



## 2019 Women in Building Services: Merilee Meacock, KSS Architects

February 19, 2019 - Spotlights

Name: Merilee Meacock, AIA, PP LEED AP

Title: Partner

Company Name: KSS Architects

How many years have you been in your current field? 28

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

AIA,  
Chair Cranbury Township Zoning Board,  
Princeton Future

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

My most notable professional achievement is creating an exceptional environment extending learning, life, and play into the community for Bancroft Neurohealth. Bancroft's 80-acre campus was designed around sensory experience and connection to nature easing transitions and offering choice to individuals with autism and intellectual and developmental disabilities. Our design approach reforms the architectural context to honor the unique sensibilities of these individuals, crafting gentle transitions, pattern languages, and a sense of security allowing them to become their best and highest selves. My approach to practice is born of my belief in and application of an architecture that serves humanity.

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

Increasing project complexity will continue exponentially in 2019 as a direct result of non-traditional funding sources, complex stakeholder relationships, and intersecting programs and building uses. Taking a meta view, we see society's desire for connection driving this change. Connectivity compels consumer demand for immediacy, requiring localized global distribution and centralized urban centers on more complex sites. Connectivity sparks innovation at the intersections of disciplines where interactive collisions can serendipitously occur and fosters engagement amongst a diverse population. Building community, fostering collaboration, and facilitating human connection

occurs at varying levels whether in elementary schools, higher education, workplace or industry.

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

Being a team player means to give everyone a voice and find mechanisms to allow that to happen. I believe that we can not succeed and grow in quality as an organization without empowering every individual within the firm. I have been instrumental in the development of our Practice Groups to provide a framework that offers employees the structure, agency, and space to advance architectural practice. These groups consist of individuals across operational teams, disciplines and experience levels who are passionate about specific initiatives to facilitate change, advancing the firm's impact-centric mission and vision and transform architecture.

Which of your philanthropic endeavors are you most proud of?

Last year, upon completion of the Bancroft campus, we undertook a significant fundraising effort to support the "ONE can change the World Campaign" and raised \$25,000 to help fund the capital campaign for the campus expansion. For several years prior, our firm participated annually in the Bike for Bancroft event, a 10-65 mile ride on varying routes throughout Burlington Country. Although personally exhilarating, the impact we were able to make last year as an active fundraiser leading up to Bancroft's annual Butter Fly Ball was even more rewarding than we could have ever imagined.

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