

WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION

As we grow at Welty, more and more women join our ranks. Each year we are putting more boots on the ground sized with 'W' on the tag. That 'W' stands for the women of Welty who advance our industry. Currently, in the United States, 9.2 percent of all construction workers are women. That's the highest percentage EVER. Building a name for ourselves in this fast-paced industry, we wouldn't be where we are today without all the hard work and dedication of our leading ladies. In honor of Women in Construction Week, March 3 – 9, we wanted to thank the women in our industry for the impact that they make.

To mark Women in Construction Week, we asked the women of Welty to share their individual stories on how they made their way into the industry and what this means to them.



Q: Why did you choose to pursue a career in the construction industry?

I was eager to experience and help utilize LEAN engineering in the construction industry.

Q: Why do you love what you do?

Working with the people, making sure they have the tools and support to be most effective, and seeing these awesome spaces come from nothing, are all reasons I love doing what I do.

3. What do you hope will be your legacy in the construction industry?

Getting people to think differently, to question the status quo, to be open-minded to new perspectives.

4. What problems do you enjoy solving?

The problems that wreak the most havoc, that have multiple layers, the ones that people accept as just the way things are.

5. Where do you come up with your best ideas?

In my dreams, sleeping, and sometimes in the shower.

6. What is the proudest moment of your career?

One of my proudest career moments (actually, a couple)...

Working with people who claim to be nay-sayers of Lean practices, but are open enough to learn and look at things from a new perspective, and then end up being advocates themselves. That is so rewarding.

7. How do you give back to the community?

Mentoring young women through the Women in Engineering program at the University of Akron. Teaching dance to underprivileged youth in Akron.

8. What do you enjoy most about your career?

I love breaking things down or taking them apart to better understand how they work, whether it's an object, a problem, a process, whatever.

Roxanne Sedlak, Lean Innovation Leader

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Q: What was the hardest challenge for you to overcome in the first few years of your career?

I had been employed by BFGoodrich since I graduated from High School and had worked in the office. I worked in a number of different areas and learned a lot about the tire industry. When I started with Welty, it was a whole new industry that I had to learn about. I was used to doing secretarial work but now had to learn about construction. I started out as just the receptionist and helped out with proposals. I then started working on projects as a Project Assistant and have over the years taken on a number of different duties and jobs.

Q: What suggestions do you have to maintain a healthy work/life balance?

I have always been a hard worker and dedicated to doing the best job I can do. I am very responsible in regards to coming to work every day, being on time and doing the job to the best of my ability. This gives me a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. I guess my best advice is to always give your job your all and realize that you have a responsibility to your employer to do what you are getting paid to do (8 hours a day and 40 hours a week). Whatever it takes and if you need to do a little extra, you do it and if you are asked to do something that doesn't pertain to your job, you do it. And when you leave work, focus on your family and ones that you love and do the same for them that you do for your job, give it your all. Things have a way of working out if you focus on each and always try to do your best.

Q: What is your greatest accomplishment and what helped you achieve it?

I have worked at two different companies during my lifetime, BFGoodrich and Welty. At each I have always done the best job I could do and have never been afraid to learn new things and take on new responsibilities. Here at Welty I have come so far from where I started. I have learned how to do my job well and how to be a project assistant/receptionist to the best of my ability. I have numerous tasks that I do every day here and hard work has been what helped me achieve it and good people helping along the way. I am very passionate about my position here and I love what I do. I also have been married for 41 years to a wonderful man who supports me in every way and has always been there to listen and give advice. So I guess my advice would be to always work hard, do the best you can do, and be happy and enjoy what your doing.

Q: What is your fondest industry memory?

One year at our Christmas Party at Prestwick Country Club, during Don Taylor's talk after dinner he mentioned something about the work that I had been doing for the Cleveland and Columbus offices and said a number of very nice things about me and my work here at Welty to the whole group. When he was finished, the entire room, hundreds of employees stood up and gave me a standing ovation. I was so overwhelmed at the kindness, caring and love that was shown to me at that moment, I will never forget it. It was such a special moment that I never expected and one that I will always remember.

Q: If you could do it all over again, would you?

Yes, I was truly fortunate to have been in the right place at the right time when this job opportunity came along. My husband and I lost our jobs the same year. He lost his in January and myself in June, 1997 due to downsizing and relocation. I feel blessed to have been given the opportunity to work here and to still be here 20 years later. Don Taylor and Jerry Welty gave me a job and a chance at a new career when I needed it most and I will never forget that. It has been a wonderful experience and I would do it all over again.

Anita Buchanan, Project Assistant/Receptionist

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Q: Why did you choose to pursue a career in the construction industry?

I spent the last 11 years in building materials with Alside. When this opportunity arose, it seemed like a really good opportunity to learn a new part of the building industry and a logical next step with the background I have in building materials.

Q: Why do you love what you do?

I feel like there's never a dull moment. Many people look at it and say "Numbers?! Yawn..." but to me they're reliable and can tell a story. There's always some challenge, some problem to figure out. It allows me to put that nosey streak I have to work for good.

Q: What problems do you enjoy solving?

I enjoy solving problems that take a lot of work to figure out. I like the process of arriving to the solution, including discovery. When it's all done, I can stand back and see the results of my work and be proud of that.

Q: How do you give back to the community?

I'm very heavily involved with my church—packing meals for children, childcare for our recovery program, and I facilitate a Wednesday night women's group.

Q: What do you enjoy most about your career?

I love that there's always something new to learn. Every time I think I have it figured out, it changes.

Q: What are the things you depend on or that just make life easier?

I depend on my family and the gym. My husband handles the back end of the day with our children and that allows me the opportunity to breathe and get to the gym to keep myself healthy.

Christa Wegner, Job Cost Analyst



Q: Where do you come up with your best ideas?

Running, while drinking my first cup of coffee for the day and cleaning my home. When my hands or body are in motion, my mind calms and I'm able to better reflect!

Q: What do you enjoy most about your career?

Daily, I'm reminded of the challenges and rewards of my occupation. Hired into Welty Building Company for operational continuous improvement, resistance to change or improvement is inevitable; however, Welty's culture has taught me that challenges are enjoyable and often

rewarding because influence has the opportunity to blossom into functional excellence.

My career at Welty has shown me gaining trust from my coworkers is invaluable. It's through their trust I'm able to influence and perform my job to the standard of excellence Welty personifies. I am grateful to have this career and all the challenges that accompany it!

Q: What are the things you depend on or that just make life easier?

Faith. Reflection. Laughter. Sunshine. Butterfly kisses from my daughter, Libbe.

Lindsay Lenze, Center of Excellence Specialist



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Q: Why did you choose to pursue a career in the construction industry?

I have been involved in construction since I was a child. My father and uncle did everything from building additions, installing roofs and laying carpet in commercial settings. They would take me on jobs and I was the cleanup girl. I still love the smell of wood cut by saws and the smell of new carpet

Q: Why do you love what you do?

Being a property manager is service based so I help people all day long.

Q: What do you hope will be your legacy in the construction industry?

That people will remember me because of the kindness I show them and how my expertise makes a tenant's work day as comfortable as possible.

Q: What problems do you enjoy solving?

I like to solve building problems that take some investigation. Sometimes you need to be creative and intuitive to find a solution.

Q: What is the proudest moment of your career?

Back in the late 90's when I was doing tenant improvements, my father's company did multiple jobs for the company I worked for. I got to manage him during these jobs. We hit every deadline. He still laughs and calls me the little dictator. He told me that I was a good project manager and I was proud.

Q: What is your fondest industry memory?

During my teenage years I was my father's assistant when he managed apartments. While I was turning suites or painting/sweeping stairwells, I loved to listen to his joyful whistling.

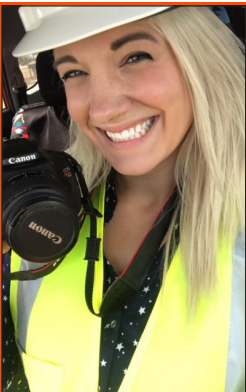
Q: How do you give back to the community?

I have done volunteer work at CAMP Cheerful and the Akron Food Bank. I also donated my time on the Executive Committee Board on IREM's Northern Ohio Chapter serving as a co-chair for Community and Public Relations programs.

Q: What do you enjoy most about your career?

That no two work days are the same.

Julie Parsons, Property Manager



Q: Why do you love what you do?

I love what I do because I work for a company that exemplifies a high performing work place. I am surrounded by incredibly smart, driven and dedicated leaders and teammates. The people around me strive to give their best to every task and project. They encourage me to learn, grow and set my passion ablaze. Working with thought leaders has helped me to be a better strategist and has amplified my creative talents. I aspire to be like the influential people I work with, most of them hard working women. Loving what you do is a huge part of gaining success; loving what you do and working for a great company with great people, makes that success much more achievable.

Brittney Bradner, Marketing Coordinator

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Q: Why did you choose to pursue a career in the construction industry?

I never thought about considering a career in the construction arena, however, when I started working in economic and community development for a municipality, we worked a lot with developers and would frequently have to deal with issue relating to construction and permitting. Then, I got involved with brownfield redevelopment projects where we would bid the work out ourselves so I had first hand involvement with contractors.

Q: What problems do you enjoy solving?

We are advisors and planners for our clients. They come to us when they have issues they cannot solve on their own. At inSITE, we have lasting relationships with our clients that span years, and they know they can rely on us to help them grow their business, increase their tax base, find financing and get property redevelopment for the betterment of the region. I can't imagine doing anything else!

Q: How do you give back to the community?

I've always been involved in philanthropy and am a current board member and fundraising chair for the Tinker's Creek Watershed Partners, board member for CASA, Court Appointed Special Advocates and the Woodridge Foundation.

Jennifer Syx, President, inSITE Advisory Group



Q: Why did you choose to pursue a career in the construction industry?

I studied Interior Design at the University of Akron with the intent to focus my career on Green Design so that I could play an active part in managing our natural resources. Though I never did become an interior designer, I do have my LEED Green Associate accreditation and hope to use my knowledge on any future LEED projects at Welty.

Q: Why do you love what you do?

One of the reasons I love what I do is that the building projects Welty chooses to become involved with offer so many benefits to our community. It is very inspiring to be a part of a company that makes such a positive impact to others in the community.

Q: What do you enjoy most about your career?

I especially enjoy working and spending time with all of my co-workers - they are all very nice, knowledgeable and always helpful. I also enjoy and appreciate the continuing education and growth opportunities offered at Welty.

Q: What are the things you depend on or that just make life easier?

I depend on computer programs such as Excel and DocuSign that make so many every day tasks much quicker and easier to complete with less room for error.

Leah Franchi, Estimator

