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2025 Ones To Watch - Rising Stars: Johanna Astudillo Gomez, Columbia

May 23, 2025 - Spotlights



Johanna Astudillo Gomez
Area Superintendent

“Johanna Astudillo Gomez’s dedication to outstanding leadership, problem- solving, and excellence makes a lasting impact on our team and the industry. As an Area Superintendent, she excels in managing complex Science + Technology jobsites. Her resourcefulness, professionalism, and commitment to continuous growth, demonstrated by her recent completion of the Leadership in the Built Environment program at Wentworth Institute of Technology, make her an invaluable asset to Columbia.” - Josh Blake, Vice President | General Superintendent at Columbia

What’s one challenge you’ve overcome in your career so far, and what did it teach you? Starting my career as a woman in construction, I faced skepticism in a male- dominated field. Through persistence, technical skill, and relationship- building, I’ve earned trust and respect as a superintendent. This journey taught me the importance of confidence, advocacy, and leading by example-showing that knowledge and dedication break barriers and open doors for the next generation.

If you could give advice to someone just starting out in your field, what would it be? Never be afraid to ask questions or ask for more. Stay curious, seek challenges, and pursue continuous improvement. Build strong relationships with trade partners, the design team, and internal staff. Find mentors, be a team player, and don’t settle-expand your responsibilities and keep learning. The more open you are to growth, the more successful and fulfilled you’ll become.

What recent professional milestone or project are you most proud of, and why? As Area Superintendent for a battery manufacturing project, I identified critical structural misalignments that posed risks for delays and missed scope. Taking ownership of the structural scope, I led redesign efforts with engineers, coordinated solutions with trade partners, and ensured compliance. My proactive leadership preserved project momentum, enhanced safety metrics, and reinforced the existing building’s structural integrity.

Who has played a pivotal role in your development, and how have they influenced you? I owe thanks to many, but especially to Josh Blake and Ryan Varney at Columbia. Since my early internship, they’ve mentored me, shared their experience, and shaped my approach to construction. Their guidance in Lean practices, problem- solving, and leadership has deeply influenced my career, and their belief in me helped fuel my growth into a confident and capable superintendent.