

Commercial Real Estate

## Barton Malow exec shares advice for women entering construction industry



Alison Nykamp, senior project manager with Barton Malow

COURTESY OF BARTON MALOW



By Richard Bilbao – Digital Producer/Senior Staff Writer, Orlando Business Journal

Mar 12, 2021, 3:18pm EST

### COMPANIES IN THIS ARTICLE

**Barton Malow Company**  
Southfield, MI

[See full profile >](#)

**National Association of Wo...**  
Fort Worth, TX

[See full profile >](#)

Alison Nykamp, senior project manager with Barton Malow, leads her team with a bright outlook.

That should be a boon to her latest project: helping build the new Peppa Pig Theme Park at Legoland Florida. Her work there also is important as she's a successful woman in the male-dominated construction industry.

Approximately 1.1 million women were employed in the U.S. construction industry as of Dec. 31, 2018, making up 9.9% of the sector, according to the National Association of Women in Construction – something to note as Women in Construction Week is celebrated March 7-13 this year.

Meanwhile, Nykamp's experience includes more than 16 years in the industry where she has worked on myriad entertainment, hospitality and education projects.

Her past works include projects with Universal City Development Partners, the development entity for Universal Parks & Resorts; Walt Disney World Resort; Rosemont Hotels; and many educational institutions including the University of Maryland in Baltimore.

---

***See more here about Nykamp and Barton Malow's part in Legoland Florida's new Peppa Pig theme park project.***

---

Here Nykamp shares her advice for young women looking to enter the industry, what opportunities there are for future female construction workers and more:

**Is construction still a male-dominated industry?** It is just by sheer numbers, but there are just as many opportunities for women. We work just as hard as the guys and are treated the same. As long as you act like yourself and treat everyone with respect and how you want to be treated, you definitely can be a successful woman in the construction industry.

**Why are more women needed in the field?** Women are just as capable to work in the construction industry as men. All it takes is effort, dedication and a positive attitude. Although women are underrepresented, we are making significant progress as leaders in the industry. There are so many organizations assisting to pave the way and promote women in their organizations and educate young women about the opportunities and benefits of working in the industry.

**What is your advice to women trying to break into the industry?** Be yourself. Don't be afraid to ask questions. A lot of the guys you work with are open and cool about working with women. It's a great industry to be out in the field and get your boots dirty. Just be yourself.

**How many opportunities are there for women entering the industry?** For younger kids and for females in college – or if they are not going to college – there are a ton of opportunities in the trade such as electricians, pipe fitters, iron workers. One of the things I love about this industry is that every day is different. We don't do the same things in back-to-back days, there's always something new. You get to see the progress of a project coming together, and when you are done and turn it over to the owner, it's something you can be proud of and think back for years to come on how it impacts families, children and anything like that.

**Women earn 81% of what men make in the construction industry. Why is it important for companies to solve that pay gap?** Women are just as capable as men (and vice versa) in every industry. I think more now than ever we are seeing a shift in the mindset of how women are perceived in the workplace, and I feel confident that salary differentials will improve over time.

**What's your advice to students entering the industry?**

It's a very rewarding career, but you are going to have to work really hard. It's not a 40-hours-a-week job. Be open minded. When you come out of college, you don't know everything. You can't be afraid to ask questions. There are a lot of people in the industry who have a lot of experience – use those people to your advantage.

**Why is gender diversity great for the industry?** I'm finding a lot of the owners representatives are female. That shows younger kids that this is an opportunity and they can do anything they put their minds to. When you think about construction, you typically see a construction worker as a male. I think we need to get away from that because a woman is just as capable of doing anything – being an iron worker, crane operator or a project manager.

**What does being part of the Peppa Pig project mean to you?** I have a lot of friends with younger kids who are excited about it. This is one of the first standalone ticket attractions for Peppa Pig – it's a big deal. At the end of the day, we will put a lot of hard work into this job, but when we turn it over and they open the park and just to see the laughter and excitement, it will make that hard work worthwhile.

**What's it like working on a theme park?** Luckily for us here, [the theme park] is its own ticket attraction so it is to the side of the park and not directly connected to the existing park. A lot of times work cannot be done during the day. A lot of times when you are working in theme parks, you are working around the clock or it's night work, just to make sure you are not impacting the guests.

**What's it like being in the room with design builders from theme parks?** There's a lot of planning that goes into this. Once you get everyone into the same room, the ideas just keep flowing. You can coordinate a lot up front. There's more of that relationship-building on the front end. It's a big team right now, and to maintain that and move forward as a group will be key to make sure this project is successful.

**What other major projects is Barton Malow working on?** We have the Camping World Stadium renovation, a new hospital daycare at South Baptist Hospital, the new Brown & Brown corporate headquarters in Daytona, the EtteHotel project in Kissimmee off [U.S.

Highway 192] and we also have several other entertainment projects.

**What is your motto?** Be tough, but fair. Be consistent with everyone. Be a straight shooter. Be the leader of the pack. I have to be working just as hard, if not harder, than everyone else. Lead by example.

#### **Alison Nykamp**

Senior project manager, Barton Malow

- Age: 37
- Years in position: One
- Years with company: Nine
- Education: Masters in construction and engineering management and bachelors in civil engineering, Lawrence Technological University
- Hobby: Working out, reading and visiting local theme parks
- First job: Lifeguard and swimming teacher (high school and college); started an internship my junior year of college working with superintendents at the Delta terminal at Detroit Metro Airport
- Fun fact: Nykamp watches Peppa Pig episodes when she visits her nephews. She grew up in a family of four and said Peppa's family resonates with her.

---

***Sign up here for our free morning and afternoon daily newsletters. And be sure to follow us on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.***

#### **T H E L I S T**

### **Central Florida Construction Cos./General Contractors-National**

Ranked by 2019 C. Fla. operating revenue

Rank	Company	2019 C. Fla. Operating Revenue
1	PCL Construction Services Inc.	\$982.31 million
2	Turner Construction Co.	\$651.00 million
3	Hensel Phelps	\$575.00 million
<a href="#">View This List</a>		

 **DEADLINE: FRIDAY, MARCH 19, 2021**

## 2021 Veterans of Influence

The Veterans of Influence Awards will recognize military veterans who have made a significant achievement in their careers in the past year, have a strong record of innovation or outstanding performance in their work, and are involved in our community.

[Submit a Nomination](#)

### RELATED CONTENT

**Firm building new theme park project shares what to expect**



**\$60M in upgrades kick off at Camping World Stadium for World Cup bid**



**Here's the latest on Camping World Stadium upgrades**



**Here's what's next for Camping World Stadium upgrade**



## MORE FOR YOU

[More >](#)



**David Siegel's Westgate Resorts' new water park ready to open**



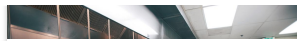
**OBJ Daily Buzz: Legoland Florida's new Peppa Pig park 'cements' it as a destination, experts say**



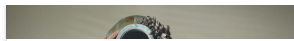
**Chipotle finally adds quesadillas to its menu (but there's a catch)**



**Exclusive: Lake Nona developer Tavistock seeks contractor to build big office building. Some say it's for Disney.**



**Ghost kitchens find a home in empty hotels**



**How Orlando Informer used its biz to help the tourism industry that helped build it**

## Latest Listings

[More >](#)

HOME OF THE DAY

23



SPONSORED

**Live Luxe in Winter Park's  
Luxury Condo Corridor**

HOME OF THE DAY

6



SPONSORED

**Golden Oak at Walt Disney  
World® Resort Presents Fanfare  
Cottage**

[Back to Top ▲](#)

## ORLANDO BUSINESS JOURNAL

[Home](#) [News](#) [Lists & Leads](#) [People](#) [Companies](#) [Events](#) [Store](#)

### SUBSCRIBERS

[Start a  
Subscription](#)

[Subscriber-  
Only Content](#)

[Digital Edition](#)

[Book of Lists](#)

[Book of Lists -  
Unlimited](#)

[Manage your  
Account](#)



### ABOUT & CONTACT

[About Us](#)

[About The  
Business  
Journals](#)

[Advertise](#)

[Help & FAQs](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Circulation  
Sales Center  
Directory](#)

### APPS & SYNDICATION

[Mobile Apps](#)

[Syndication/RSS](#)

### FOLLOW US



### NEWSLETTERS

[Sign Up Now](#)

### ACBJ

[American City  
Business  
Journals](#)

[AmericanInno](#)

[Bizwomen](#)

[Hemmings](#)

[User Agreement](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Your California Privacy Rights](#) | [Ad Choices](#)

© 2021 American City Business Journals. All rights reserved. Use of and/or registration on any portion of this site constitutes acceptance of our User Agreement (updated 1/1/21) and Privacy Policy and Cookie Statement (updated 1/1/21). The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of American City Business Journals.















