



2025 Women in Construction: Cristen Colantoni, HLW

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Cristen Colantoni
Senior Principal
HLW

What is one project or achievement in your career that you are most proud of, and how did it impact your organization or community?

One of the achievements I am most proud of is HLW's 2024 recertification of The International Living Future Institute's Just 2.0 Label, which reflects our firm's commitment to our people. The extensive teamwork, data gathering, and thoughtful policy implementation to advance HLW in key

areas like gender pay equity, family leave policies, and well-being initiatives, reinforces our culture of inclusivity, and I am proud to have been part of the process. It's incredibly rewarding to see the outcome of our work to uplift both HLW's team members and the broader design community.

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?

I see the future of design shaped by sustainability, inclusivity, and hybrid work environments. At HLW, I champion universal design principles, ensuring spaces accommodate diverse needs, including neurodiverse individuals. I am also passionate about sustainability and have collaborated on some of the most influential workplace design strategies in recent history through HLW's collaboration with Google. Through mentorship and efforts to cultivate a more inclusive and equitable industry, I aim to drive positive change, positioning HLW at the forefront of innovation and advancement.

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?

Susan Boyle has inspired me the most with her authenticity, empathy, and perseverance. Susan has contributed significantly to the industry as a leader and mentor at HLW, while excelling in designing award-winning spaces. She balanced family and career with effortless grace, always making time to listen and offer honest, thoughtful feedback. She exemplifies the power of leadership rooted in integrity and compassion. My advice for the next generation is to listen intently, welcome feedback, and acknowledge the women who paved your way. Honor them by uplifting those following in your footsteps.

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

I find energy in sharing experiences, valuing connection, and the joy that comes with it.

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