



2019 Women in Building Services: Carisima Koenig, CannonDesign

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Name: Carisima Koenig, AIA

Title: Senior Vice President

Company Name: CannonDesign

How many years have you been in your current field? 19 years

List up to three CRE organizations that you are currently a member of:

American Institute of Architects;

Co-chair of AIA New York Professional Practice Committee

What was your greatest professional achievement or most notable project in the last 12 months?

This fall, Pratt Institute will open Emerson Hall, a dynamic new residential hall for its students. I'm extremely proud to lead the CannonDesign team working with Pratt Institute and hMa to create this building.

The typical dormitory is based upon a double loaded corridor which may solve some problems through its efficiencies but creates additional problems of community, self-identification, relationships and a host of other issues in the life of a college student.

In this project, we sought to create a shared community experience where students are not placed in the position of binary choice. By creating traditional doubles as sleeping rooms with a series of compartmentalized toilet/bathing facilities outside the rooms, a student's privacy can be maintained.

This design solution solves issues of gender politics; identity; and religious diversity. It also aides in building community for first year students—a programmatic solution drove design, where design supports the core values of the institution.

What trend(s) do you predict to dominate your industry in 2019?

The design and construction industry will continue to evolve in positive ways regarding gender and

opportunity equity and will also further increase focus on sustainability. As we learn and understand more about the current state of these issues in the industry, further action and positive change will come forward.

At the same time, I see higher education institutions also shifting their needs and focus when it comes to capital improvement. Discussions have shifted to focus on inclusivity, engaging quiet learners, and how immigration reform has and will impact enrollment. These shifts will continue to influence higher education in 2019.

Which of your philanthropic endeavors are you most proud of?

I'm proud to serve on the Board of Directors for Saint Saviour Catholic Academy. As an architect, it's important for me to understand projects from the owner's side, and this role enables me to do that. This past summer, the board helped navigate the school's renovation of its library and classroom inventory. It was an invaluable experience for me and it's wonderful to give back in this way.

What does it mean to you to be a team player?

Architecture is a team sport, so being a team player is critical to success in my role. For me, a team player knows how and when to listen, is willing to trust others, always credits the larger team for success, and isn't afraid to take risks for the team's collective good.

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