



2021 Women in Professional Services: Sushmita Roy, HAP Construction

March 23, 2021 - Spotlights

Name: Sushmita Roy

Title: General Counsel

Company Name: HAP Construction

Real estate associations or organizations that you are currently a member of:

Professional Women in Construction (PWC),
New York Building Congress,
ABA Forum on Construction Law

In the past year, what project, transaction or accomplishment are you most proud of?

I have been most proud of my role as general counsel for HAP Construction, a construction management company responsible for several projects in Manhattan including The Maverick, a mixed-use residential development located in Chelsea. As general counsel, I have many responsibilities including drafting subcontracts, managing litigation, managing risks, settling disputes, and mitigating from damages in future lawsuits. However, I am most proud of my role in keeping The Maverick moving, despite many obstacles that have arisen. I was able to utilize my knowledge of the subcontracts and construction law to push the subcontractors to keep working, avoid delays, correct any defective work, perform all work within their scope, and coordinate on overall scheduling.

What steps have you taken to ensure the continued success of your firm?

I am constantly immersed in the role of risk management, ensuring that I am protecting the company from any damages and lawsuits. Due to my intimate involvement with HAP Construction's projects—from inception through drafting subcontracts, coordinating and notifying subcontractors when they are falling behind or missing scope, and at close out of each trade—I am able to identify problems and mitigate against potential damages that may arise by getting involved early on, and resolving or settling issues before they rise to the level of lawsuits or damages.

Why should women consider a career in commercial real estate and related services?

Real estate and construction tend to be male-dominated fields, but women are uniquely detail oriented while maintaining an ability to multi-task, which is ideal for managing hectic construction projects while being mindful of quality and schedule.

How have you adapted and changed in the last 12 months?

COVID was particularly difficult for the construction industry. While construction was deemed essential for one of our projects, we had to adapt to set protocols for distancing, sanitizing the workplace, keeping up mask protocols, monitoring the health of employees, and more. In addition, we had to maintain our schedules with a reduced workforce in areas on the site to keep up with protocols. Together we coordinated and managed to keep the job moving, and we are on schedule to finish up in mid-2021.

How do you keep your team motivated despite conflicts and obstacles?

We push through everything with teamwork. I am always available for anyone to speak with and discuss issues or thoughts as they relate to our construction projects, or in general as they relate to the work environment. I strive to maintain an approachable and helpful attitude.

Women have made significant progress in the last year towards equality in the workplace. How do you advocate for your fellow women in real estate?

I am constantly advocating for the hire of more women. I mentor former colleagues and strive to help them advance in their careers. I have befriended other women in the profession, and we meet monthly to support each other in the construction field, provide advice, and motivate one another. I also belong to Professional Women in Construction (PWC), where I am part of the professional development and advisory committee.

What books or social media influencers would you recommend to other women?

“Becoming” by Michelle Obama, “Notorious RBG,” and the Legal Speak and Call Your Girlfriend podcasts.

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