Shining Through Crisis
Women in Modular Construction
Green and Sustainable Projects
Summertime Safety
BUILD LIKE THE BIG PRIMES
WEBINAR SERIES

If you’re a construction industry business owner, executive, or decision maker who wants to grow your business, strengthen your position in the market, or plan for the future, then this no-cost program is for you!

In the Build Like the Big Primes webinar series, we will tackle 8 common challenges that you may face when you start to work more on your business and less in your business. From navigating finances with fluency and communicating effectively with difficult people to hiring dependable workers and recognizing the signs of burnout in yourself and your team, you have a lot to manage. We’re here to help you tackle it all, one step at a time.

Here’s what we will cover:

**June 16 – Finance**
- Why you need to know your numbers well
- How to present your numbers in the best light
- What story your numbers tell – and how to change that story

**June 23 – Operations**
- Why cash flow is critical - and tips to flatten the boom and bust cycle
- How to improve the measurement and management of your business
- Tools for extending safety beyond the jobsite

**June 30 – Communications**
- Why how you say it is as important as what you say
- To get comfortable with difficult conversations
- How to tailor your message to different audiences

**July 7 – Personal Branding**
- The importance of making a great first impression
- How to develop your executive presence
- How to help your team reflect your company’s image

**July 14 – Marketing**
- To identify qualified prospects
- Why clear online messaging is mission-critical
- How to foster relationships for long term growth and success

**July 21 – Human Resources**
- How to find and hire staff you trust
- The importance of feedback and performance assessments
- The basics of organizational behavior

**July 28 – Coaching and Mentoring**
- The difference between coaching and mentoring
- How to be a great listener
- Why you should be paying it forward

**August 4 – Work-Life Balance**
- Signs of burnout in your team and yourself
- The benefits of delegation
- To reconcile the complex world of being a business owner with your life outside of work

If these topics are in line with some of the thoughts that keep you up at night, join us for this informative and interactive webinar series to help clarify your next steps to Build Like the Big Primes.

**All sessions will be held from 6:00-7:00pm EST.**
To register for the program, click on the link below:
https://www.eventbrite.com/e/build-like-the-big-primes-webinar-series-tickets-106242694760

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On the Cover:
Part of team #HabiMac stands proud as they usher in an era of innovation on the site of their latest sectional house. Clockwise from back left: Helen Hicks, Rita Brown, Mashell Carissimi, Aledria Howard, Erika Bartles.

On the Back Cover:
NAWIC RI Chapter 52 teams up with Habitat for Humanity on affordable housing projects in Exeter, RI during WIC Week 2019.
Webinars:

July 1
ConsensusDocs Webinar: 8 Advantages ConsensusDocs offers Over AIA A201 in Addressing COVID-19 Risk in Construction Contracts

July 7
Membership & Marketing Webinar: Cultivating Sponsorships

July 14
Build Like the Big Primes Webinar Series with Michael Riegel of AEC Business Strategies: Marketing

July 21
Build Like the Big Primes Webinar Series with Michael Riegel of AEC Business Strategies: Human Resources

August 4
Build Like the Big Primes Webinar Series with Michael Riegel of AEC Business Strategies: Work-Life Balance

Events:

July 15
Chapter Leadership Update Forms Due to the National Office

August 12-14
NAWIC 65th Annual Conference (Virtual Event)

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NAWIC and the Future

Dove Sifers-Putman, CBT
NAWIC Immediate Past National President

I am excited about the vision of NAWIC that the past boards have created for our organization. I would like to see NAWIC as a brand and name that everyone knows...such as AGC, ABC, etc. NAWIC is here to help provide support to the women of the construction industry, along with leadership skills and education to help amplify their success. Now is the time for chapters and members to reach out to not only women in the industry but also to men and companies. Share your NAWIC story and tell people what NAWIC has done for you – both personally and professionally. We are an association for women, but we need to make the construction industry as a whole aware that we are here.

Chapters, I would encourage you to contact your local AGC, ABC, PCEA, Subcontractors Association and other associations in your area. Talk with them about how you can work together to help promote the construction industry, because we should absolutely be working together with other associations for the betterment of the construction industry. With the changes in our world due to Covid-19, the construction industry has continued to work, although things are changing on the jobsites and in how we interact with our co-workers. Working with other associations gives us the opportunity to share ideas, procedures and more.

The current board has been hard at work with Taylor Brand Group, and we are looking forward to hearing what they propose for NAWIC marketing and the unveiling our new branding. We are excited to see what changes our marketing refresh will bring for us on the national level, as well as on the chapter level. With the help of our members and national board, we are continuing to move the organization forward and into the future.
A New Era
Crissy Ingram, CAE, NAWIC Executive Director

The world has witnessed a number of setbacks and challenges so far this year, but NAWIC Nation is still running strong!

We have shifted gears on our 65th Annual Conference and are going VIRTUAL! This will be NAWIC’s first ever virtual conference, and we are working hard to ensure that it is a wonderful event. Rest assured that you will still get to participate in the many educational opportunities you are accustomed to, along with top-notch keynote speakers, installation of the new NAWIC National Board of Directors, awards presentations and more. Be on the lookout for the new registration link and information so that you and your colleagues can get signed up! If you have already registered for the live event, expect a phone call from the NAWIC National office to settle your account and transfer your registration to virtual, should you wish to do so. I’m looking forward to a new and exciting conference!

This issue of NAWIC Today is packed full of interesting and relevant information. We open with a ‘Visions’ article by Immediate Past National President Dove Sifers-Putman, CBT. Also, learn about NAWIC’s new partnership with the Board of Certified Safety Professionals (BCSP). You will get safety information from the NAWIC-OSHA Alliance Committee and Heat Stress tips from our Safety and Health Committee.

One of our member companies, Hunt Electric has provided an exciting addition to this issue! We’re featuring the story of how they teamed up with Synergy Med on containerized solutions for Covid-19 medical relief. Thank you to Midwest Region Director Jodi Wiemerslage for this submission!

This instalment of Angela Highland’s Power Tools for Professional Women focuses on women leaders shining through crisis and what we can learn from their examples and employ in our own lives – both personal and professional. Following Angela’s column, enjoy a guest submission from the Modular Building Institute featuring women in Modular Construction. We wrap the issue up with Doreen Bartoldus’ article on making sustainability a personal commitment.

The National Board just wrapped up a hybrid version of Board Orientation and Training in Arlington, Texas. The week was filled with education for both sitting and incoming board members on NAWIC procedures and the NAWIC Strategic Plan, along with leadership training. We started the conversation that will continue all year to ensure that we are on top of current events and member needs. Our members are our top priority, and we will continue to search out resources and educational opportunities that provide the highest return on investment and best benefits to you!

As this year keeps us on the edge of our seats, remember that we are all in this together and we will continue to be NAWIC Strong!
WE'RE GOING VIRTUAL
AUGUST 12-14, 2020

REGISTRATION COST
Member: $350
Non-Member: $400
NAWIC Signs Partnership with BCSP

In April, NAWIC formed a collaborative partnership with the Board of Certified Safety Professionals (BCSP) to improve safety and health performance at workplaces throughout the United States and Canada.

As partners, BCSP and NAWIC will use our collaborative efforts, expertise, technologies, and resources to provide competency-based certification to advance the safety of members and their organizations.

“BCSP looks forward to working together with NAWIC in the advancement of safety,” said BCSP Board of Directors President Mario Varela, CSP, ASP. “This partnership enhances our capabilities to protect construction workers through our joint efforts to encourage greater safety leadership.”

“NAWIC is excited to partner with BCSP to provide opportunities for professional development and certification,” says NAWIC President Diane Mike, CBT, CRIS. “As safety is a top priority for our industry, NAWIC’s partnership with BCSP will strengthen efforts to increase the knowledge and expertise of construction workers and provide a safer work environment for all.”

BCSP and NAWIC’s collaboration will include developing and disseminating information on career opportunities in safety and health, concerning accredited certifications, and regarding safety management systems and best practices for construction workplaces. Both organizations will engage in outreach to a diverse group of stakeholders, encourage formal recognition and use of certification, participate in events where safety and health are addressed, and facilitate the transfer of relevant occupational safety and health research findings to the body of knowledge of safety and health professionals.

The Board of Certified Safety Professionals (BCSP), headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana, is a not-for-profit corporation recognized as a leader in high-quality, accredited credentialing for safety, health, and environmental (SH&E) practitioners. BCSP establishes standards and certifies competency criteria in professional safety practice. Since 1969, over 100,000 BCSP credentials have been achieved.
Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

- Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms’ length) from other people.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
- When in public, wear a cloth face covering over your nose and mouth.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
NAWIC-OSHA Alliance: Committed to Your Safety

Kathleen Dobson, CSP, CHST, STS-C, LEED® AP BD+C, CIT, NAWIC-OSHA Alliance Liaison and Karen Mitchell, NAWIC-OSHA Alliance Committee Co-Chair

Nearly 20 years ago, the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) created its Alliance program to facilitate voluntary, collaborative working relationships with organizations, such as NAWIC, that are committed to workplace safety. NAWIC first partnered with the OSHA Alliance in 2013 and renewed the partnership in 2017. The goal of the NAWIC-OSHA Alliance Committee is to provide educational tools for members focused on safety and health in the workplace with an emphasis on issues affecting women. In addition to the usual construction workplace hazards, women face unique safety challenges including ill-fitting personal protective equipment and clothing, unhealthy sanitary facilities, and adverse workplace culture. Through education and safety initiatives, the alliance between NAWIC and OSHA is addressing and overcoming many of these challenges.

The Alliance Committee has been active this past year. In September, before COVID-19 halted face to face meetings, NAWIC-OSHA Alliance National Chair Karen Brioso and Kathi Dobson, a former national committee chair, traveled to Washington, D.C. to represent NAWIC at the OSHA Alliance roundtable where your voices were heard. Kathi spoke to the group as part of an overall discussion on suicide prevention in construction. The Alliance Committee also provided educational webinars including “Issues Affecting Women in Construction,” held in November 2019 and attended by over 100 women. Regional and chapter OSHA Alliance Chairs were challenged to provide Alliance-related programs at their Fall Conference and/or Forum. Regions have met this challenge in innovative ways by bringing in OSHA speakers and creating presentations and program inserts to highlight the benefits of the Alliance and educate members on workplace safety.

The Alliance Committee works to inform you of relevant OSHA/safety topics and issues, especially as they pertain to women. The following 4 steps are easy ways you and your company can benefit from the Alliance.

Visit the NAWIC-OSHA Alliance webpage on the NAWIC national website.

The Alliance has a stand-alone webpage with information to help educate members on safety and OSHA initiatives. This year’s areas of emphasis include trench safety, fall protection, suicide and opioid abuse prevention, hazard communication, and, of course, battling COVID-19 in the workplace. The webpage is an excellent resource for articles, presentations and other information on these and many other topics.

Participate through your company or individually in OSHA campaigns.

OSHA has created several safety campaigns that NAWIC promotes including Fall Prevention (May), Heat Stress Awareness (April – October), Safe+Sound (August) and Trenching and Excavating (June). These campaigns target primary safety hazards on the construction jobsite. These resources are provided by OSHA and disseminated through NAWIC via the Alliance webpage, articles, and social media posts.

Follow the NAWIC-OSHA Alliance on social media.

Posts on social media get information to members in a quick and concise way. Follow the NAWIC OSHA Alliance Committee (@nawic.osha.alliance) on Facebook and you will have access to relevant information about safety, OSHA initiatives, training opportunities and much more. We also post on Twitter (@nawic_alliance) with links to alliance partners and OSHA programs. In the past 12 months, OSHA-NAWIC Alliance posts on social media have reached close to 10,000 people in our industry. Take a moment as you are checking your feed to read and share these valuable posts.

Convey your safety concerns and ideas to your local, regional, and national NAWIC-OSHA Alliance and NAWIC Safety & Health committee chairs.

Identify OSHA/safety issues that impact women in construction. As was done in the past to improve jobsite sanitation facilities for women and create PPE designed to fit women, your ideas on how to improve workplace safety, especially for women, will be brought to OSHA and could create lasting changes for women in the construction industry.

The Alliance recognizes that NAWIC members lead busy lives but that they have joined NAWIC because they care about helping women succeed in our chosen industry. By utilizing the resources provided by the Alliance, you can make the workplace safer and more rewarding for the multitude of women who chose a career in construction.
Protecting Workers from Heat Stress

By: Adair Stevenson, National Safety & Health Committee Co-Chair

Exposure to heat can cause illness and death. The most serious heat illness is heat stroke. Other heat illnesses, such as heat exhaustion, heat cramps and heat rash, should also be avoided. There are precautions that can be taken any time temperatures are high and the job involves physical work.

**Risk Factors for Heat Illness:**
- High temperature and humidity, direct sun exposure, no breeze or wind
- Heavy physical labor
- No recent exposure to hot workplaces
- Low liquid intake
- Waterproof clothing

**Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion:**
- Headache, dizziness, or fainting
- Weakness and wet skin
- Irritability or confusion
- Thirst, nausea, or vomiting

**Symptoms of Heat Stroke:**
- May be confused, unable to think clearly, pass out, collapse, or have seizures (fits)
- May stop sweating

**To Prevent Heat Illness:**
- Establish a complete heat illness prevention program.
- Provide training about the hazards leading to heat stress and how to prevent them.
- Provide a lot of cool water to workers close to the work area.
- At least one pint of water per hour is needed.
- Modify work schedules and arrange frequent rest periods with water breaks in shaded or air-conditioned areas.
- Gradually increase workloads and allow more frequent breaks for workers new to the heat or those that have been away from work to adapt to working in the heat (acclimatization).
- Designate a responsible person to monitor conditions and protect workers who are at risk of heat stress.
- Consider protective clothing that provides cooling

**How to Protect Workers:**
- Know signs/symptoms of heat illnesses; monitor yourself; use a buddy system.
- Block out direct sun and other heat sources.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Drink often and BEFORE you are thirsty. Drink water every 15 minutes.
- Avoid beverages containing alcohol or caffeine. Wear lightweight, light colored, loose fitting clothes.

**What to Do When a Worker is Ill from the Heat:**
- Call a supervisor for help. If the supervisor is not available, call 911.
- Have someone stay with the worker until help arrives.
- Move the worker to a cooler/shaded area.
- Remove outer clothing.
- Fan and mist the worker with water; apply ice (ice bags or ice towels).
- Provide cool drinking water, if able to drink.
- IF THE WORKER IS NOT ALERT or seems confused, this may be a heat stroke. CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY and apply ice as soon as possible.
Powering the Future of Crisis Response: Containerized Solutions for COVID-19 Emergency Medical Relief

The Covid-19 pandemic has placed acute pressure on businesses and organizations across nearly every sector. With many patients needing critical care, healthcare systems worldwide have struggled to meet the increased demand on their facilities. Because the locations of greatest need are an ever-moving target, the most crucial question is this:

*How do we provide a safe space – in any location – to provide sanitary testing, consultation, and care to those in need of medical attention?*

Synergy Med and Hunt Electric Corporation, along with several project partners, have developed a mobile, multi-functional, self-cleaning containerized solution.

To best address the full range of emergency medical needs, our team designed three unique units. Each model is configured to serve a specific purpose:

- **Emergency care**
- **Testing, triage and outpatient care**
- **Housing and medical storage**

Each container is designed as a stand-alone tool to assist with pandemic response, disaster relief, temporary housing, and other acute needs. The mobile containers can be deployed as needed to ease the widespread pressure on medical infrastructure as it peaks in different locations at different times.

**Why Modularized Containers for Emergency Response?**

The current pressure on healthcare systems is not one-size-fits-all. One of the greatest benefits of containerized medical spaces is the flexibility they provide to respond to the demands of each individual location:

- When containers of various levels of care are deployed together, the right resources make it to the right place at the right time.
- This scalable solution allows greater or fewer containers to be deployed to a location based on need.
- Pandemic pressure is a moving target; mobile solutions enable rapid response as critical needs arise in different areas.
- Disasters from all types of natural causes – tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes or floods – require emergency resources to be deployed to the point of need and to be fully functional.
This solution will also benefit emergency response beyond the current health crisis. The flexible, durable, mobile units can be customized and deployed to meet the needs of future emergency situations as they surface. They can be reused and redeployed better than temporary built structures.

Driving Expedited Design-Build

Synergy Med Global Design Solutions has developed and patented clean cube technology for medical applications. They have applied their designs to mobile containerized units, initially for forward military operating deployments and now to commercial and governmental rapid response units. Synergy Med selected Hunt for its manufacturing based upon its significant experience in manufacturing other military and government containerized solutions, as well as its quick response, teaming mentality.

In order to move the project from concept to completion as quickly as possible, Synergy Med brought several highly experienced medical architecture and electrical firms out of Denver, Davis Partnership Architects, and BCER Engineers, together to work with Hunt Electric Corporation to drive an extremely fast-paced design process. The intent was to establish key elements during the design phase, which would be added to and fine-tuned during assembly. This iterative process truly exemplifies design-build in its purest sense.

After just two weeks in design, the project moved into the build phase. Hunt Electric Corporation coordinated the production of the first proof-of-concept unit at our headquarters in Bloomington, MN. Anticipating the greatest pressure on testing, triage, and outpatient care, we opted to produce this relief unit first.

Hunt Electric collaborated with Better Building Data, Homeco Insulation, Kendell Doors, Olympic Companies, Inc., Ryan Companies, Schadegg Mechanical, St. Paul Linoleum, STAR, Super Cubes, Swanson & Youngdale, and Tom Kraemer, Inc. to construct the unit. Moving with remarkable urgency, the build team worked day and night in our 30,000 square foot prefabrication shop to complete the unit in only two weeks.

Social Distancing in a Multi-Trade Prefabrication Project

This project relied on the joint efforts of team members from various trades. Ensuring the safety of everyone in the build space was a project priority. Hunt Electric’s Health and Safety department implemented stringent social distancing methods, including:

- Limiting crew size and rotating shifts to minimize contact between trades
- Regular sanitation efforts, mandatory face coverings, and prohibiting the shared use of tools
- Installing additional bathrooms and handwashing stations to provide separate facilities for regular and guest team members
By following this protocol, we ensured that the experts performing this critical work were able to do so in an environment that minimized risk for all.

**The Final Product: A Comprehensive Containerized Solution**

In just one month, our team brought the testing, triage, and outpatient care unit from innovative designs and ideas to completed proof-of-concept that is production ready. This durable, highly-flexible solution provides a wide variety of solutions for a wide variety of end users. The fully-equipped base units can be modified to meet the specific needs of the situations to which they are deployed.

**BASE UNIT FEATURES**

- Self-contained mechanical and electrical systems
  - HVAC with high-level filtration and 100% outdoor air
  - Hand-sinks for each space
  - Lighting and power with control for each space
  - Ability to connect to utility or generator power

- Demountable wall-partitions to maximize the flexibility of the space.

- Data and documentation integration for smart tagging and reading of systems, equipment and inventory items.

- Interior floor, walls, and ceiling made with Altro PVC hygienic surfaces for extremely efficient cleaning.

- A proprietary self-cleaning system with Bioquell interfacing with doors, hardware, HVAC system and patented vaporized hydrogen-peroxide to disinfect spaces in minutes between patients.

Before deployment, the base units can be outfitted with a variety of wall-mounted accessories, medical equipment, and inventory. This flexibility enables end users to support nearly every urgent need that can arise in an emergency.

**What Makes Our Containerized Solution Unique?**

Construction teams across the country are developing containerized medical units to meet the needs of the current crisis. The units designed by our project team maximize the potential of this solution by leveraging the following features:

- The unit intakes fresh air to avoid recycled contamination and houses an automatic cleaning system to sterilize the space between patients.
• The demountable partitions maximize the flexibility of the space, allowing for real-time modification of use.
• The units are equipped with robust data integration to track equipment, maintenance, and report status of the location and inventory.

Who Can Benefit from These Containers?

The short answer is: everyone. The global nature and acute pressure of the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted sectors without bias. Agencies and organizations worldwide have expressed the need for flexible, scalable, high-quality solutions to support healthcare systems where the existing infrastructure cannot.

Primary interest in these containers has come from a variety of sources:

• The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
• The Army Corps of Engineers
• The National Guard (various states)
• The US Armed Forces
• Several regional healthcare providers
• Numerous overseas partners

Total Team Effort for Lasting Impact

From start to finish, the entire project team displayed exemplary capabilities and willingness to go above and beyond to deliver Synergy Med a high-quality product. Their efforts resulted in a reliable solution capable of meeting the evolving needs of hard-hit communities throughout the United States and worldwide. These units will benefit crisis response well into the future, enabling end users to effectively provide safe and sanitary care to populations in need anywhere on Earth.

This article originally appeared on the Hunt Electric Corporation Newsroom website on May 6, 2020. You can find it here: https://www.huntelec.com/newsroom/containerized_solutions.html
Cyber Threats of Employee Telecommuting
Author, Sam Clayton, Vice President, Construction Group, Rancho Mesa Insurance Services, Inc.

The recent COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic has created numerous challenges for both individuals and businesses all over the world. In March 2020, many states required their residents to shelter-in-place and all non-essential businesses to cease in-person operations. In doing so and in order to keep their businesses operating, many employers transitioned employees to work remotely, otherwise known as telecommuting.

While this approach is nothing new for many businesses, employers have been required to expedite these accommodations which creates unanticipated Cyber Liability Exposure.

Below are three online threats to be aware of if you have remote workers:

1. **SECURED WIFI NETWORKS**
   Make sure that all employees are using a secure WiFi network (or hardwired connection). An unsecured or public WiFi network are prime targets for malicious parties to spy on internet traffic and collect confidential information.

2. **USE OF PERSONAL DEVICES AND NETWORKS**
   Many employees will be forced to use personal devices and home networks for work. These devices often lack the tools built into company networks, such as strong antivirus software and firewalls. This lack of security could increase the risk of malware which may allow personal, as well as, confidential information to be exposed.

3. **PHISHING SCAMS**
   Workers may receive emails from hackers impersonating a supplier/vendor or even someone within the organization to obtain confidential information or to transfer funds unknowingly.

In order to minimize these threats, companies should implement a written “Telecommuting Agreement” that outlines specific practices and procedures when employees are working remotely. Make sure the policy is added to your employee handbook and you have documentation your employees have acknowledged the new policy.

In addition to a telecommuting agreement, contact your Property & Casualty insurance broker to ensure your company has the proper coverage it needs to be protected from cybercrimes.
We're proud to support the National Association of Women in Construction.

With 27,000 associates in 1,400 locations serving all 50 states, Ferguson understands the importance of making a positive impact in the communities in which we live and work. That's why we're proud to support NAWIC in its mission to strengthen and amplify the success of women in the construction industry. Learn more at ferguson.com.

Hilti is a privately held company providing leading products, services and software to professionals in the construction industry. With 29,000 team members in 120 countries—nearly 4,000 here in North America—we invest heavily in our people, training and culture.

Our performance-oriented, inclusive and caring culture makes Hilti a unique place to work. Learn, grow and build a better future with us.

Learn who we are, what we do, and how we give back to our communities at careers.us.hilti.com.
Women Leaders Are Shining Through Crisis

Women hold only 7% of the world’s government leadership roles, but several women leaders are drawing global praise for their skillful navigation of the coronavirus pandemic. In Germany, New Zealand and Taiwan – among other countries – women are being held up as role models of how to effectively guide countries through a public health crisis.

They’ve been lauded for their swift and decisive action, trust in science, and ability to make difficult decisions with empathy and compassion. As a result, they’ve succeeded in minimizing the impact of this disease on their countries.

Just what attributes and qualities led to these successes? These women are summoning the courage to make the hard decisions and inspire the support of their communities. I believe it’s because women excel at being the “voices of reason” when dealing with crisis.

Some of our greatest feminine strengths incorporate empathy, compassion, preparedness and an ability to collaborate and listen before making impactful decisions. Most importantly, female leaders know how to influence others to stay calm and think through an acute problem to find solutions that work for everyone. They can motivate their followers by reasoning rather than rousing, and they are more democratic in their leadership.

This is not a weakness, but an incredible strength. We must capture this moment in history, recognize that these women are making large-scale impacts during such a monumental crisis, and learn from their successes. What can we take away from their bold actions that will help us be better leaders on a less than global scale?

We Must Be Willing to Take Counsel from Experts

Women are intuitive, but our independent nature and overwhelming urge to prove ourselves can sometimes prevent us from listening to others. We are pretty darn smart, but we don’t know everything. Utilize discipline and creativity to strategically assess options through collaboration. Good leadership shows trust in your team. If you second-guess or override them at every turn – you won’t have a team. You’ll have robots.

Stop Shying Away from Decisive Actions

Women hesitate because they don’t want to make the wrong decision, finding this pressure to be paralyzing. What do you do if you can’t be sure what the right course of action is? You are going to have to tap into a unique style of confidence that is at once vulnerable and assertive – both empathetic and tough. Take risks in the face of risk. Our recent crisis has shown that sometimes there is no textbook answer, so we have to be bold and take action.

Take Care of the Vulnerable

Don’t ignore the anxiety people feel – this only makes things worse. We must be vigilant that every member of the team, from the mail room to the board room, is considered. Not everyone has the same resources, therefore, we should consider Simon Sinek’s wise words in his book, Leaders Eat Last: “Great leaders sacrifice their own comfort—even their own survival—for the good of those in their care.”

Control the Message

Address people directly and early. Don’t leave it up to hearsay and speculation, and don’t put this on your mid-level management. As a leader, you will be the one they look to, requiring you to respond
with a calm and truthful resolve. Remember, you are one to many, and they need to hear from you to understand what is coming and what you intend to do about it. Even if you don’t have a firm plan yet, it’s ok to say so. Make them part of the conversation by keeping them in the loop so they have the confidence that you are working diligently towards a realistic solution.

**Well Behaved Women Rarely Make History, and They Don’t Do It Alone**

Don’t be afraid to be a changemaker. “That’s the way it’s always been done” doesn’t mean systems and processes can’t, or shouldn’t, be improved. Deputize your people as “opportunity scouts” and tap into the collective knowledge of your front-line management. They may offer out-of-the-box ideas that may not be on your radar. So get radical, accelerate your efforts, and lead the way to innovation and a healthy business culture.

**Lead from the Front End of Reality**

Recognize the significance of events and implications to business and workforce, and don’t just sit back and “hope” it will go away. Urgency is a powerfully unifying force and can be used to your advantage. In times of crisis you’ve got to lead from the front and focus on SMART solutions.

**Keep the Lines of Communication Open**

If you want a truly cohesive team, try more transparency. Once considered “need to know” information, financial reporting should be for everyone. More than ever, people are interested in knowing the costs, sales, and financial strength of a company. This helps immerse them in the metrics of the business and gives them ownership in overcoming challenges and sustainable growth. If they know what’s at stake and how that impacts the quality of their career, they will be more accountable to the bottom line and more willing to be engaged in long-term gains.

**Be a Ray of Light**

Welcome to leadership! It’s glorious in the good times, but when things go sideways it’s the job nobody likes. You chose to be here, so the best thing you can do is have a positive and determined mindset. It will take everything you’ve got, especially on days when you feel like curling up in the corner with a bottle of vodka, but your people are counting on you. Make sure to celebrate the wins – no matter how small. Get creative and show your team – ALL of your team – that they are important and valued. This promotes contagious good will and solidifies loyalty throughout your ranks.

As leaders, we need to ask ourselves some important questions. Am I defining reality and creating hope in this unprecedented environment of challenge and change? Am I helping my people become the change agents we need, so we can be successful in difficult times? And do they truly know the score so they can actively engage in improving the situation?

As women, are we bravely stepping up and bringing our greatest feminine strengths to the workplace and our communities? In what ways can we act as harbingers of much needed change for a better world? I think the events of the past few months have shown that we are. Keep it up – the world is counting on us.

The great philosopher Winnie-the-Pooh has a few words worthy of sharing that are more relevant now than ever: “Promise me you’ll always remember: You’re braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think.”

Be well sisters and LEAD ON!

> Angela Highland, CIT, CPC
> Greater Orlando Chapter #73

Do you need help with your leadership strategy? Email me at angela@calltoactioncoaching.com and let’s get the conversation started.
Women in Modular Construction
By Zena Ryder

The modular construction industry is not afraid to challenge conventions. Women in our corner of the construction industry challenge conventions every day simply because of their gender. Here, thirteen women share their thoughts on the effect of their gender on their career, what they love about the industry, current challenges in the field, and the future of modular construction. It would be easy to have an entire story focused on each woman’s comments, but this article shares brief highlights of each conversation.

How is the Image of Modular Construction Changing?

Ewelina Woźniak-Szpakiewicz is the CEO and Managing Director of DMD Modular, based in Cracow, Poland. She’s also an inaugural member of the Modular Building Institute’s (MBI’s) European Council.

“Modular construction combines many different values and attributes,” she says. “The combination of challenges, innovation, experimentation, and international relationships yields unique solutions.”

The result is the improved image of modular construction. “More architects are becoming interested, and the projects are getting more exciting. This has accelerated the delivery of high quality, complex, innovative solutions and is sweeping away the old perceptions of ugly, cheap, temporary solutions.” Woźniak-Szpakiewicz says. “The hospitality market is a serious driver of this change in perception. When industry titans like Marriott or Hilton launch modular programs, it has a huge impact on the image of modular construction.”

How Does Modular Design Differ From Conventional Design?

Based in Chicago, USA, Angela Spadoni is the Director of Residential Architecture at Skender.

“In modular design, the architects and designers interact from the beginning with the construction and manufacturing team — even before schematic design. In conventional construction, architects often work in a bubble with consultants for quite some time before bringing the contractors on board.”

Although the process is different, the results are aesthetically comparable. “There’s nothing in my past work in conventional construction that I couldn’t do modularly. In fact, my interest in modular stemmed from my frustration that many architectural components for multi-family residential construction are repetitive. I hope as time progresses, we’ll standardize more of the repetitive elements such as bathrooms and kitchens, so we don’t have to spend so much time re-drawing those. Then we can focus more on elements like the exterior and be more creative there and push the boundaries, design-wise.”

How Can Diversity Help in Modular Construction?

“Right now, modular is the sexy part of construction. It’s exciting and fun,” says Kathy Wilmot, Co-owner of Wilmot Modular Structures, based in Maryland, USA. “I’m glad to see more women getting involved — more women contractors, architects, engineers.”

But being a woman in construction can be challenging.

“A man is automatically perceived as knowing what he’s doing. A woman has to prove that she knows what she’s talking about. So, my biggest advice to women entering this industry is to become an expert at what you’re doing, and know how to explain it succinctly and simply — so you come across as the expert you are.”

“Men in the industry can help,” Wilmot adds.

“Women can bring a different perspective to boards. Diversity of all kinds results in better decisions. Once men in leadership roles appreciate that, they’ll want to have more women and minorities involved.”
Why Is It a Good Time for Women to Get Involved?

“I’m used to being in uncomfortable situations and feeling out of my element. I’m an immigrant, a minority, a business owner, an architect,” says Sara Logan, the Vice President of Design at Volumetric Building Companies in Boston, USA.

“I walk into a room and people are often surprised — they have no idea how I fit in. I’ve felt somewhat of an outsider since I came to the United States, so being a woman in construction doesn’t seem any different. There still aren’t a lot of women in the industry and I would encourage them to get into it.”

Logan thinks that now is an especially good time for women to get involved.

“The modular industry is in its relative infancy, so gender roles are less-ingrained. You have more freedom to forge your own path and that’s one of the reasons this industry is so exciting to me. Everyone is blazing their own trail.”

How Can Education Help?

Mitzi Garcia is the Federal Contracts Manager for Modular Solutions in Arizona, USA.

“When I speak to girls and young women, they often don’t know what construction involves, or what modular construction is. I tell them about the many opportunities in construction that aren’t just hammering nails.”

As well as educating others, Garcia has benefited from education about modular construction herself.

“I came from an administrative background, and when I decided to stay in the modular industry, MBI helped me learn. They have classes, training opportunities, and will even take one-on-one time with you. Through their mentor programs, you can meet people to discuss what they’ve tried and learned.”

“Education is key. Going into schools, talking with vocational students, using MBI resources — and also using our own websites and social media. People are looking online for information. We can provide it and help educate people about modular construction.”

What’s Another Good Way to Learn?

“Find a mentor,” says Melissa Potter, a Journeyman Plumber at an ATCO facility in Calgary, Canada.

“When I was doing maintenance plumbing work for the University of Alberta, I worked with a group of older gentlemen. They taught me so many cool tricks! I was warned about one fellow, though. I was told he didn’t like women getting into plumbing. They avoided putting me with him,” Potter says. “Then, about eight months into the job, I got stuck with him. We ended up having a blast! I’ve been lucky — my gender has never been an issue.”

Potter loves learning, which is part of the appeal of working in modular construction. “Usually, a job-site is huge and you have a big area to work in by yourself. Modular is more challenging for a plumber. Here, you could have five or six people working in one room at the same time. It’s a quicker pace and we need to come up with safe solutions for tight working quarters.”

What Challenges Have You Faced With Modular Construction?

At ICON Architecture in Boston, USA, Kendra Halliwell is the Associate Principal, Practice and Design Team Leader.

“In general, you should be able to save four to six months of construction time by using modular construction. On one of our recent projects, the client’s goal was to get the building operational and rented out earlier, so off-site fabrication was the best option.”

That worked well and the building was rented out significantly sooner than would have happened if they’d used conventional construction. But there were logistical challenges. “There are very few
modular construction companies in the northeast and they’re very busy. Some of them are booked a year and a half into the future. Our fabricator was a five-hour drive away,” Halliwell says. “I’d love to see more modular factories serving this part of the country. The market is in need of more housing, and off-site fabrication may be the answer.”

**Is Cost a Challenge?**

Until recently, Zoe Kennedy was Marketing and Sales Manager for the UK subsidiary of De Meeuw, a large European modular manufacturing company. She’s now switched gears and is doing a Masters in Off-Site Housing Construction.

“The key advantage of modular construction is the consistent high quality. Modular can also produce time savings of up to 50% compared to conventional construction, which means quicker ROC [return of capital]. We still have to be competitive on cost, though. And I’ve seen off-site come in at 30% more expensive than conventional construction.”

To counter this cost challenge, Kennedy says that modular construction companies need to think like manufacturers. “Manufacturing companies need consistent volume, otherwise fixed overheads result in uncontrolled costs. Consistent throughput is the only way we are going to see off-site construction go mainstream and help solve the housing shortage.”

**Is Sexism a Challenge in Construction?**

“When I first started looking for a construction job, companies around here said they needed people,” says April Harmon, a framer at Volumetric Building Companies in North Carolina, USA.

“But as soon as they found out I was a woman, they said, ‘No, we can’t use you.’ I was told flat out that the problem was that I’m a woman. One person said, ‘That would be great if you’d work with us. Also, are you single?’ As soon as I didn’t want to date him, he didn’t want to hire me.”

Things are different at VBC. “I was able to get in here and prove myself. To some of the guys, I do still have to prove myself every day. A few will never come around.” Most co-workers have, though. “I love that my co-workers come to me to answer their questions. It took a while for some of them, but they know I know my stuff. That’s been very rewarding.”

**Are More Women Getting Involved?**

Ronda Orchard has worked in modular construction since 1989 when she started at R Homes. She is now the Lead in Final Finishing at an ATCO facility in Idaho, USA and has worked there for seven years.

“When I started my first job, there were a few people who took me under their wing and taught me how to build floors, frame walls, everything. Some of those people are now working here at ATCO. When I first started at R Homes, it was all men. I never had a problem with that. I just respected them, and they’ve always respected me back. It’s only here at ATCO that I’ve noticed more women getting involved. Here, we’ve got women in framing, in HVAC, in our final finishing area. Women are starting to migrate into modular construction and they’re finding that it’s good work.”

**What’s It Like To Work in a Modular Construction Factory?**

Shelly Coutu is a Production Worker at Metric Modular, in British Columbia, Canada. She’s worked in five different factory departments during her eight years there, including as a saw operator. She now spends some of her workday in the plant, and some helping with the company’s admin.

“It’s nice that I work eight-hour days indoors, sometimes ten, if there’s overtime. I have friends and family who work long, hard days outside on conventional construction sites. They think it would be good to have my job!” she laughs. “You do need to have a bit of a thick skin when you first start, though. The first couple of weeks were hard when I didn’t really know how to do very much, and didn’t know the safety procedures. There’s a big learning curve at the beginning. But I stuck it out and now I love working here.”
How Does Networking Help?

Phoenix Modular Elevator is based in Illinois, USA. Allison Allgaier is the Owner and President.

“We’re a teeny-tiny slice of the overall elevator market. There’s only one other company in the United States that makes modular elevators, but there are hundreds of conventional elevator companies. When contractors first discover us, they’re intrigued. But even if they hate the problems with site-built elevators and dealing with difficult elevator companies — it’s a case of the devil you know. With something new and unfamiliar to them, like modular construction, they don’t know what might go wrong.”

This current lack of awareness and acceptance of modular construction is partly why networking has been so important for Allgaier.

“MBI is a great network. We can be in the exhibition section at the World of Modular and everyone gets modular. The value proposition is very apparent to them. We have a lot of repeat customers who are MBI members.”

How Can Collaboration Help?

“I’ve asked general contractors, ‘If you could get modular manufacturers to do one thing, what would it be?’” says Dafna Kaplan, Founder and CEO of Cassette, a modular design-build startup based in Los Angeles, USA.

“A big one was the standardization of the MEP [mechanical, electrical, plumbing] connections on modules. It’s an investment for general contractors to learn on their first modular project. But that investment pays off less if, when they go to the next project, things are done completely differently.”

“As providers, let’s come together and make it easier for the bold GCs who are learning to work on modular projects. Let’s try to agree on some standard things, like connections. Now’s the time to do this, while the industry is still small. It’s on my to-do list this year to reach out to colleagues in steel modular. I believe that the industry is in a place that rewards collaboration and knowledge-sharing. That collaboration excites me. It’s a thrilling time to be involved with modular construction.”

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Founded in 1983, the Modular Building Institute (MBI) is the Voice of Commercial Modular Construction™. MBI is the international non-profit trade association serving modular construction. Members are manufacturers, contractors, and dealers in two distinct segments of the industry - permanent modular construction (PMC) and relocatable buildings (RB). Associate members are companies supplying building components, services, and financing. MBI strives to keep up with the latest trends of the modular/offsite construction industry and has expanded its membership over the years to include architects, owner/developers, and general contractors.
Sustainability – It’s Personal
by Doreen Bartoldus, PE, CCM, Assoc. DBIA, ENV SP

The focus on the need for sustainability has been subdued in recent years. However, current events including the COVID-19 pandemic and issues regarding equity have brought the need for fully defining and proactively engaging in real sustainable practices to the fore. The pandemic revealed for all to see that 1) the people hardest hit by the pandemic were the poorest and 2) when we shut down, the natural environment began a rebound of clean air and water and the return of species to areas they avoided in the past. Utilizing a sustainability strategy to move forward can make us more resilient, inspire more innovation, and keep us from returning to a status quo that is unsustainable.

A Personal Journey
I am a child of the 1970’s (giveaway). I was right behind the “hippies” of the time who were looking for peace not war, equal rights for women, and an end to pollution. Silent Spring, by Rachel Carson in 1962 ignited an environmental movement. Then came the Clean Air and Water Acts of 1970 and the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These laws made obvious impacts on the air and water where I lived on Long Island, on the border of New York City. There were bodies of water we could not swim in that we now can today, and the smog was so palpable, my eyes would sting when driving through the city limits after a “clean air vacation” with my cousins in Vermont.

So influenced, my education in Engineering followed an environmental path. My degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering now has me constructing water and wastewater treatment plants that meet the regulations I referenced above. When desiring to advance further, in the mid 2000’s, environmentalism was remerging in the form of climate change warning - notably the movie An Inconvenient Truth by Al Gore in 2006.

I opted for an MBA in Sustainable Business. This focused on business strategies using the triple bottom line of People, Planet and Profit. My final capstone project was called “Sustainable Project Delivery” to focus on clean construction. The capstone created an environmental report card for the construction phase (similar to the LEED process) for the project I was then working on. I became a LEED GA to fully comprehend the procedure (now expired). The goal was to create a process for Sustainability in Construction - in particular for Infrastructure projects. Only a few years later, the ENVISION Certification was developed by the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure (ISI), which addressed some of the items I had included in my research. I then became an ENV SP (Sustainability Professional) and became a trainer for this certification. I achieved my LEED GA in 2010, my MBA in 2011 and my ENV SP in 2013.

I also utilized the book Strategy for Sustainability – A Business Manifesto by Adam Werbach (Harvard Business Press 2009). This book has become a staple in my library. In it, Mr. Werbach focuses on how he helped several clients, including Walmart, develop strategies for true sustainability. In addition, he adds a chapter on developing your “Personal Sustainability Practice”. Mr. Werbach defined sustainability in broader terms than the triple bottom line. He saw a sustainable business as one that survived in perpetuity. He felt true sustainability was focused on four core tenets:

Social – Actions and Conditions that affect all members of Society,

Economic – Actions and Conditions that affect how people and business meet their economic needs,

Environmental - Actions and conditions that affect the earth’s ecology,

Cultural – actions through which communities manifest their identity and cultivate traditions

There is much to dive into as presented in this Strategy for Sustainability. I will do what I can briefly and leave you to find out more through his book.
True North for a Sustainable Business

Mr. Werbach sets out a technique for businesses to establish a distinct North Star goal – the strategic direction toward which an organization drives to reach greater sustainability. These are developed in a framework that includes what he calls STaR mapping, where each change that is discussed is analyzed as one of the following elements: Social change, Technological changes, and Resource changes. With that framework developed, he points to a TEN cycle – Transparency, Engagement, and a strong Network. These tools and techniques would result in what could be compared, for example, between a strategy for sustainability – such as plan for change – and a strategy for profitability – one that assumes the external environment will stay the same for 3 to 5 years. In other words, “built to last” does not translate to sustainable.

The project I used as a case study for my capstone had a True North. Through partnering, we developed high level project goals that included focus on the health and safety of all employees, a successful project that all would be proud of, the ability for employees to engage in problem solving, and of course protection of our surrounding environment while under construction. We also celebrated our diverse workforce through potlucks, where we would taste food from all different cultures and recipes were shared. This project – to this day – is the most successful I have ever worked on. On time, on budget and celebrated by the client.

A Personal Sustainability Practice (PSP)

We can all have an influence through our own personal sustainability practices. Mr. Werbach includes some inspiration for developing your own plan. He provides several steps. The following are a focused few:

1. Think of a personal sustainability practice that would improve your day, even in the smallest way.
2. Ask yourself if it’s repeatable, inspirational, sustainable and enjoyable.
3. Start small, start now and share what you are doing.

There are many ways we can positively affect our environment, sustain our health and improve day to day. I developed a personal sustainability plan that included a focus on health – eating organic and vegan – as well as professional – staying focused on diversity and equity in my work and staffing opportunities. My job as a construction manager on Water and Wastewater Infrastructure in NYC already focuses on environmental stewardship, so my influence is able to expand. My True North Star goal became the capacity to empower all women who follow me. NAWIC became a way to achieve that True North. And, bonus, our NAWIC Strategic Plan now includes a focus on diversity and inclusion, which will make us a more sustainable association.

My partner and I continue to do what we can in bigger ways, such as purchasing solar panels for our home. And of course, there is my Tesla!

I have always been environmentally conscious, and now I am expanding that to truly focus on overall sustainability. We are in this together, and a small step today can make a big difference tomorrow. Develop a Personal Sustainability Plan first, then you will be able to move on to influence others and eventually be a part of creating the sustainability plan for your company, our association, our communities, and our natural environment.

For more information:

Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI) - https://www.gbci.org/
Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure (ISI) - https://sustainableinfrastructure.org/
Or Bartnawic@gmail.com
Macomb Habitat for Humanity Builds Green and Affordable Home Ownership

By Rita Brown, NAWIC North Central Region Director

Serving local communities across all 50 U.S. states and in approximately 70 countries, the overriding Habitat vision is “of a world where everyone has a decent place to live”. In recent years, Habitat for Humanity International ranked as the 17th largest single homebuilder in the United States. Facilitating and building affordable housing is primary to the mission and vision of this faith-based non-profit. Closing $492M in revenue, Habitat has built a legacy of hope where potential homeowners volunteer their time and talents and invest in education as they access a reasonable mortgage and a well-built home of their own. But this isn’t a giveaway. It’s a get-dirty, all-in lifestyle change for many of the recipients of this opportunity. “Our homeowners are hardworking people from across age, ethnic, and social boundaries” says Mashell Carissimi, Board Chair, Macomb Habitat for Humanity, CEO of JMC Electrical Contractor, and incoming NAWIC North Central Region Director. Carissimi donates her time and expertise while marshaling much of the local business community as allies.

Macomb County, MI Habitat for Humanity builds on its mission with innovation in design and application and a heavy emphasis on green building practices. Like affiliate Habitat organizations across the country, Macomb benefits from the expertise and partnership of several women-owned construction businesses and NAWIC members, including both a current and an incoming Region Director. So, what is it that sets Macomb Habitat on a trajectory to 2.0 success?

Macomb County Habitat for Humanity sets an intentional path for building homes. “Besides being built safely and affordably, our homes are being built using as much energy efficient and Earth-friendly products and materials as possible” says Helen Hicks, Macomb County [MI] Habitat for Humanity CEO & President. “These practices are significantly better for our communities and the environment, and the energy efficiency of everything from our appliances to our windows and building materials add to the overall affordability factor for the eventual homeowners. A very good thing.”

Community involvement and volunteer expertise is the foundation of the success formula for all Habitat affiliates, and Macomb County is no exception. This affiliate of the International Habitat organization has developed partnerships and a production supply chain with student-built offsite construction. In this program, students build homes in two pieces as a semester-long project in their high school, under the direction of their instructors, and then donate their end product. Homes are designed and developed to fit specific sites and are craned into place above poured basements. Final carpentry and systems are completed onsite, with approved homeowners fully participating in their build. “Building community and giving back from the industry that has served me so well is one of the chief reasons I accepted the position of Board Chair” says Carissimi.
Container Builds

The Macomb affiliate has also garnered support from the stalworth Ford Foundation. An integral partnership between community, funding, and affiliate is driving the collaboration as team #HabiMac designs and advances to build container houses that fulfill the affordable housing mission of Macomb Habitat. “This is game-changing,” says Rita Brown, CEO of BCC+ and current NAWIC North Central Region Director. “This affiliate is innovating the very definition of what a Habitat home can be. Their partnership with the Ford Foundation and the can-do-getting-it-done attitude of team #HabiMac is enviable.”

There are local Habitat for Humanity affiliates in every state. For more information on your local projects, go to www.habitat.org and explore the many ways the organization and its allies are advancing affordable homeownership and green design.