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2025 Ones To Watch - Rising Stars: Kevin Kilguss, BL Companies

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Kevin Kilguss
Project Manager

“What makes Kevin Kilguss a rising star is not just his technical ability or the quality of the projects he delivers. It is the thoughtful, forward- looking approach he brings to every facet of his work. At BL Companies, we emphasize the importance of integrating operational excellence with mentorship, innovation and responsiveness to client needs. Kevin embodies excellence in all of these areas and brings a strategic approach and maturity level beyond his actual years.” - Derek Kohl, Vice President of Operations at BL Companies.

What recent professional milestone or project are you most proud of, and why? One of the proudest moments in my career so far has been seeing the completion and opening of the Costco store in Sharon, Mass. It was a multi- year project involving a large, multidisciplinary team, and a complex development site that included additional retail and residential components. I worked on that project from the earliest test- fit phases through final construction. Over the years, my role evolved from hands- on design to technical leadership and client coordination. Being part of the ribbon- cutting and walking into a space I helped bring to life was incredibly rewarding.

What’s one challenge you’ve overcome in your career so far, and what did it teach you? When I transitioned into project management I encountered a major learning curve. Letting go of technical tasks and trusting junior staff to take them on was difficult at first. I’ve always taken pride in the details of my work. But I’ve learned that delegation isn’t just a management tool; it’s a growth opportunity for others. Coaching younger team members, challenging them and watching them develop has become one of the most fulfilling parts of my job.

If you could give advice to someone just starting out in your field, what would it be? Don’t be afraid to ask questions or make mistakes. That’s the only way to make sure you are growing in your profession. The early stages of your career are the best time to be curious and absorb as much as you can. Take on the big tasks and push yourself to learn things that might feel out of reach. No one expects you to know everything right away, and showing that initiative and enthusiasm will go a long way.

Who has played a pivotal role in your development, and how have they influenced you? Jessica Bates, a principal engineer at BL Companies, has been a major influence on my career. She’s guided me technically, mentoring me through complex projects, and set an example of what thoughtful leadership looks like. She brings deep engineering knowledge to the table, but what really stands out is how she treats people. She listens, builds personal connections, and creates an environment where others feel supported and empowered. That’s the kind of manager I aspire to be.