



CELEBRATING
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2025 Ones To Watch - Rising Stars: Debra Seay, Amenta Emma Architects

May 23, 2025 - Spotlights



Debra Seay AIA, WELL AP
Workplace Studio Leader

“Debra exemplifies the next generation of leadership in workplace design. Her innovative approach to creating healthy, inclusive spaces has elevated our firm’s reputation and resulted in our offices achieving the WELL Equity Rating – among the first in New England. Her vision transforms how people experience their work environment while inspiring both clients and colleagues alike.” - Michael Tyre, AIA, LEED AP, President at Amenta Emma Architects.

What recent professional milestone or project are you most proud of, and why? As architects, we shape how people live and work, but meaningful change often starts at home. I’m proud to have led Amenta Emma to achieve the WELL Equity Rating for our Boston and Hartford offices – a roadmap for meaningful DEI action. As the new Workplace Studio leader and a WELL AP, I emphasize to clients that creating welcoming environments requires intention, especially as we navigate new work cultures. We must reimagine offices not just as places to clock in, but spaces where employees genuinely thrive.

If you could give advice to someone just starting out in your field, what would it be? Find a strong mentor. Early in my career, I worked under a female architect who was the majority owner of her firm. She taught me how to confidently lead on job sites as a woman and instilled the importance of acknowledging knowledge gaps. She encouraged me to research what I didn’t understand or simply say, ‘I’ll look into that’ – because those moments of curiosity are when real learning happens. Embracing questions rather than pretending to know everything builds both expertise and respect.

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