



**2025 Women in Construction: Melisa Yepes-Schaefer,  
Goldman Copeland**

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Melisa Yepes-Schaefer  
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What trends or innovations do you believe will shape the future of your field, and how are you positioning yourself (or your firm) to be at the forefront?

Energy-efficiency and sustainability will increasingly shape the future of construction and engineering, as buildings account for 39% of global energy-related carbon emissions. At Goldman Copeland, we work closely with many of New York City's largest property owners to optimize the balance between energy-efficiency and cost-effectiveness. We have completed energy audits and retro-commissioning projects for over 70 million s/f of properties. My role is to implement recommendations from the audits. It's exciting to help make buildings more sustainable in the heart of the business world.

Who or what has inspired you most in your career, and what advice would you share with the next generation of women entering the A/E/C industry?

The work itself is inspiring. The hands-on nature of construction and the satisfaction of seeing a project come together are extremely rewarding. I've been in the construction industry for a decade, and the presence of women — along with the diversity among us — has grown so much over that time. The possibilities for women engineers today are greater than ever. My advice to those just starting out? The construction industry can be tough, and you might face challenges, but use setbacks as motivation to demonstrate your strength and resilience.

What's your favorite way to recharge or get inspired outside of work?

I enjoy hiking and rock-climbing with my husband as a way to connect with nature and reset.

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