



2019 Women in Building Services: Joelle Kirchick Nelson, Thornton Tomasetti

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Name: Joelle Kirchick Nelson, P.E.

Title: Vice President

Company Name: Thornton Tomasetti

How many years have you been in your current field? 14

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

ASCE 7-16 Wind Load Subcommittee

ASCE 7-22 Wind Load Subcommittee

ASCE 37 Committee

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

With a background in forensic engineering, I led several investigations into the structural collapse of cranes. Oftentimes, these crane failures could have been prevented, and recognizing that, I decided to make crane safety the focus of my career. I took on a new role at the firm as head of crane and erection engineering for the New York metro area, a position that previously did not exist. I have been working diligently to improve site safety by correcting engineering errors, insuring that proper precautions and protocols are observed in an effort to minimize the risk of accidents.

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

Being a team player means working with a group toward a common goal. It also means taking advantage of the breadth and diversity of knowledge and experience of the entire group to achieve what one could not achieve alone. It requires humility to recognize one's own weaknesses and to appreciate others' strengths. In this industry, teamwork is essential.

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

There will be a strong push for reducing the number of construction accidents. In recent New York City construction accidents, the responsible party (general contract, crane operator, master rigger) is being held accountable to a higher degree. We are seeing New York City officials take a harder line

and pushing to revoke licenses or pressing criminal charges. OSHA reports that over 20% of private industry worker fatalities in 2017 were in construction. It is time for change.

Which of your philanthropic endeavors are you most proud of?

I spent several years volunteering with developmentally disabled youth in my community.

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