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2024 Women in Construction: Amelia Lopez, Chestnut Hill Realty

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Amelia Lopez
Construction Accounting & Compliance Mgr.

Chestnut Hill Realty

What was your greatest professional achievement or most notable project in the last 12 months? My biggest achievement this past year is being able to apply my master's degree in Construction Management, which I earned from Wentworth in 2022, to two large construction projects at Chestnut Hill Realty. We recently completed the development of a 25,000 s/f three-story, multi-purpose community center at Hancock Village and are nearing completion of a 250-unit apartment building, also at Hancock Village. I was able to apply knowledge about contracts, budgeting, compliance, finance and accounting to these projects, all of which I learned while obtaining my master's degree, which made me extremely proud.

What has been the driving force behind your success in the AEC industry? My Dad has been the guiding light in my professional journey. Following the completion of my bachelor's degree in Accounting from Suffolk University a decade ago in 2010, I embarked on the job hunt and stumbled upon a temp-to-hire opportunity at Chestnut Hill Realty. It was my father's words of encouragement that propelled me to apply, reminding me that opportunities often arise unexpectedly. Since joining CHR in 2011, I've transitioned from property management accounting to construction, a move that has ignited my passion for the field. Although my father passed away a year ago, his unwavering belief in the importance of continuous learning remains etched in my mind. His memory serves as my driving force, spurring me forward in my career pursuits.

Who or what inspired you to join the AEC industry? Upon being tasked with aiding the construction department, I transitioned into the role of a full-fledged construction accountant. Under the guidance of my supervisor, Yureidy Medina, I found inspiration. Her unwavering encouragement urged me to expand my knowledge, bolster my confidence, and actively engage by asking questions. This journey ultimately propelled me to pursue a master's degree in Construction Management from Wentworth, facilitating my ascent into a managerial position within the field.

What is your favorite / most beneficial part of Women in Construction week? When people think about the construction industry, they don't think of women. And they don't think of all of the knowledge and backgrounds needed to construct a building. There are a lot of things that have to happen before you break ground. This observance shows people what they typically don't see. It opens their minds to how broad of a field construction is and to all of the employment possibilities. That's my favorite part of Women In Construction Week and what I find most beneficial about the observance.

What are your goals for the future? My goal for the future is to continue learning about the industry. I want to learn more about what goes into a project before it even gets to the financing part. I want to be more involved in feasibility studies, researching local bylaws and regulations, zoning requirements and the like. Basically, my goal is to have knowledge about the entire construction process, from inspiration to ribbon-cutting.