



## **2021 Women in Building Services: Sara Davis, FXCollaborative**

June 22, 2021 - Spotlights

Name: Sara Davis

Title: Senior Associate

Company Name: FXCollaborative

Real estate associations or organizations that you are currently a member of: American Institute of Architects (AIA), Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH)

What did you want to be when you grew up?

In late elementary and middle school, I wanted to be an engineer. Later on, I wanted to be a classical musician, and one of my majors in undergraduate school was in music performance. Architecture seemed to strike the right balance between the two, combining the analytical and performative.

Who was/is your mentor and how did s/he influence/help you in your career?

First, I am grateful to have strong mentorship among the leadership at FXCollaborative who provide regular constructive feedback and guidance. Beyond the strong project teams I am fortunate to work with, two women have been particularly influential in my career: Ann Rolland and Elizabeth Finkelshteyn. I admire these two women immensely, and witnessing their dedication and perseverance has been hugely inspiring. The tireless support and commitment, and their guidance in navigating the tricky areas as a woman working in commercial architecture, have been invaluable. They routinely serve as empathetic sounding boards and help me to keep my perspective and balance.

What led you to your current profession?

In the architecture industry there is such a wide range of focus—both in the type of work and specific individual professional focus. I've been fortunate to have had a wide range of exposure to various project types in order to develop a broad professional perspective, which has led me to identify a preference for large and complex project types such as 3 Hudson Blvd. On a team, my role tends to be that of a generalist, and I find it very rewarding to connect experts' specialized

contributions to tailor appropriate solutions to complex project challenges. So much of a project's success involves working with people far beyond the more obvious design and technical aspects of the architectural profession.

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

The measurement of accomplishment from this past year has been drastically different from years prior. I have been very fortunate and am among the lucky who was able to continue working remotely from the safety of home—yet I found that much of the year felt almost impossible to navigate. By other years' standards, survival may not have been much of an accomplishment, but this year was different! Navigating working from home while balancing full-time childcare of a young toddler, in the midst of the everyday chaos, I am proud of the moments where I was able to step out of my comfort zone professionally—learning new project types, testing new skills and presentation formats, conducting research, and even contributing to thought leadership.

What trends will dominate your industry in the coming months?

In the coming months and years, two areas in particular need our focus and commitment: Diversity and inclusion; and addressing climate change mitigation with advancements in sustainable design, behavior, and policies.

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

“The Imposter Syndrome Paradox” TEDx Talk by Dr. Lisa Orbe-Austin and Dr. Richard Orbe-Austin; and “The Great Unlearn” by Rachel Cargle

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