

PWC-NJ

Professional Women in Construction – New Jersey

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Media contact:

Evelyn Mertens

914.762.6429

914.263.9129 (cell)

emertens@westnet.com

Professional Women in Construction –New Jersey (PWC-NJ) Celebrates Extraordinary Women of Achievement at Annual Luncheon

Newark, NJ –Offering a special salute to Women’s History Month, Professional Women in Construction- New Jersey (PWC-NJ) Chapter President Carolyn Pugaczewski, president of M. Adams & Associates, launched the organization’s annual Women of Achievement luncheon on March 18 in the penthouse Metropolitan Room of the Newark Club, an appropriately lofty space that overlooks both the Manhattan and “new” Newark skylines. Noting that the honorees “reveal exceptionally strong role models who share an expansive vision of what a woman can do,” she said that their success stories will “encourage young women to think larger and bolder.”

Pugaczewski introduced PWC President Emeritus Lenore Janis, one of the national organization’s original dozen founders in 1980, thanking her for helping in the formation of the New Jersey chapter and for “giving us the tools to become a major force in the NJ construction industry.”

Janis summarized the history of PWC saying that in 1980 “a dozen determined women” strove to achieve success in the “male-dominated construction industry” asking “How far would the concrete ceiling reach?” She spoke of the import of PWC: “being a member means you’re *involved and committed*, it means you’re part of a vibrant organization, you’re well-informed and well-positioned.”

PWC-NJ Vice President Anne Marie Almasi, president of Almasi Companies, introduced the other honorees beginning with Karen Rossilli-Kiefer, president TeamPAR: PARflooring & PARsolutions, a highly successful WBE. Rossilli-Kiefer told of her courageous business launch pointing out that “networking is the key to success and hard work will prevail.” She attributed her companies’ success to value engineering; helping clients increase their ROI while decreasing lifecycle costs; teamwork; and a willingness to listen. She credited her team for all accomplishments. The company has been much honored for its philanthropic efforts.

Karen Martinez, president & CEO of BRAVO! Building Services which counted revenues of \$65 million last year, spoke of the need to “be passionate, love what you do, do it with integrity, listen to your customers, and give them the value and service they deserve.” She reminded all that success isn’t “going to be handed to you.” Developing leaders and creating opportunities in janitorial, mechanical and electrical service contracting motivates Karen and her senior leadership team every day.

Lisa Santaite Ballerini, president of Montana Construction, said that her motivation for success “has and always will be my family.” Under Ballerini, Montana which now has annual sales of \$40 million “grew and flourished” despite the recession. She attributes the success to “our dedication and never compromising on quality and service.” Montana employs a staff of close to 100 and has an extensive fleet of equipment.

Theodora Sergiou, vice president, Nicholas Pools, Inc., praised her parents and the president of her alma mater, Georgian Court University – where Sergiou now

teaches marketing and management - who told her to “always dream the impossible.” She chronicled her journey, the company’s volunteer efforts after Sandy and with Ocean County Community and said that her goal remains to “keep growing the business.” Sergiou was recently included in *NJ Monthly Magazine’s* Top 25 Leading Woman Entrepreneur and Business Owners.

Maria Yglesias and Maria Del Mar Lopez, managing partners, M & M Development, developer and builder of “superior and distinctively beautiful affordable housing,” took the podium together. M & M projects include work for the Coopers Hill Housing Development in Camden and the Harmony Square project in Newark.

Noting that M&M is “transforming communities,” Yglesias noted that a common thread among all honorees is the “pursuit of excellence.” She urged all women to mentor women to help “make a better world.”

Corporate sponsors of PWC-NJ are Montana Construction and Binsky & Snyder Service; platinum sponsors are Torcon; Tishman, an AECOM Company; and Turner Construction.

For information on PWC-NJ visit www.pwcusa.org/nj. PWC-NJ is a chapter of PWC and a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization founded in 1980.

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Photo caption: Honorees and presenters at PWC-NJ’s Women of Achievement Luncheon. Seated, L-R: Karen Rossilli-Kiefer, Team PAR; Lisa Ballerini, Montana Construction; Maria Del Mar Lopez, M&M Development; Lenore Janis, President Emeritus, PWC; Standing, L-R: Theodora Sergiou, Nicholas Pools, Inc.; PWC-NJ President Carolyn Pugaczewski, M.Adams & Associates; Maria Yglesias, M&M Development; PWC-NJ VP Anne Marie Almasi, Almasi Companies; Karen Martinez, Bravo Building Services. **Photo credit:** Corine Bruno.

