



# Women IN CONSTRUCTION

**Carol Schary**  
President and Owner  
Nathan Kimmel, Co. LLC.  
World Trade Center, NY

Woman-Owned Business since 1996. Carol purchased her family business which started in 1956, from her greatest mentor, her father and built an award winning industry leader.



PIONEER | COLLABORATE | SUPPORT | CULTIVATE

## FROM HIGH HEELS TO HARD HATS



When I began my construction business career, there were very few women in offices or job sites.

I went to industry conventions and sat in meetings where I was typically the only woman in attendance.



Things have changed a lot in the last 20 years.

It all changed for me when I went to Florida for my first AWCI Committee Week. Tired and hungry after the cross-country trip, I went to the hotel café to have lunch. When I walked in, a lady named Ann Daly, a women owner of a large construction company in Canada, waved to me and asked me to join her for lunch.

At that lunch, I had an opportunity to ask her how I could be successful in this male-dominated industry. What she shared with me gave me the insight and the strength to succeed.

- Firstly, she said that when you go to meetings, in the beginning, just listen because it's a new thing for men to have a woman in their meetings. After you get used to it, they will get used to you, and then you can gradually increase your participation.
- She suggested that men tend to think in a straight line from point A to point B. Women tend to meander. Therefore, talk to men in the manner and sequence they are used to hearing.
- Knowledge is king; the more you know, the more you are respected. You need to know as much if not more about their needs and the products you are selling.
- Do not try to be one of the "guys." Be your feminine self. You can go from high heels to hard hats with steel-toed boots easily.

When Ann passed away years later, I wrote a note to her sons, who had taken over the business. It told them what their mother did for me. I would never have been as successful as I am today without having that wonderful conversation with this fine lady.

Now, of the over 10 million construction workers in the US, just over one million are female. That number is growing every year.

When I am at job sites, I see more and more women in various positions. I have also developed relationships with women owners of construction companies that are WBE's (Woman BusinessEnterprise), as is NKC.

Companies are hiring more ladies in their sales force. I am now not the only lady in meetings or at conventions. But I am proud to have led the way to the world of today.

I especially remember the time I was leaving a board meeting of the Foundation of Walls and Ceilings. The guys were talking about going to the bar for a drink, and one of them turned to me and said, "Come with us, Carol, you're one of us, please join us." I had made it into their world!



Being in steel-toed boots and a hard hat mixed with a " high heels" feminine side is an easy combination for success!

Happy Women in Construction Week !