

New York Real Estate Journal

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**Hoffmann Architects
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Moses Award from
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SPOTLIGHT: WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION

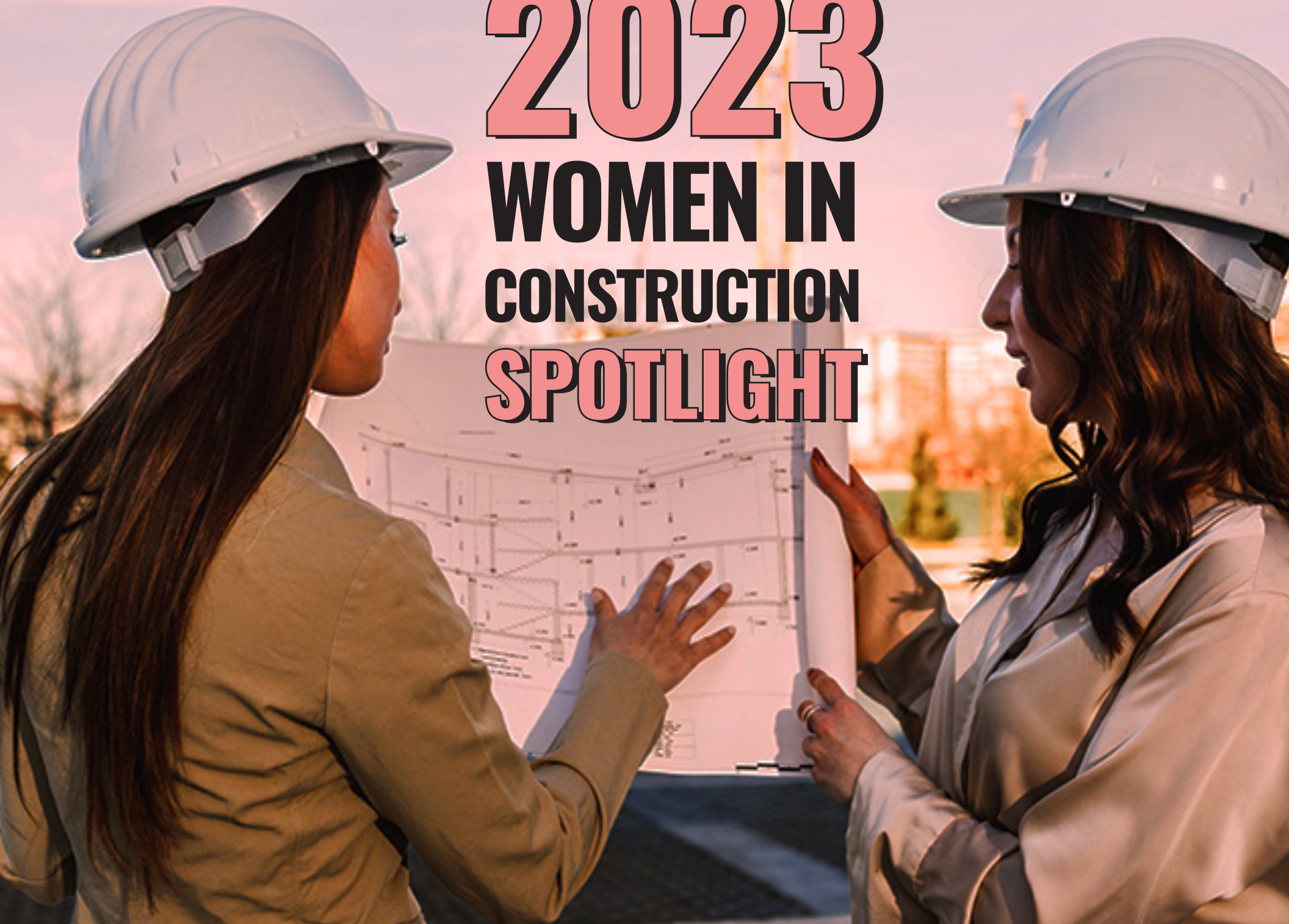
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2023 WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION SPOTLIGHT





Tarshia Champagne, CPM, NYARM
Asst. Dir. of Mgmt. Ops., Sr. Prop. Mgr.
Argo Real Estate

In the past year, what project or accomplishment are you most proud of? Despite the myriad challenges associated with any F.I.S.P./Local Law 11 project, the façade work we are doing at a large prewar co-op on West 101st St., concurrently includes a separate roof replacement, and is proceeding exceptionally well. As both project manager and managing agent, I am collaborating with a team of engineers, architects, and exterior restoration contractors who are on top of filings, as well as the physical work. Our goal of completing both the Local Law 11 work and roof replacement by the end of May 2023 is right on target!

What was a pivotal point in your career? The day I was promoted to senior property manager was epic! It was the ultimate recognition of hard work and commitment. My career entails wearing many hats, so there is never a dull moment, whether overseeing building operations, working with co-op and condo boards, or supervising capital improvement projects. I am especially pleased to be working for a firm that, for the past two years, has been cited by a prominent New York business publication in its “Best Places to Work” list. I love what I do and being acknowledged and paid for it is wonderful!



Isil Akgul
Associate
Cooper Robertson

How can AEC companies recruit more women? Companies need to be intentional and proactive in their efforts to recruit and retain women from diverse backgrounds. Recruitment is at the end of a pipeline that starts with high school education, mentorships, and internships. Companies should be present at career fairs and events in unusual schools with a more diverse student body, especially BIPOC women. Workplace culture also plays a significant role in the retention of women employees. Establishing mutual trust can allow for flexible hours, a better work-life balance, and more effective work. Highlighting individual strengths and giving women ownership of their projects will lead to more women in leadership roles.

What is your favorite building in New York? I’m originally from Istanbul, Turkiye. I came to New York for the first time in 2013

and did a tour of the High Line, starting from Hudson Yards and ending in the Meat Packing district. It was the first time I saw the Whitney Museum. I love contemporary art and the Whitney is a special place with its connectivity and relationship with the urban environment in an urban lot. Years later I came to New York to study and started working for the company that is part of the team that designed the Whitney. I still take friends and family who visit me on the same route to show them the High Line and the Whitney.



Nandar Godoy-Dinneen
Senior Associate
PJCArchitecture

What was a pivotal point in your career? In 2006 I moved from Ecuador to New York to pursue my master’s degree. What I thought was going to be a two-year adventure turned into a whole new life. After 16 years of living in New York, I’m still awestruck and giddy to wake up in the greatest city in the world. As an architect, the unique first-hand experience you can encounter on every street, and in every building, museum, and gallery is incomparable. I can’t emphasize enough how greatly New York City has influenced my life, career, and worldview.

What is your favorite building in New York? The Chrysler Building, an Art Deco masterpiece! The building’s crown and its seven radiating terraced arches make it so distinctive even within the crowded city skyline. It’s an outstanding piece of design and engineering.



Frances Graham
Senior Managing Director
Newmark

In the past year, what project or accomplishment are you most proud of? Our relocation of the Central Park Conservancy (CPC) to its new space on Fifth Ave. was a monumental transition. The firm occupied 14 E 60th St. as their ‘home base’ for the past 30 years and it was time for something new as they had outgrown that environment. We worked collaboratively to find their new, bright and understated open-concept office. They took to the space and enjoyed putting their personal touch by incorporating graphics of the park throughout the office. It was perfect for the CPC.

What was a pivotal point in your career? Following my design of an office addition for a

pharmaceutical company in Central New Jersey, I was approached with an opportunity to go into the field as a project manager, overseeing the construction process. Unbeknownst to me at the time of acceptance—I had found my calling. Being out in the field was eye opening experience. I was especially drawn to our role – bringing a concept to fruition, from paper to ground-up construction. Perhaps what made this most memorable to me was being the only female project manager working for a New Jersey construction firm at the time.



Olga Vinogradova
Associate
Troutman Pepper

Which professional associations or organizations would you recommend to women who are starting out in the AEC industry? The Professional Women in Construction (PWC) is a great organization for women who are starting out in the AEC industry. PWC has an incredible mentorship program that pairs a mentee with an accomplished woman mentor in a specific construction related field of mentee’s interest. PWC holds empowering, educational and networking events throughout the year and helps members to build important connections in the industry. PWC also provides support and advice to women about navigating and growing their careers in such a male dominated industry.

What is your favorite building in New York? My favorite building is the Flatiron Building. This building represents New York and what construction of skyscrapers in New York is all about. The Flatiron Building sits on the intersection of Fifth Ave. and Broadway on 23rd St. It is a skyscraper built in 1902 and designed by Daniel H. Burnham. The Flatiron Building has a unique triangular shape to fit into the corner plot. Although this skyscraper was built very quickly, in about one year, it was not without any difficulties: criticism of the odd shape and issues with the Department of Buildings during construction.



Rose Williams
Head of Client Solutions, The Americas
Unispace

In the past year, what project or accomplishment are you most proud of? As a part of Unispace’s Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and

Belonging (DEIB) and wellbeing initiatives, I have been instrumental in building out a strategy to expand the company’s supplier base to include more women and minority-owned businesses, and to enrich employee wellbeing in the workplace. DEIB and wellbeing are top of mind to many Unispace clients, so prioritizing these initiatives makes a measurable impact on employees, businesses, organizations and communities worldwide. I believe that being on the forefront of Supplier Diversity trends is a differentiator for Unispace and have worked tirelessly to make this a reality.



Marissa Dionne Mead
Associate Principal
Svignals + Partners

Which professional associations or organizations would you recommend to women who are starting out in the AEC industry? I absolutely encourage participation in industry-specific organizations like AIA and NOMA. These organizations offer so many ways to network, grow leadership skills, and contribute on a local, regional or even national level. AEC professionals have a lot to contribute outside our immediate professional world, as well; and for that reason, I recommend getting involved in local advocacy groups that are tangential to our industry, such as housing equity, land-use reform, preservation, park stewardship. The list goes on. Our home communities need our skills in creativity, collaboration and problem solving. Find an issue that you’re passionate about and get involved.



Bernadette Amarosa
Senior Construction Project Manager
L+M Development Partners

In the past year, what project or accomplishment are you most proud of? The project I am most proud of this year would definitely be my current project, Bronx Point, located in the South Bronx. I grew up in this neighborhood so it’s humbling to come full circle and give back to my community in an impactful way. It’s a different type of pride knowing that I’m building something that will improve the landscape of the neighborhood and the quality of life for a community I was once a part of. I’m incredibly grateful for my team where each one of them goes above and beyond to ensure the success of this project.