



## NAWIC • National Association of Women in Construction

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### **National Association of Women in Construction Announce 2009 Crystal Vision Award Winners Judith Ritter and Catherine Escobar**

*NAWIC's Crystal Vision Awards celebrate the achievements of individuals with vision who help promote, expand and encourage the role of women in the construction industry. Judith Ritter, owner of Ritter Contracting, and Catherine Escobar, Owner-General Partner of Escobar & Escobar Concrete Construction, pave the way for women in the construction industry.*

Fort Worth, TX April 21, 2009 -- The National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) is pleased to announce the winners of its 15th annual Crystal Vision Awards. The mission of the Crystal Vision Awards is to recognize individuals who promote, expand and encourage the role of women in the construction industry. Judith Ritter is the recipient of the Crystal Vision Award, which is awarded to a nonmember of NAWIC, and Catherine Escobar, is the recipient of the Crystal Achievement Award, which is awarded to a NAWIC member.

Judith Ritter is the owner of Ritter Contracting, a commercial union subcontracting firm. In 1992, after seven years with an electrical subcontractor and supply house, Ritter became a partner in J.A. Woodworking, a small, residential construction company on the verge of bankruptcy. Within a year, she transformed it into a profitable commercial union contracting firm, becoming 100 percent owner when her partner chose to start another company. She renamed the company Ritter Contracting Inc.

Ritter is considered a pioneer, mentor and advocate of advancing women in construction. She was the first woman to solely own a union construction firm in the Philadelphia area. Her tenacity, high level of professionalism and ability to deliver high quality have made the last 16 years memorable, having contributed to many of the premier commercial buildings in Philadelphia. She has accomplished this while significantly exceeding the mandated percentages of women and minorities working on her projects.

“She has dedicated countless hours to the assistance of small, women and minority businesses,” says Peter Coyle, Director of Business Development at Hunter Roberts Construction Group.

Ritter's legacy continues to build through her support for small business owners in her work with General Building Contractors Association (GBCA), Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) and the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce (GPCC). With each organization, she has been instrumental in developing systems that help small, women and minority-owned businesses gain the skills and networking opportunities they need to be competitive.

While Ritter works the east coast, she has a kindred spirit on the west coast, Catherine Escobar, with a similar commitment to helping grow the number and experience of women in construction.

Catherine Escobar is a 36-year member of NAWIC and is currently a member of the Monterrey Bay, Calif., chapter. She is the owner/general partner of Escobar & Escobar Concrete Construction, C & C Concrete Pumping and Advanced Concrete Equipment, LLP.

Escobar has shared her leadership abilities with various NAWIC chapters having served as president, vice-president and charter secretary for the Anchorage, Alaska chapter; president, vice-president and treasurer for the Monterrey Bay, Calif., chapter; and served on the board of directors for the Portland, Org. Chapter.

When not at the office or a NAWIC function, she can be found mentoring and encouraging youth to get involved in the construction industry. Escobar, the visionary behind its founding, sits on the advisory board for the Mission Trails ROP VEA and AGC's Mission Trails ROP/Salinas High School Construction Academy, as well as the advisory board for the Alisal High School Engineering Academy.

“She is an excellent role model for any young person, especially a female, on what can be accomplished by a woman working in a male-dominated field,” says Robert Berry, retired faculty of Hartnell College.

She is also active in the Associated General Contractors of California and Salinas Valley Builders Exchange. Naturally, she has shared her leadership skills in these organizations as well by holding a variety of Board of Director positions and serving on committees.

Both Ritter and Escobar will be added to the elite group of Crystal Vision Award winners and honored for their achievements during the 15th Annual Crystal Vision Awards Gala at NAWIC's 54th Annual Convention in Phoenix, Ariz., August 29 at 7 p.m. More than 700 members in various facets of the construction industry are expected to attend the Convention, August 26 to 29 at the J.W. Marriot Desert Ridge Resort. Convention affords attendees the opportunity to enhance their success by attending educational seminars, attaining certifications and networking with other women in the construction industry.

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#### About the Crystal Vision Awards

The Crystal Vision Awards Program was established by NAWIC Past National President Susan Levy in 1995. The program recognizes individuals who promote the role of women in construction through initiatives, policies or legislation. The Crystal Vision Award recognizes a nonmember of NAWIC, and the Crystal Achievement Award recognizes a member of the Association. Since the first visionaries were selected in 1995, this one-of-a-kind program has not only fulfilled its purpose of recognizing exemplary leaders in the industry, it has developed a reputation for honoring individuals who are committed to building a diverse work force amidst the demanding backdrops of the industry today. To schedule interviews or learn more about the Crystal Vision Program, contact Julie Lyssy at (800) 552-3506.

#### About NAWIC

NAWIC is an international Association serving approximately 5,500 members in close to 160 chapters across the United States. It was founded in 1953 to enhance the success of women in the construction industry as “Women in Construction of Fort Worth, Texas.” In 1955, the charter was expanded to allow chapters to form across the country, and the National Association of Women in Construction was born. NAWIC's Core Purpose is “To enhance the success of women in the construction industry.” To learn more, visit [www.nawic.org](http://www.nawic.org).