



Women in Construction



Therese M. Baer, P.E., principal engineer and president of **Baer Engineering and Environmental Consulting, Inc.** founded her company in 1992. Baer holds a B.S. in Civil Engineering from Rice University and she has 22 years of experience in civil and environmental engineering.

"Engineering can sometimes be challenging, but that's the fun stuff. Management of human resources is the most difficult challenge."

"I am responsible for the overall corporate management and commitment of corporate resources. As principal engineer, I am responsible for the overall project management, job execution and quality control. I also direct staff and resources to complete civil and environmental projects on time and on budget."

Baer added she has developed a strong background for solving problems within a regulated community. She has a significant appreciation of the regulated versus the regulator perspectives.

As a high school student, Baer's physics teacher encouraged her to study engineering, and her cousin, who worked at NASA, inspired her to become an engineer.

"Young women who are considering engineering and construction careers need to focus on their passion. If they enjoy their work, then the rest will come easy."



Sylvia Acevedo received her B.S. in Engineering from New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, NM and her Masters degree in Engineering from Stanford University. She is the president and CEO of **The Communicard, LLC.**

Acevedo started her company to pursue the idea of bridging the communication gap at the work site. She did extensive research across the US for all types of construction.

"I created a line of products for the construction industry that allows employers to communicate with non-English speaking workers without saying a word. Easy to use, the trade-specific communication tools are affordable and can be used right at the job site."

"After numerous prototypes and actual field testing with builders and contractors, I have created and launched the product line. I applied for patents for this new product line of trade-specific Construction Communicards."

"There are plenty of opportunities for women in construction, but it is competitive. Networks that support women in construction are not as broad, so women have to work hard to find the connections in the industry."

"Since there are not many women at the job sites, women still have to be comfortable being a trail blazer and being one of the few women at the construction site."



Jane M. Stansfeld, FAIA, RIBA, earned her B.A. in Architecture from the Bartlett School of Architecture University College in England and Architecture at Newcastle University in London. Today, she owns her own architecture firm, **J. Stansfeld & Associates.**

"Like most professional architects, I have embraced a lifetime of learning, constantly addressing new ideas and materials to make sure that designs are the best and constructed in the best manner possible at the time of construction."

"I draw, design, communicate, write specifications and watch construction in progress. I love it. Even though the projects are, of necessity, small in comparison to the mega projects of my earlier career, I find immense satisfaction in the process of realizing a project."

Stansfeld added that it is a challenge to blend art, science and technology.

"Often it is hard to contain a design vision and to prevent it from being contaminated by over-enthusiasm."

"A young women should go for it, if she wishes to pursue a career in architecture. I believe that by acting as though the profession is wide open you will find that it is."

"Sometimes you will find that it is your abilities and enthusiasm which makes you the one who opens the doors, and when you do so, you will find they are already unlocked."



Susan G. Coe, the office manager/bookkeeper for **Robert Coe Builders** spent her college years at St. Edwards and UT Austin. Her department includes job costing for every penny spent, payables/receivables, typing proposals and contracts, human resources and lending an ear for customer compliments and complaints.

"I love seeing a completed remodel with satisfied clients. I also like that I can tell the boss exactly what is on my mind."

Coe said the most challenging aspect of her job is juggling routine responsibilities as business owner, stepmother, and wife. She is also learning a new software program, called Tracework, to better track job costs.

"I would like to see improvement in formal education. It is important that field employees can read blueprints and perform complex mathematical calculations on the spot."

"If women are interested in remodeling, they need a good education. Get out there and do some volunteer carpentry work. It's a great way to learn how the field personnel work and give back to your community."



Carol Baker, the marketing director at **Capitol City Insurance Agency/The Insurance Store** provides information to builders, trade contractors, and vendors about the general business insurance programs that her agency offers.

"I began my career in the construction industry in 1992, when I went to work for the **Texas Association of Builders (TAB)** as their Administrative Director. Then I worked for a warranty company as

a mediator between builders and unhappy homeowners."

Baker serves as the vice president of membership and she is on the board of directors at the **Home Builders Association of Greater Austin.** In addition, she is on the board of directors for TAB.

"The most challenging aspect of my job is getting builders and trade contractors to understand how they can best protect their business assets within this litigious society."

"I would highly recommend the homebuilding industry to young women who are trying to make a decision about their career paths. Some of the most wonderful people that I have ever known are in this industry."

"Our industry makes a difference. We actually provide the "American Dream" of home ownership for Texas citizens."

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