

# BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS

WINTER 2018

## A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

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### OUR MISSION

Join us as we promote career advancement and leadership skills of women in the building industry to ultimately increase the number of women industry leaders.

Dear Members of WBI,

As I reflect on this past year and review everything we have accomplished, I am proud to say that we achieved the goals we set in January. WBI had a significant impact not only among our membership but throughout the NVBIA organization. Our accomplishments include:

- Lead With a Handshake seminar to address the #MeToo movement
- Secured a 6 ft. tall WBI banner to recognize our group at all NVBIA events
- Increased attendance by women and men-- all our events SOLD OUT this year!
- Recognition by Home Builders Association of Va. (HBAV), our statewide affiliate of NAHB
- A significant Leadership Workshop that gave all who attended useful tools to enhance their job performance
- Events that gave back to our community through HomeAid, Fairfax ReLeaf, Women Giving Back and For Children's Sake of Virginia

We have raised the bar this year and proven that WBI is more than a book club. A special thank-you to the awesome WBI Board members that helped make this year happen—my right hand Jessica Harrison who served as VP and made all my ideas come to life; Sophie Swartzendruber who handled all our community events and expanded our service opportunities to include new organizations; and last but not least Annie Colturi who did a wonderful job keeping us all informed of our events through her timely newsletters and social media updates.

It has been an honor to serve as the 2018 WBI President. Thank you to all who attended our meetings and events and helped make this a fantastic year! Please continue to support WBI in 2019! I look forward to celebrating with everyone at our Holiday party December 11<sup>th</sup>.

Sincerely,  
Carmela Patrick



Members of the 2018 WBI Executive Board - Sophie, Annie, Jessica, and Carmela at the WBI Lead Star event

## SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEW

### 2019 NVBIA PRESIDENT: ALICIA SKOUG

#### What was your first job in construction? What led you to the construction industry?

*My life consisted of part time and seasonal jobs in the industry. My first real job was a summer job as an on-site community representative for Lowes Island Estates. This was while I was still in college and it was summer of 1993. I also grew up going to my fathers office to help whenever I could. I have memories of answering phones, spending the day on construction sites, highlighting construction plans in phases, etc.*

#### Do you have a mentor? How has that individual affected your path?

*Obviously my dad. I actually wanted to not be in the industry when I was growing up but the pull back to it was strong. I started as a sales person and worked my way up to sales and marketing management positions. I switched to land acquisition because my draw to the land side was due to him. He created communities, which was amazing to see. It is fascinating to see a farm become a community like South Riding (which was a community he worked on). I also had many female mentors when I was in the sales and marketing arena. There was a strong female presence in that aspect of construction. I learned a lot from the women who had been in the industry longer than I had. Many of them are my good friends now. I still look up to what some of them accomplished, in a male dominated industry, in awe. I wanted to emulate them and how they shattered glass ceilings.*

#### Are you a mentor? Why?

*I try to be as much as I can! It was one of the reasons Soledad and I created WBI. Other than the sales and marketing arena, there weren't many areas where women (who were part of the industry in other aspects) could network and communicate. I relished in the opportunity I had by starting in sales and marketing, and having those relationships. A group of women who support you and cheer for your success is so necessary in our industry. I was hoping to create a similar network for others. Women add so much to our industry, that I want to build as many women up to be great leaders on their own. For me, giving back and mentoring others is something very important.*

#### What inspires you to accept the role of President of NVBIA?

*NVBIA has been a great organization for me. I was able to meet many people, advance my career, and grow into a leader through NVBIA. I had the ability to take classes through NVBIA to become a NAHB certified in Master in Residential Marketing, and eventually a trainer in several of the classes. I have been on the board for 6 years and involved in committees for many years prior to then. The only place we can all network as industry individuals, regardless of company, is through NVBIA events. Networking with other builders allows you to expand your thoughts and process. It makes you become better at your craft, by learning from others that are doing things different than you. In the past several years, we have been primarily focused on legislation. Legislation is vital to our industry. Understanding that priority and importance, I want to get back to bigger regional events that everyone can network. When I first joined NVBIA, there was almost a tribal environment where everyone was involved and knew each other. Events were big and fun. I want to bring that type of environment back to the association. We are all working hard in our day to day jobs. Let's enjoy each other, and expand our knowledge through NVBIA.*

#### What changes would you like to see for the organization? For the industry?

*Our industry is an aging industry. I think we need to focus on getting more women and younger generations involved in the industry. I have seen a rise in younger people becoming involved in NVBIA through Future Leaders and WBI. I would like to see that spiral into a whole new leadership group. We haven't been an industry of changes or technological advances. I think we need to start changing. I am hopeful of the next leaders to help continue that change.*

#### Fun fact? What would surprise us about you?

*I have 5 kids! Many people don't realize that I have so many children. My oldest is a senior this year, and my youngest is in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. We love it.*

#### HAVE NEWS TO SHARE?

Please contact Annie Colturi, PR Committee Chair at [acolturi@wetlands.com](mailto:acolturi@wetlands.com)

#### WANT TO RECEIVE WBI NEWS AND INVITES?

Please make sure you provide information on event sign-in sheets or email [acolturi@wetlands.com](mailto:acolturi@wetlands.com).

## EVENTS RECAP

### WBI LEAD STAR EVENT

On November 13th, WBI hosted the New York Times best-selling author and co-founder of Lead Star, Angie Morgan. Angie spoke to NVBIA and WBI members about identifying leadership skills, time management, work/life balance, and how to prioritize time and energy in every day life. Angie's energy was infectious – she engaged members by sharing personal stories from her time in the Marines and provided guidance to build trusting relationships to find success.

We started the day by reflecting on leaders we admire, identifying the qualities of leaders that we personally look up to. In small groups, we discussed the skills that we admired of these leaders and discussed how we can focus our energy to grow and improve our own leadership skills, both professionally and personally. Angie engaged the group through insightful questions and personal stories to express challenges of communication between levels of management, coworkers, and family and friends. We were tasked with a small group exercise to solve a puzzle, forcing us to think outside of the standard rule book to find solutions to a seemingly simple task. At the end of the session, we were inspired to reflect on our new-found leadership and set goals for the coming months.

Thank you to all who attended and participated in this year's Lead Star seminar! We hope to host more events like this that inspire and engage members to be leaders in the industry!



*Angie Morgan of Lead Star engaging WBI members*



*2018 WBI Executive Board with Angie Morgan of Lead Star*

### WOMEN IN RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION CONFERENCE

In September, a group of eight women from Van Metre's leadership team attended Professional Builder's Women in Residential Construction conference in Scottsdale, Arizona. The conference was titled "The Challenge of Change" and hosted various speakers on topics such as Women in the trades, Emotional Intelligence, Grace under fire and Attracting Millennial Buyers, to name just a few. While we found most of the sessions interesting, our team found the segment "Bringing Women into the Trades" intriguing. It talked about what we can do as women in the industry to encourage the future generations to pick this industry for their careers. They encouraged more women as ambassadors at career fairs and trade shows, one trade puts on a Fashion show with tradeswomen from all aspects of the industry in their uniform and gear. At this fashion show they had work stations for young girls to use equipment to try out different jobs. We learned about the Tradeswomen of Instagram and Kobalt Tools upcoming marketing campaign that focuses on women with their tools. The conference hosted a breakout session with Poker Divas, which was founded by a woman to teach other women the art of poker which was then translated into skills to use in your business.

The conference was well attended by private and public home builders, custom builders, renovation companies, trade partners, members of NAHB and other fabulous women. This may be a great conference for you to check out for 2019. For more information, <http://pbprwomen.probuilder.com/2018/> or for more details on the Van Metre team's takeaways, feel free to contact Jenn Keesling for more information.

## MEET THE 2019 WBI EXECUTIVE BOARD

### President - Mary Pitman

Mary Pitman works in site development as a Project Engineer at SMITH Engineering, working on commercial and residential projects. She is coming up on three years working in Northern Virginia and has degrees in Civil Engineering: a bachelor's from Georgia Tech and master's from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Having lived in five states in ten years, she understands the importance of building community and connections and has been heavily involved in organizations ranging from professional to civil liberties and education to activism to non-profit, with leadership positions in many. Mary consistently has fresh, new ideas that will allow WBI to pick up steam in 2019 and continue to grow with enthusiasm. Since Mary has been so involved in the behind-the-scenes of WBI and its events committee, she will exceed the expectations of this role and will be a huge asset to the WBI leadership team.



### Vice President - Sophie Swartzendruber

Sophie is an Environmental Project Manager with TNT Environmental, Inc. and specializes in natural resource consulting. She graduated from Virginia Tech with a BS degree in Environmental Science in 2014. Sophie is involved in multiple aspects of natural resource projects and provides valuable consulting services to assist developers and builders on their projects in the region. In addition to Sophie's involvement with WBI, she actively helps with NVBIA's Future Leaders and co-developed the game list for their annual Field Day event. Sophie enjoys meeting and networking with peers in the industry and is appreciative of the opportunity to connect with them through WBI. Sophie is reliable, hardworking, organized, team-oriented and friendly and will undoubtedly bring fresh new ideas to WBI while continuing to utilize what has worked for WBI.



### Public Relations/Communications Chair - Melissa Farrar

Melissa is the Business Relationship Manager for Washington Gas. In her role, she serves as a liaison between the homebuilder and the internal departments to navigate the system and make sure the builder needs are met and there is communication throughout the process. She also coordinates and promotes programs put together by Washington Gas for the builder community. She has been in this role less than a year but immediately became an active member of NVBIA and Women in the Building Industry. Melissa Farrar has been an active member of the PR committee during 2018, so she is familiar with the mission of the committee and tasks that need to be completed. She actively participates in the WBI Public Relations Committee, working with committee members to brainstorm content, discussing latest industry news, and writing articles for quarterly newsletters and various social media posts. Melissa has an outgoing personality and will be a great ambassador for WBI.



### Community Service Chair – Jenn Keesling

Jenn Keesling is the Director of Customer Experience for the New Homes division of Van Metre Companies. She has worked in the building industry for over 15 years, all of those on the home builder side working with Customer Care. Her current role works with multiple departments to help shape the Customer Experience at Van Metre Homes. She has been an active volunteer with the Northern Virginia chapter of HomeAid for over 14 years, volunteering on various Builder Captain projects throughout the years, and HomeAid's Annual Gala and Auction Committee. Jenn has been a member of the WBI Community Service Committee since its inception and has worked on multiple volunteer projects for the WBI group. She is excited to take the opportunity to lead the Community Service committee and join the WBI leadership team in 2019.



## JOB OPENINGS

**Apex Companies, LLC** is seeking Environmental Project Managers, Staff Scientists, and Industrial Hygiene Professionals in their Maryland and Virginia offices. Apply now through their website: [www.apexcos.com](http://www.apexcos.com)

**TNT Environmental, Inc.** is seeking an Environmental Scientist with 0-5 years of relevant experience for its Chantilly office. For more information, please visit [www.tntenvironmentalinc.com](http://www.tntenvironmentalinc.com). Submit your resume, cover letter and compensation requirements to [info@tntenvironmentalinc.com](mailto:info@tntenvironmentalinc.com).