



PWC begins second year of mentorship program at Cathedral High School

January 15, 2014 - Design / Build

On Nov. 13th, Professional Women in Construction (PWC) began its second year of mentorship programs with a presentation by PWC board members and supporters at Cathedral H.S. The event, part of the school's Women in Leadership program, took place on one of Cathedral's ongoing career and enrichment days.

Principal Maria Spagnuolo said, "This shows that with the correct education, drive and willingness you can do whatever you want. We're giving students leadership skills, showing that they shouldn't second guess themselves."

Marguerite Kiely, who organizes Women in Leadership as chair of business and IT and director of job placement, said, "It's wonderful to see women of commitment, passion and courage. When the students think of construction, careers as architects, engineers and estimators may not come to mind but these are paths they could look into."

PWC president Lenore Janis told the girls that PWC exists "to let all of you know that there is an industry out there for YOU." She spoke of the improving, but still too low number of women engineers and the growing numbers of women architects and construction managers. "Major corporations are looking for women with the skills they need," she said. "If you want to go forward, we have the people who can help show you the way. Women in this industry are here to stay."

Barbara Armand, president and CEO of Armand Corp., discussed the long upward climb propelled by "grit, hope and confidence" that enabled her to grow her company from one to 25 employees with major projects in Pennsylvania, N.J. and N.Y. "What happened to me definitely can happen to you," she said.

Nancy Czesak, R.A., first VP of Tishman, an AECOM Co., advised all to be aware that mentors are everywhere; ask questions and listen to the answers; accept that you can change your mind; and know that "you're better than you think you are."

Nicole Hunter, project manager, HNTB Inc., said that it's all right to try different venues: "a career can have ebbs and flows and still stay on track." She advised all to "be true to yourself and your passion" and share what you learn with others.

Elaine Freeman, a financial planner for Ameriprise Financial, told the students that she "helps people simplify and systemize their world to build for a brighter future" using analytical, interpersonal, sales and communication skills.

Kathleen Contes, student council vice president for 2014 and an officer with Future Business Leaders of America was glad to have a chance to "look at the struggles and accomplishments of women" and see that "nothing is impossible."

Student council treasurer Nyoka Myers found the event, "a good way to show us that we're here for a reason. It's empowering for the leaders to come to us and show us what they've done."

For information on PWC call 212.486.7745, visit www.pwcusa.org/ny or email pwc@pwcusa.org. PWC is a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization founded in 1980.

Shown in the front row (from left) are: H.S. seniors Kathleen Contes, Karen Castro, Crystal Ponce and Nyoka Myers. Shown in the back row (from left) are: Spagnuolo; Cristina Agudelo, senior; Nicole Hunter, HNTB; Elaine Freeman, Ameriprise Financial; Janis; Nancy Czesak, RA, Tishman, an AECOM Co.; Barbara Armand, Armand Corp.; and Kiely.

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