



2021 Women in Building Services: Katy Flammia, Spacesmith LLP

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Name: Katy Flammia, AIA, IIDA

Title: Design Director-Hudson, Spacesmith

Company Name: Spacesmith LLP

Real estate associations or organizations that you are currently a member of: Taghkanic Headquarters Watershed, Columbia County Women's Alliance, Columbia County Native Plant Exchange

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

I have never had just one in particular. I would say the Boston Women Principals Roundtable, part of the Boston AIA chapter was and still is a fabulous group of peers who, even though I live in New York now, still are a wonderful support group; an extremely generous source of advice and inspiration.

What trends will dominate your industry in the coming months?

I'm hoping it is innovative sustainable design. The time is now to change how we think about building. Our industry has a huge impact. We can really make a difference if we embrace energy efficiency, carbon neutral or positive materials, and think about our work holistically, where we consider both health and well-being for people and the environment.

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

Books include "The Good Ancestor," by Roman Krznaric and "Nature's Best Hope," by Doug Tallamy. Two websites are Yancey Strickler's Bento Society, <https://bentoism.org/>, and the Green Building Advisor, www.greenbuildingadvisor.com/.

"The Good Ancestor" and the Bento Society are about reimagining a society and economy that are future-thinking and not based on only short-term outcomes for a select few. "Nature's Best Hope" is about how small home yards and gardens can repair our ecological flora/fauna balance by the planting of native plants and trees and getting rid of huge lawns. Green Building Advisor is a very

practical site about how to build more sustainably.

What did you want to be when you grew up?

I knew I wanted to be an architect when I was 10 years old. I was good at art and people told me to become an art teacher. I said, no I want to be an architect. I was the only girl in shop class and the only girl in the drafting class.

What led you to your current profession?

I had my own office in Boston for 16 years and then joined a large firm for six years. Now I'm design director for Spacesmith and charged with helping to build the upstate office, which brings me full circle to starting up another office, this time with great back up of our well-established New York City office.

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

Since the past year was entirely a COVID year, I think the thing I'm most proud of is how we made great progress building our upstate Hudson office despite the difficulties of COVID. We have just completed Upriver Studios in Saugerties, and this July will finish our beloved Talbott & Arding commercial kitchens and retail location, and several very interesting private homes.

How do you contribute to your community or profession?

I am involved in several Columbia County organizations that are environmentally and social justice-focused, including the Taghkanic Headquarters Watershed, Columbia County Women's Alliance, Columbia County Native Plant Exchange, and I volunteer with Operation Unite NY, teaching writing workshops to Hudson youth.

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