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2022 Women in Construction: Riane Ragno, Diversity and Workforce Coordinator at Cranshaw Construction

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Riane Ragno

Starting out in the construction business, who or what empowered you? I never thought I'd end up in the construction industry, but now I don't think I'll ever not be in the construction industry. I just happened to get lucky to find myself in an ever growing, changing and challenging career. So, when I found myself working as the assistant estimating coordinator at Cranshaw right after college, my mom told me, "I don't know nothing about construction, but do your very best. Learn whatever you possibly can, and figure out what you'd like to be doing in ten years down the road with this career." I didn't grow up with a lot of opportunities, but my mom always pushed me to create my own. She's always been my source of empowerment, encouragement and inspiration.

Within your firm, who has helped you succeed within the industry? How have they helped you? It might sound cliché, but every single person I've met within my firm has done nothing but challenge me, congratulate me, and give me opportunities I didn't even know were out there. I wouldn't be where I am today without the advice from my coworkers, professional development conversations with my supervisors, and the firm's ideals on helping everyone succeed not only within the company but also the industry at large.

What was your greatest professional achievement or most notable project in the last 12 months? My greatest professional achievement in the last year would have to be my role change from being the assistant estimating coordinator to being Cranshaw's very first in-house diversity and workforce coordinator. The world is changing and so is the construction industry. People are starting to realize just how important diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) are in all facets of the world, and I'm so excited and proud to be a part of this important step in the construction industry. I've always been passionate about DEI and thought I would go into that field somehow, but I never imagined it'd be through construction. However, I'm glad it is, and I'm personally so grateful for this opportunity.

When you're not busy, what is your go to book or podcast to help you unwind? I'm actually a devoted crime junkie. Ever since I was a little girl, I've loved mysteries, whether it be a podcast, TV show, movie, article or book. The uncontrollable thrill of trying to solve a case along with the (sometimes) unexpected results and insights one can get captures my mind like nothing else. Some of my ultimate favorite podcasts would have to be: "Crime Junkie" hosted by Ashley Flowers and Brit Prawat, "My Favorite Murder" hosted by Georgia Hardstark and Karen Kilgariff, and "Red Collar" hosted by Catherine Townsend.

What tips or advice would you offer to other women who are considering entering the construction industry? As we all know, the construction industry is still a male-dominated space, and as a woman, you will face adversity. It's important to understand that it won't be easy, but try to continuously push through those times because it will only make you stronger. Find good leaders who create a positive, encouraging environment that will allow you to continuously grow and learn in the industry. Remember that you're not alone, and that you set the standards for your own success.