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2022 Women in Construction: Shanice Ayala, Assistant Project Manager at Vantage Builders

March 25, 2022 - Spotlights



Shanice Ayala

Starting out in the construction business, who or what empowered you? I tend to naturally lean into a challenge, so to a large degree I am self-motivated and self-empowered. Even in college, I loved being one of the few women in my classes. Not enough women get into the STEM programs and rather than discourage me, that always pushed me to go further, to work that much harder. Being in a male dominated field like construction isn't easy if it feels like you aren't being taken seriously, but Vantage Builders' culture is very supportive. I love doing what I do and seeing the fruits of my labor.

What tips or advice would you offer to other women who are considering entering the construction industry? My advice for women who are considering getting into construction is straightforward: Do it! It's a great field with a lot of opportunity – to learn, to succeed, to accomplish goals, to have a career. Like in any industry, when you start out, you are still learning. But in my experience, coworkers have always been willing to teach and share their knowledge. Yes, it's a male dominated field but don't let that intimidate you. Be part of the change. The change has already begun.

What was your greatest professional achievement or most notable project in the last 12 months? As an assistant project manager, my role is primarily to support Vantage Builders' project managers and project executives to successfully complete client jobs. This year, however, I had the opportunity to take the lead on managing a project. I had managed residential projects earlier in my career but this was my first commercial project. I was both excited and nervous, and appreciated the opportunity to take this next step in my career. We have good mentoring at the firm and I knew I could go to team members with any issues that came up. I am happy to say that the project went smoothly!