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## **2024 Women in Construction: Rachana Kheraj, Bridgeline Exteriors**

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Rachana Kheraj  
Executive VP of Business Dev.-National

## Bridgeline Exteriors

What was your greatest professional achievement or most notable project in the last 12 months? My greatest achievement in the last 12 months was the creation and full scale launch and operation of two more divisions of our company, wood framing and our capital projects divisions nationally. The strength of our team, the dedication to our craft, has been recognized and appreciated. Our team collectively found innovative ways to assist our developers, architects and prime contractors achieve their goals.

What has been the driving force behind your success in the AEC industry? The driving force behind my success has always been education. Constant innovation and constant change leads me to learn more, train more individuals and create more opportunities using the knowledge that I have gained. We have created a Developmental and Pathways Program partnering with Youthbuild Boston that will allow us to share knowledge and empower a more diverse future generation of construction.

What is your favorite / most beneficial part of Women in Construction week? As a National Association of Women in Construction Boston Chapter board member and chair of our DEI committee, I was able to see and hear first hand the stories, struggles and accomplishments of so many great women. WIC week allows us to come together, all genders, in the support of a more diverse and equitable future of construction. It is pure inspiration!

Who or what inspired you to join the AEC industry? 25 years ago, I saw a homeless mother with her two children. I stopped and gave her my bottle of water. I asked if I could help her to a shelter because it was bitter cold. Unfortunately she said all of the shelters were full and there was nowhere for her family to go. Her husband passed away last year, and the cost of her apartment was too great and the waiting lists for the affordable housing were years long. At that moment I realized I needed to be a part of building our communities, creating affordable safe housing to guarantee a future for all children in our cities.

What are your goals for the future? My professional goal for the future is to create a sustainable business model for my company in order to create pathways for further advancement of those interested in construction, those looking to pursue advanced options in AEC and introduce the world of construction to as many youths as possible. My goal is to be a part of creating the next generation of leaders and open the eyes to the many possibilities of career paths in the world of construction.