

Contractor hires fifth woman project manager

Half of Erhardt Construction's project management positions are filled by women leading multimillion dollar developments.

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West Michigan's Erhardt Construction has added to its female leadership team with the hiring of Melissa Hruska, its fifth female project manager.

With Hruska on the team, women now make up half of Erhardt's project management positions and are leading a number of multimillion-dollar projects throughout the area.

"In an industry where women account for less than 10% of its overall workforce and less than 30% of project manager positions, it's paramount that we, as a company, do our part to promote women and diversity in the workplace because it makes us a stronger company," Erhardt President and CEO Ben Wickstrom said. "Melissa is going to do great things, her experience and significant attention to detail is exactly what we need."



From left are Nick Haglund, project manager; Jennifer Pelletier, project manager; Erica Rahe, project coordinator; Karli Jackson, assistant project manager; and Melissa Hruska, FSG project manager. Courtesy Erhardt Construction

Hruska has 22 years of industry experience, working on health care, corporate, hospitality and tenant improvement projects. Some of her previous project experience includes Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Michigan Real Estate's 12,100-square-foot corporate office in Grand Rapids and Mitten Kids Dentistry in Caledonia.

She will join Director Aaron Mead in the facilities solutions group division of Erhardt Construction, managing multiple projects throughout West Michigan.

The division offers customized solutions for growing and expanding businesses like simple repairs, an interior redesign or complex renovations.

"What is so appealing about working for Erhardt Construction is being part of the facility solutions group," Hruska said. "Our team is unique from the perspective our projects, on one hand so diverse, are also similar in that we are helping those businesses grow by partnering with them through their construction needs, be it big or small."

"I feel Erhardt does empower us, not only as women, but as individuals, to carry out an important role in the organization, the construction industry, and within our communities," Hruska said. "I am very proud to have the opportunity to be part of this great team."

Hruska's formal education is in interior design, but shortly after graduation, she was approached by a contractor and was asked if she would be interested in becoming a construction project manager.

"It was from that day forward I knew I was where I belonged," she said. "Many clients I work with appreciate I can come in from the start during the architectural design process and manage their project through to its completion."

"I hope that the number of women in construction continues to grow tremendously," said Jennifer Pelletier, one of the other four women project managers at Erhardt. "I've been in this industry for 22 years, I've always had a passion for building and design, seeing my clients' reactions to the finished product is probably my favorite aspect of this job."

Erhardt Construction is an Ada-based general contractor, construction management and design/build firm with over 55 years of experience.