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## **2025 Women in Construction: Vanda De Sousa Silva, E Alves Cleaning Services**

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Vanda De Sousa Silva  
Estimator/Sales Associate

## E Alves Cleaning Services

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'm most proud of the work I do rather than a single project. Every project is unique, and each company has different goals and visions. My role is to focus on all projects and identify opportunities that bring value to our company. While I take pride in every initiative we pursue, I have a personal passion for projects that involve affordable housing and community services. These initiatives not only align with our company goals but also create a sense that something is being done for people in need. This brings me joy.

What trends or innovations do you believe will shape the future of your field, and how are you positioning yourself (or your firm) to be at the forefront? In the future, I believe improved communications tools to shape the understanding of the importance of a cleaning company, will significantly influence the estimating and sale process in the cleaning industry. Right now, cleaning companies are often not taken seriously by general contractors, and communication in the industry is far from ideal. Unfortunately, many contractors still prioritize the lowest bid over quality service, making it challenging for us to grow as a company. We are forced to maintain the company size to be considered , preventing us from growing. To stay ahead, I'm compelled to be more persistent, focusing on techniques to improving communication, to build stronger connections with potential clients, even though it's not always easy. Believe it or not "ghosting" happens in the construction industry too, which adds another layer of difficulty to track project status that we already provided quotes or potential opportunities.

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? I'm inspired by the growing of equality in the cleaning construction industry and the increasing respect from male colleagues. Seeing woman breaking barriers and being valued for their skills motivates me to keep pushing forward in my own goals as a woman, ignoring all the criticism, skepticism, doubt from the environment around us. My advice for woman in the industry and woman afraid to follow their dreams, is to stay confident, stand your ground, and never be afraid to speak up. Respect and equality are earned through Resilience, Perseverance and to be yourself no matter what, so keep pushing forward, support each other and prove that you belong!

What's your favorite way to recharge or get inspired outside of work? My favorite way to recharged and find inspiration outside of work is through nature, anything as a hike, fishing, swim, picnic etc. Being surrounded by its beauty helps reset my mind, making me pause in time and reflect on how we should be grateful, even for the things we consider small. You realized how small you are in the grand scheme of things-but also how much we can achieve.

Do you have a hidden talent or a surprising fact about yourself that most people wouldn't know? A

surprising fact about me is that I was the first female indoor soccer coach, with a course at 18 years old in my Island (Terceira Island) in Portugal where I'm original from. I have spent most of my life working in male-dominated environments, and it has not been easy in industries that were traditionally considered to be built for men. But Breaking those barriers has been rewarding and I can say I'm proud of myself.

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