



**2022 Women in Construction: Kamila Altman, Magnusson
Architecture and Planning PC**

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Name: Kamila Altman, AIA CPHD

Title: Senior Associate

Company Name: Magnusson Architecture and Planning PC

What was your greatest professional achievement or most notable project in the last 12 months?

The last 12 months have been productive! I became a Certified Passive House Designer. One of the largest buildings I've ever managed completed bringing 121 units of affordable senior housing to NYC. Even better, it has received very positive feedback from the residents. Despite the pandemic, another project I am managing is close to completing. The 93-unit affordable development is a NYSERDA Buildings of Excellence Award winner and will also house a new headquarters for our nonprofit client. Internally, I've been part of an amazing team driving the firm's sustainability initiatives. We've become signatories to the AIA 2030 commitment and are finding new ways to make high level sustainability integral to our process.

Why should women consider a career in construction?

Any team is better served if it consists of members with diverse perspectives and experience. The teams that I have been on that have worked best together, were ones that were balanced by different perspectives and ways of solving issues. Women, of course, can contribute to that balance.

Starting out in the construction business, who or what empowered you?

I have been very fortunate in my career to work with people that have helped me grow and helped develop my interest in affordable housing architecture. I will always be grateful to the first architect who gave me the opportunity to work in this field, Peter Landon, FAIA (Landon Bone Baker Architects) who was and is still an expert in the field. His firm's work had been an inspiration to me as a graduate student. Learning the profession under his supervision validated my reasoning for becoming an architect in the first place—to help spread the idea that everyone deserves a safe, healthy, and beautiful place to call home.

Who within your own firm has helped you succeed within the construction industry?

I have been very lucky to work with a brilliant team of people at Magnusson Architecture and Planning (MAP) I have mostly worked under the direction of design principal Fernando Villa, FAIA, who from the beginning has treated me as a partner in the design process and a leader in the business. He trusts me with clients that he has worked with for years and empowered me to be a representative of the firm. Christine Hunter, AIA, and former principal at MAP initially hired me and has continued to be a personal and professional coach and adviser. I'm so grateful for her perspective and support.

What advice would you offer to other women getting into the construction industry?

Although the number of women has significantly increased in the industry, it is still not where it could be. So, my first piece of advice is to join us! The industry needs more diversity in general to provide a balance of perspectives. Next, I would advise them to seek out people who are doing the type of work that is inspiring to them and not settle for just any work. It is so important to feel good about the work you do especially when the product is something as permanent as a building.