



Palisin of Hoffmann Archts. selected as Construction Institute champion of change

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New York, NY According to Hoffmann Architects, an architecture and engineering firm specializing in the rehabilitation of building exteriors, Rachel Palisin has been named the 2021 Construction Institute champion of change for her contributions as a role model and advocate for women and emerging professionals in the AEC industry.

Palisin, PE, LEED AP BD+C is the director of Hoffmann Architects' Virginia office and one of the owners of the firm. She joined Hoffmann Architects' NYC office in 2016, bringing a background in restoration and sustainable design, with a Master of Structural Engineering degree from Washington University. Just one year later, she was selected as Team Leader, responsible for managing a group of emerging professionals with diverse backgrounds in engineering, architecture, urbanism, and ecological design. In that role, Palisin served as a mentor for women on staff and was an integral part of hiring several women to join the firm.

Beyond managing her own team, she served informally as a mentor to women in her office, many of whom frequently sought her guidance for projects and professional development. Engaging emerging professional women to join her for site visits and co-author technical articles were some of the many ways that Palisin shared her expertise while empowering young women to build skills in professional practice. On multiple projects, she brought in younger women colleagues to assist; as these women advanced, Palisin made sure they had the skills and experience to take over managing projects on their own. With the confidence and know-how that Palisin instills through mentorship, she has shown real impact in advancing the careers of her younger women colleagues.

In 2020, Palisin was selected as Hoffmann Architects' Virginia office director. Upon her promotion, she immediately expanded her staff, hiring young women who had just completed their degree programs. With much to learn about the day-to-day work of architecture and engineering, these new hires depended on Palisin for training and support, and she was especially attentive to their adjustment to the firm as they spent considerable time working remotely due to COVID. By providing challenging work and offering guidance when needed, Palisin lets the women on her staff know she is committed to their success.

In addition to her role as office director, Palisin is an active member of industry organizations, including the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), the United States Green Building Council

(USGBC), and the Association for Preservation Technology (APT). As a task lead for the APT Disaster Response Initiative, she planned and executed a disaster-response certification training workshop and liaised with government agencies and complementary professional organizations to provide heritage responders after disaster events. Recently, Palisin joined the ACE Mentor Program to volunteer with high school students interested in the design and construction professions.

Palisin is only the second woman in Hoffmann Architects' 44-year history to head an office. Under her leadership, Hoffmann Architects has hired several women, many of whom have gone on to earn promotions and take on leadership positions in professional organizations. Active in the industry as a speaker, writer, organizer, panelist, and volunteer, Palisin serves as a role model for rising women in the design professions. Her easygoing demeanor, skillful and confident management of projects, advocacy for women in the industry, and capable leadership combine to make her a deserving recipient of the Construction Institute Champion of Change Award. Hoffmann Architects congratulates Palisin on this recognition of her outstanding contributions.

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