



2020 Women in RE: Leticia Blaya Fornataro, SWBR

October 20, 2020 - Spotlights

Name: Leticia Blaya Fornataro

Title: Senior Associate, Architect

Company Name: SWBR

Associations or organizations that you are currently a member of:

American Institute of Architects (AIA)

YWCA of Greater Rochester,

Town of Pittsford

Women's Council

SeniorsFirst/Kirkhaven Board

RIT – Curriculum Advisory Board

USGBC – LEED BD+C

What is one characteristic that you believe every woman in business should possess?

Empathy.

What trend(s) will dominate your industry in the next year?

COVID response strategies in senior living communities. It has already started with short term solutions, but I suspect it will eventually result in an overhaul of senior living in the U.S.

How are you networking during the pandemic?

There have been countless opportunities for networking virtually, and a lot of conferences that are now open to the public. The most creative ones so far have been a virtual wine tasting, and lunch with a colleague where they sent a GrubHub gift card to have lunch delivered for a zoom call.

What conferences, books, blogs, podcasts, or influencers would you recommend to women?

Conference: AIA Women in Leadership Summit – it is the result of an industry-based look at why women leave the profession of architecture, and what can we do to change that trend.

Book: "Radical Candor" by Kim Scott – a great look at how to promote a culture of candid feedback and trust.

Blog/podcast/influencers: The Riveter and The Wing, both with a broad reaching audience and material, from virtual lectures, activities, and resources.

What recent project or accomplishment are you most proud of?

Our office has a team for the Habitat for Humanity Women Build program, and our team has been hard at work with fundraising. Because of COVID our team had to reimagine all fundraising efforts/events and came up with a great list of activities. Some examples are a driveway concert, "flamingo your yard," porch portraits and pumpkin carving competition, among others. We are ahead of target with fundraising goals, due to the incredible women involved in this... I am very proud of our team!

What would you tell your daughter if she was interested in following in your footsteps?

Stay true to yourself, and work for the things you are passionate about. Do not be afraid to have and use your voice, even when it shakes as you speak. And most of all, don't let others dictate what you can do or who you can become; it is up to you to determine what kind of person and professional you want to be.

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