



2018 Women in Real Estate and Construction Services: Tara Bono, EmPower Solar

March 20, 2018 - Spotlights

Name: Tara Bono

Title: Manager

Company Name: EmPower Solar

Years in your current field: 10

What professional organizations or associations are you a member of? Long Island Solar Energy Industry Association, C3E Women in Energy, HIA, LIA, LIBI

What was your most notable project 2017?

After several years of planning and development, we completed a 1MW solar project in Brentwood for the Sisters of St. Joseph. The system is the largest solar array in the town and will offset 60% of the property's energy and allow the Sisters to save on their building's electric costs with no upfront investment. It was an amazing opportunity to work with the Sisters to make their property more sustainable and to educate them about the impact they have made by switching to a renewable energy source.

What trends are you seeing so far this year in your field?

Over the last few months, we have seen an increase in demand for solar projects on commercial buildings which is due in part to the introduction of low cost financing and programs like community solar. Community solar is now available in our region so commercial building and property owners can now earn new revenue by becoming a host-site for a solar project. The owner of the solar project pays the building owner an annual hosting fee which can be used towards capital improvement projects.

On the residential side, we have seen a shift towards more ownership versus renting solar panels which provides greater long-term savings to the homeowner. This is in part due to the fact that there are more financing products available including local credit unions like the Nassau Financial Credit Union Solar Loan.

When I am not working I am....

Travelling or hiking Long Island's forests and beaches with my family!

What was your greatest professional accomplishment in 2017?

In 2017, EmPower Solar received the SunPower Residential Regional Dealer of the year award. Out of 450 dealers, we were proud to receive this top award on the East Coast. Receiving this award was in part due to my department's efforts in boosting our customer satisfaction score to 92; one of the highest in the country, increasing our branding presence on social media, and continuing high-quality solar installations.

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