



**2022 Women in Construction: Irene Yim, Mark Design Studios
Architecture, PC**

March 22, 2022 - Spotlights



Name: Irene Yim

Title: Director of Design

Company Name: Mark Design Studios Architecture, PC

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

We completed the historical restoration of Lawrence Middle School, which was commissioned by the federal Public Works Administration as part of the New Deal and completed in 1936. Under this project, the auditorium, cupola, entrance and lobby, event restrooms and administrative suite were restored and renovated. The result of this multi-phase project integrates 21st century functional practices and the allure and glamour of the Art Deco era into a public building that is the crown jewel and point of pride for the Lawrence community.

Why should women consider a career in construction?

Half the population on earth is women. Architecture and the built environment should reflect all facets and spectrum of the population. Women offer a unique voice and perspective to every project. Our innate detail-oriented nature not only enhance the project, sometimes it is those exact details that will make a lasting impression on the end-users that render a project a success.

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

My former boss and mentor Anna Thorsdottir is a strong female architect, who, like me is an immigrant. She showed me that you can have strength and grace at the same time in difficult situations that often happen in a place where we were the only women at the table, or at the job site. That our multi-cultural perspective is a valuable asset that we offer to our clients and not an impediment.

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

I am very fortunate to work with Michael (Mark). He helped me succeed by always asking and challenging me to step out of my comfort zone. I experienced tremendous personal and professional growth in the past five years that I have been working with Michael because of the trust he has placed in me. His generosity with his time to support us and his love of sharing of his knowledge and wisdom is admirable.

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

The design and construction industry is about self-discipline. We can only achieve excellence by relentlessly challenging ourselves to do our best. One of my college professors had advice for my class which I still hold dear to today, "Make yourself indispensable." Do your homework, show up to work with more knowledge about the project than anyone else, then you can drown out any "mansplaining" that you will inevitably experience on the job site.