



EDiS Company Celebrates Women In Construction: An Interview with Jaclyn DiDomenico

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We sat down with our own Jaclyn DiDomenico to listen to her experiences and insights as a young woman owning the title of Project Engineer at EDiS Company. What have we learned, where do we see the construction industry heading, how can we empower and encourage more young women to enter this world of exciting opportunity?



Q.: What is your role at EDiS Company? What was your most challenging project that you've completed and/or what is the most challenging aspect of your role?

A.: My role as Project Engineer at EDiS Company involves working closely with the Interiors Department to help manage quick turn-around, fast-paced projects. Combining my previous experience as a Project Manager specializing in exterior design and landscape design with my honed sense of creativity, my current role involves working closely with clients to meet design



expectations. When I joined the EDiS family, the biggest hurdle I faced was learning the language of construction management. While my previous career experience prepared me for this industry, I had to wade through an entirely new set of technical terms and methods on my journey to becoming a Project Engineer. I was fortunate to have an astute and meticulous mentor, Martha White, who continues to teach me lessons and gives me great insights on what it means to be a pro in this industry.

Q.: How did you know construction was what you wanted to pursue as a career? What was your ‘Ah-ha’ moment? Who or what influenced you to pursue a career in construction?

A.: Before entering the world of construction management, I was the manager of a salon and spa. After the salon I managed closed, I was thrust into the job market and landed in construction management – a field I never considered would be such a perfect fit for my abilities. What kept me in this industry is the fast-paced and hectic nature of project management, something that would scare many people off, but an atmosphere in which I can excel. I enjoy the rapidly evolving nature of my work, the fact that every project is a brand-new experience, and that I belong to a company that values my work. EDiS goes a long way in welcoming my ideas, challenging my professional expertise, and lifting me up as both a woman and someone who didn’t start out knowing that this industry would become my home.

Apart from my DIY-attitude and fierce prerogative in owning my role as Project Engineer, I owe a lot of who I am today to my father. My father was and continues to be an inspiration in my life because I was his helping hand growing up. If he needed help repainting the house or rebuilding the shed, I was always there to assist. Growing up in a house of sisters, I took the initiative in helping him as well as taking on home improvement projects on my own. His nurturing of my handy work helped influence where I am today because I learned from a young age that I am capable of anything I put my mind (and elbow grease) to. Even after moving out of the house, I continued to approach home improvement projects with a can-do attitude; an outlook I still employ to this day as I take on my own projects in my own household.

What attracted me to working at EDiS Company was the fact that it is a family-run business. Family is everything to me, so feeling more than just being part of a team is what keeps me motivated and excited to give each project I work on my everything.

Q.: How has the workplace culture changed since you began your career in construction and what changes would you like to see happen?

A.: One aspect I noticed early into my tenure at EDiS was how accepting and welcoming of women this company is. Having experienced workplace discrimination based on my gender elsewhere, working here has been a revitalizing breath of fresh air. Not having to go that extra mile to prove myself solely due to the fact that I am a woman allows me to focus on my work instead of trying to break into the “Good Old Boys Club” traditionally akin to this industry. EDiS empowers and celebrates its female employees and that validation makes me feel appreciated for my abilities, my accomplishments, and helps to propel me to greater achievements.



Q.: What is a key resource for someone who is interested in a career in STEM, or more specifically, construction? What organizations, websites, or opportunities empower women entering this career and how can young women use these to their advantage?

A.: My biggest piece of advice is to find a mentor and ask them every question under the sun. I am fortunate in working directly with an amazing, accomplished woman, Martha White, who has been there for me since the start. Becoming an expert in Interiors didn't happen overnight, and I had a ton of questions when I started, so having a mentor to show me the ropes, tricks, and tips was a huge boon and a cornerstone of my ongoing success.

Finding communities and organizations that celebrate women in the construction industry is as easy as an Internet search. You have to take the initiative and forge your own path, so the onus is on you to find your community or to create one if it doesn't already exist. My stepmother has held a career in pest control, another sector that is traditionally male-dominated, and yet she's found a community for women in pest control to which she continues to belong. With a little research, you will quickly find that you aren't alone and other women are here to bolster your career, validate your experiences, and act as a community for your profession.

Q.: What advice do you wish you had going into a career in construction? What would you tell a young woman just entering undergrad as a STEM major?

A.: You will know if this is the career path for you ASAP. The best way I can describe the construction management industry is that it is very 'sink or swim', and to succeed, being a self-starter is what will keep you afloat. Identifying not only your passion, but a passion you can sculpt a career from is paramount when considering pursuing a STEM-related path. Being relentless in learning, doing, and making is what will gain you recognition and guarantee your success, so if you can easily find inspiration in this industry; my advice is to run with it. You will find that results are your best defense against people who second-guess your capabilities, so identifying your passion and owning your work will quickly build rapport, respect, and trust in the workplace (and in life).