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## **2025 Women in Construction: Erin Benken, QA+M Architecture**

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Erin Benken, AIA  
Architect

What is one project or achievement in your career that you are most proud of, and how did it impact your organization or community? I am most proud of the housing projects that rethink what affordable housing should be by putting an emphasis on creating buildings that don't look like traditional low-income housing. These projects celebrate the residents by creating units that allow them to take pride in their homes. It aims to promote resident integration into their communities by using purposeful site and building design. Allowing those in our communities access to a safe, comfortable, beautiful place to live is so important and I am grateful that my career allows me to play a small role in helping to achieve this.

Who or what has inspired you most in your career, and what advice would you share with the next generation of women entering the A/E/C industry? There are many peers, colleagues and mentors that have inspired me in my career. All of them have inspired me in different ways; some by acting as a role model, and others by providing advice when I run into new situations I haven't experienced before. Some advice I'd give to the next generation of women entering the industry is to learn to adapt to new situations. Every project that you work on will be different, with new challenges, constraints and unknowns. Be willing to learn new things and find trusted mentors that can give guidance when you encounter difficult and unknown situations.

What's your favorite way to recharge or get inspired outside of work? I love going to new places, exploring new towns and cities, and national parks.