



2016
WOMEN
IN COMMERCIAL
CONSTRUCTION
& FACILITIES



Eyeing the road ahead

Somewhere between finalizing the strategies of 2016 and their growing to-do lists for 2017, executives from some of the industry's leading commercial construction firms spoke passionately about pushing the needle forward.

Snapshots of the current state of the marketplace were hashed out during the Women in Commercial Construction & Facilities Retreat, held August 4-7, at The Mills House Wyndham Grand Hotel in Charleston, S.C. The conference was sponsored by *Commercial Construction & Renovation* magazine.

The discussions were part of the roundtable discussion held during the three-day event, which featured strategic networking opportunities such as an intimate bus tour of historic downtown Charleston, several lunch and dinner parties, and the vaunted one-on-one meetings.

Following is the initial installment of our Retreat coverage, including a look at our afternoon roundtable forum. For more information, visit us at www.ccr-mag.com.

New business opportunities, growing the industry top wish list of Retreat attendees



Jennifer Abilez
Steak n Shake



Melisa Baune
Core State Group



Gabriella Bolm
Cedar Lake Cellars



Rita Briggs
Fairmont Sign



Kelli Buhay
Retail Maintenance Specialists



Magen Bybee
Genesis Lighting Solutions



Rebekah Cianfrocco
Level Office



Bre Coe
Level Office



Penny Czarra
AC-Tech



Patricia Davis
Innovative Dehumidifier Systems



Haylee Giere
P&C Construction



Laura Gross
American Signature Furniture



Jessica Hamilton
Porcelanosa USA



Patty Kelly
Broad Street



Sharron Koch
JHM Hotels



Karen MacCannell
The McIntosh Group



Emily McCready
Selser Schaefer Architects



Lisa McShane
Los Angeles Dodgers



Angela Peterson
The Public Library of Cincinnati



Angie Roach
Cedar Lake Cellars



Janel Scarborough
Broad Street



Rebecca Suen
Hilliker Corporation



Nicole Thompson-Floyd
TD Bank



Grace Daly
Shop Talk 360



Give us a snapshot of the most pressing items on your to do list?

Melisa Baune, Core State Group: I have a few items on my to-do list as I am sure everyone does; I am primarily focused on growing our Dallas offices' retail, hospitality and restaurant portfolios both by building new, solid connections and maintaining existing client relationships.

Sharron Koch, JHM Hotels: Right now development is really big. We're growing really fast. We have 37 hotels stateside and four under construction right now, and we have seven under renovation. There's going to be another four or five that will break ground next year. And those are just the new builds. We just went through a period where nobody was building or renovating – nobody was getting any money. That's changed now. We're just trying to keep up and manage all of it, and make sure we do it smartly.

and cost saving redesign of existing prototypes. Through this process, we help retailers achieve their company goals, whether they are increased efficiencies, reduction of construction costs and schedules, or increased customer engagement and turn-times. My job is to see where those complementary partnership opportunities are and make the match.

Nicole Thompson-Floyd, TD Bank: As you know, banking is going through major changes as our customers do more of their banking online or on-the-go. So we're trying to determine what brick and mortar means to our customers today and balance that with being everywhere they are to meet their digital needs.

It's about innovating our use of space; What does that look like? How do we develop it and make our stores a more interactive experience for our customers? Do we add more elements within the space that lead to collaboration with customers and employees?



Haylee Giere, P&C Construction: Like a lot of you have been saying, the construction industry continues to change. Companies that previously haven't been doing a whole lot of construction – new construction or remodels – are starting to again now. We have a lot of projects currently in progress, so most of what I'm focusing on is trying to make everything more efficient. A large piece of that is communication in the field. We have a new system to track communication on all of our sites. We work in multiple states, so making sure we have clear communication between our superintendents on site, project management in the office and our subcontractors is critical.

Sub-contractors are really busy right now, so finding quality ones who will do quality work for a competitive price, but still meet the schedule is quite the juggling act. There is a lot of screening taking place before they are contracted. We have numerous discussions with them to figure out if they are a good fit for our clients needs.

Seventy to eighty percent of our work is repeat business. We like to build long-term relationships with our clients, and are continually working to strengthen those. The longer a business partnership goes, the greater benefit it is for both parties. Building LTR's and making sure we meet all of our client's needs and expectation's is the top priority. It comes down to piecing together all of the smaller pieces to create a full product for our

Janel Scarborough, Broad Street:

What's hot right now is budget season. We're also finishing a vet clinic that wanted to expand into another space. It's a good learning experience for us.

Emily McCready, Selser Schaefer Architects: We service nearly all industries within the commercial market. My current focus is seeking opportunities in the retail industry, particularly restaurants, grocers and convenience stores. We are seeking brands that are looking for an architectural partner for prototypical design, maintenance and/or site adapt projects. A service that is in high demand for our retail clients is analysis

“One of our main hot topics right now are the tax credits that are going to be awarded to the affordable housing projects.”

– Patricia Davis,
Innovative Dehumidifier Systems

client. Creating a streamlined communication process that is more efficient will help accomplish that.

Patty Kelly, Broad Street: My most pressing item at this time is expanding one of our large anchor tenants. This is on the top of my list in order to make every effort to ensure we move along with this project as quickly and efficiently as possible. Unfortunately, it has been very difficult due our deadline and so many unforeseen obstacles, which have been out of our control. Aside from this project, we are in the process of multiple acquisitions and sales, which is very exciting.

Bre Coe, Level Office: We currently own and manage 10 buildings in six cities, totaling over 500,000 square feet that are in various stages of development and stabilization. Based on the success of our existing locations and the backing of our investors, Level is aggressively seeking to enter new markets and fill our pipeline with new projects. What's hot on my to do list is primarily on the acquisitions front – finding new buildings in multiple markets for us to potentially buy, which involves underwriting the construction scope/budget and the business plan.

Besides our exciting plans for growth, another hot item is finding ways to add value to our existing centers and constantly adapting to the needs of our tenants. We've seen great success in renting out smaller, budget-friendly offices (less than 100 square feet and starting at \$349/month), so we've begun adding these offices where there is space – primarily in areas like storage closets and basements.

Oftentimes, there is a substantial amount of untapped value in under-utilized space throughout different buildings that can be maximized through developing more offices or other amenities for our clients. We have also capitalized on pent-up demand for flexible, 1,000-3,000-square-foot executive suites that hold 15-50 employees that are able to achieve substantially higher lease rates than conventional office.

Karen MacCannell, The McIntosh Group: I have made some very, very good relationships at events like this. The key is to continue to build and nurture them. It's about not letting people fall through the cracks, making sure that someone on our team stays in contact with them. So keeping in touch is always pressing.



“What I am finding is that a lot of companies are exploring the thermoformed sign faces for their signage.”

– Rita Briggs, Fairmont Sign

In order to make sure we continue to stay top of mind with them, we produce helpful materials including our CCR mini-magazine “Commercial Transformations,” white papers, an online ADA Question and Answer forum called AskBrad on our website, etc. But it can't be just about making a sale; it's about making real connections. We don't want people to turn into “pressing items” even though their potential project might be.

We just make friends, and learn what their needs are... and when a project comes up, be it in 2 weeks or 2 years, hopefully they'll think of us first because by then we are a trusted resource.

Jennifer Abilez, Steak n Shake: We have a long list of non-traditional formats, including universities and casinos. We continue to add these formats to our brand portfolio because of our flexible design options. Our smallest footprint is a 460-square-foot, and our largest non-traditional counter service is 1,200 square feet, not including the dining room.

We have also redesigned our freestanding full service prototype and added a freestanding counter service prototype to our brand. We are growing our franchising business in the domestic and international segment of the restaurant industry.

Kelli Buhay, Retail Maintenance Specialists: We've been expanding on the restaurant/casual dining type of retailer, attending RFMA and Restaurant category shows. We've recently won “Vendor of the Year” with Samsung, which features 4,100 shop-in-shop locations, which we are all

very proud of. It's not an easy task because of the dynamics of being in Target, Wal-mart and Best Buy locations, among others.

I've been with the company for two-and-a-half years, since that time, we've doubled in size. I've been working very closely with our VP of Operations as we continue to grow to keep ourselves in check on our hiring and our 90-day training program, which assists and preps our account representatives to become acclimated to our programs, operational processes and our strict attention to detail.

Rita Briggs, Fairmont Sign: So, as national accounts manager, my priorities are always the priorities of my clients. So

the things that are important and hot on the top of their list are the topics that are really on the top of mine. What I am finding is that a lot of companies are exploring the thermoformed sign faces for their signage. While we still do plenty of channel letters and other types of signs, we have a very large facility, and we're able to manufacture very large signage with thermoformed faces. We do it in a special way. Our president does a lot of the innovation for our company. He has come up with some innovative ways of thermoforming signs. It depends on what the customer wants and needs.

The process works like this: You take a sheet of plastic or polycarbonate, and heat it up to a high temperature. Then it starts to get soft. Next, you put it over this wooden die and then vacuums suck it down. It turns it into this amazing sign. It's something we've been doing more of because it has a three dimensional look and is very clean looking.

Rebekah Cianfrocco, Level Office: There's always a million things going on, so everything's a hot button. We have a short construction schedule, so I have to make sure we're on top of things. I have to make sure I get my furniture and material orders in and keep

“Something that is surprising me is the current cost of construction. Our original 2016 maintenance package bid came back approximately 20 percent higher than our published estimate.”

— Angela Peterson, The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County

everything organized. That's super important, so we're trying to come up with a non-complicated way to keep everything organized. Basically improve procedure and processes. When you have a fairly new company, a small team and five projects at different stages going on at the same time, keeping things on track and going smoothly is key to success.

Lisa McShane, Los Angeles Dodgers: For us, the running theme right now is, are we going to play baseball in October? That makes things busy for all of us. Now, we're talking budgets and seeing what construction needs to be done in a very short window of time for the 2017 season for all our facilities. Between season-end, all the way through spring training in March, I can work 16-hour days, as all requests go in at the same time. I am constantly juggling my time between lots of different projects, which is why I rely a lot on relationships, as that is how I accomplish the tasks.

CCR: How many retail outlets to you have at the stadium?

LA Dodgers McShane: There are nine different large retail outlets as well as numerous retail kiosks throughout the stadium. Last year, we redid the Stadium Dugout Club. We also built two Overlook Bars so fans can enjoy a one-of-a-kind view overlooking the bullpen. Baseball is a very old tradition with the same type of office culture. Everything is a slow-moving process. There are lots of department heads that specialize in their own respect fields.

Patricia Davis, Innovative Dehumidifier Systems: One of our main hot topics right now are the tax credits that are going to be awarded to the affordable housing projects. Our in-wall dehumidifier is an Energy Star-rated appliance, so developers that utilize our appliance receive tax credits. But our product is also seen as a luxury product - and we need it to be seen as a necessity, so we have to make sure we maintain those relationships with the developers when those credits are awarded. We don't want our product cut based on budget constraints.

Maintaining relationships with the developers is key. We also have to maintain relationships with the general public, because we sell through our website. This has been quite explosive for our business. Consumers didn't know that our product even existed, and Innovative Dehumidifier Systems is the sole developer of the IW-25 in wall dehumidifier. We've landed a lot of business, but in the same interim, we need to maintain existing relationships while creating new ones.

Angela Peterson, The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County:

I am currently working on a re-bid of our maintenance package and a remodel and expansion of our Loveland branch library. The maintenance package consists of

HVAC equipment replacement in 14 of our buildings along with some roof replacements. The Loveland branch is expanding into an existing storefront space. It is growing from approximately 5,500 square feet to 8,550 square feet.

Core State Group's Baune: Companies are outsourcing more and more in all sectors. On the Program Management side of Core States Group, we are seeing a growing pressure on our clients to reduce costs and streamline processes. Clients will come to us to utilize our program managers to run their programs, allowing them more flexibility to use their internal resources elsewhere. For example, we have had one of our full-time project managers embedded in Fed-Ex Office's headquarters for over a year now working as an extension of their staff. Gregg (Wheeler, project manager) has recently moved back into our office while they plan out their next program and he or another team member will return when needed.

Gabriella Bolm, Cedar Lake Cellars: Due to our growth, we are focusing on three major areas of interest. First, we're restructuring our company and have hired additional staff. Second, we now have a very talented and experienced leadership team who are completely focused on putting a new system in place so that our company can work more efficiently. And lastly, we hired a new executive chef and Chef de Cuisine, who serves as a liaison between the kitchen and customers. Our primary goal is to have healthier fare, so we plan to offer an extensive selection of organic food options. Food accounts for 30 percent of our total revenue and, while we are running a winery, we have a tremendous opportunity to promote the food aspect of our business. We are looking forward to taking every facet of our business to the next level.

Rebecca Suen, Hilliker Corporation: We have had some very exciting and amazing opportunities recently, one of which was the

collectibles, such as classic cars, boats, RVs, motorcycles (etc.). Basically, The Place is your ultimate man cave. These private storages range from about 700 square feet to 4,000 square feet. We are promoting it as a personal space away from home.

Penny Czarra, AC-Tech: What's trending for us as a building product manufacturer, and what I see happening relevant for others, is that there's now a return to reality where you cannot just say you're an expert by saying it's "in your catalog".

As a result of the Great Recession, construction product manufacturers expanded their catalogs in hopes of increasing revenues. In many cases, they began offering products for which they did not have the technical knowledge or technical support capacity. Consolidation happened everywhere. One-Stop shopping took hold. The days of the product specialist seemed numbered. Oh, and technical support services and personnel were also cut during this time as a way to improve profit margins.

But now there is a definite trend back towards product manufacturers partnering with each other based on their areas of expertise. That's ultimately good for the end customer because they get the best solution for their particular project. Take our case. We specialize in the coatings that go on the concrete before the final flooring is installed. It requires a very specialized knowledge base without which the risk of flooring failure is dramatically increased. So the trend we see is that flooring product manufacturers are increasingly working together to offer the customer the best combination of products rather than offering everything from just one catalog.

Laura Gross, American Signature

Furniture: We are remodeling and re-evaluating our retail spaces for we know that our customer shops differently. We want to provide them with the best possible experience, so that they can find what they want for their home.

We are partnering with folks like Chip and Joanna Gaines, who have the same belief that everyone deserves a space they love and no one should over pay for furniture. Their new line of product – Magnolia Home Furniture – has been in our stores since Labor Day weekend. It has been a huge hit with our customers.

For me, the biggest thing on my to-do list is vendor management. I firmly believe that aligning our vision and values and purpose is important, for it aligns us on the same thing - the customer. As a



Union Seventy Center (in St. Louis). Union Seventy is a first class industrial business park on approximately 161 acres. It was formally a General Motors assembly plant and conveniently located right by downtown and the Lambert airport. I would say Union Seventy Center is a best value for modern warehouse space in our MSA. Hilliker is thrilled to partner up with Union Seventy and acquire more tenants for the center.

On a slightly different note, another remarkable real estate deal we are promoting is the luxurious storage condominium suites called The Place. It is located in Chesterfield, Mo., which is about 30 miles west of St. Louis. It's designed for people with luxurious toys and

“Due to our growth, we are focusing on three major areas of interest. We are looking forward to taking every facet of our business to the next level.”

– Gabriella Bolm, Cedar Lake Cellars

team, we can focus creating a better experience for our customers – make furniture shopping easy.

Magen Bybee, Genesis Lighting Solutions: Currently, we are expanding our brand into the hospitality and storage space market.

LED consumerism is still untapped in many areas, so the answer to this question is expanding on a weekly basis. We are already specified in many national programs such as Domino's, Papa Murphy's, Red Lobster, The Little Gym, and Extra Space, to name a few. Some of these are franchised based business, so we are constantly building that clientele as well. Currently, we are helping Fiesta Restaurants expand their brand and redesign many of their concepts, which has been a very fun adventure.

CCR: What type of trends are you seeing out there?

Public Library of Cincinnati's

Peterson: Something that is surprising me is the current cost of construction. Our original 2016 maintenance package bid came back approximately 20 percent

higher than our published estimate. This shocked me. Normally our estimates are pretty close. I was also surprised that we are not getting many bidders. Everyone seems to be very busy.

Steak n Shake's Abilez: We are also seeing construction bids coming in higher than last year. Our budgets that are only eight to twelve months old are significantly out of date. This affects the bottom-line and influences our franchisee's decisions. They may not develop multiple restaurants as previously expected.

“We have had some very exciting and amazing opportunities recently. We are promoting it as a personal space away from home.”

– Rebecca Suen, Hilliker Corporation

Retail Maintenance Specialists' Buhay:

It seems that everybody has been on a growth spurt for a while now. What I'm finding is even with the addition of hiring a third-party vendor, everything seemed to be higher. If one can turn around and get the business at a 20 percent higher mark-up, they'll take it. I think that has a lot to do with what you're saying – we have seen it as well.

Genesis Lighting Solutions' Bybee:

The LED business is evolving rapidly. So



we're cutting our costs all the time. The prices have to stay market-able to stay in business. Therefore, although the electrician's time might becoming more expensive- the product they are installing is becoming more inexpensive.

Jessica Hamilton, Porcelanosa USA:

In 2016, you can expect to see the use of more bold metallics as well as hexagon shaped tiles. Metallics can add so much personality to any room, whether used as an accent wall or a simple backsplash. The same applies to hexagon shaped tiles. You can create classical patterns using hexagons with flooring tile as well as walls; make them large scale or small – the choice is ultimately up to your own design aesthetic.

We've also seen a shift to larger format tiles. Porcelanosa has a wide variety of large format tiles such as our Air Slate collection that is available in 47-inch x 94-inch and our X-Light collections, which are available in 39-inch x118-inch.

Porcelanosa also produces luxury vinyl tile that is available in many different styles including natural wood, woven textiles and brushed natural woods.

Grace Daly, Shop Talk 360: A pressing issue that I hear

of across the industry is the lack of skilled trades people in the field. Since the economic downturn in 2008, there appears to have been a mass departure from the industry – especially so in the facilities sector. People have left the industry, whether they lost their jobs, lost their businesses or retired. Also, much of the younger generation has shifted to other professions such as technology. As industry leaders, we have a responsibility to raise the awareness and importance of this profession and also mentor the newcomers.

“We’re trying to determine what brick and mortar means to our customers today. We’re looking to balance that with the mobile side.”

– Nicole Thompson-Floyd, TD Bank

Retail Maintenance Specialists'

Buhay: It seems as if the up and coming generations behind us are looking for a quick buck. They feel entitled to make six figures as soon as they decide they're going to go into the workforce. I'm a Baby Boomer, and when I was younger I took on two or three jobs to get what I needed. It seems as if there's a shift with that. We really are losing the trained craftsman, the trained carpenter and the expert who was really talented. What they do is an art.

AC-Tech's Czarra: We lost a lot of craftsmen. In 2008 and 2009, a lot of these family businesses were devastated. The parents left the business and started to do something else. So a good part of the issue is that we just don't have that next generation coming up. They don't want to lose everything again. If they haven't been trained, they have moved on.

Retail Maintenance Specialists'

Buhay: Those regional entrepreneurs, if you will.

AC-Tech's Czarra: Yes, they really were entrepreneurs. They went on to do something else to survive. Maybe it was construction related, or maybe not. But they certainly felt vulnerable. It happened everywhere around the country,



and there really hasn't been a recovery yet. So yes, it has really limited the number of skilled workers out there.

Retail Maintenance Specialists' Buhay: In 2007/2008, this happened in my husband's field as well. We were living in Georgia. We were hit really hard due to the continued growth since the '96 Olympics. For example, they would build shopping centers everywhere, but nobody moved into them. It just stopped dead.

Some areas of the country, Texas, for example, were not hit as hard. I think there were so many businesses that just went under and builders were left with nothing. So there's a lot to be said about the lack of skilled jobs out there and what it means today. There is a big movement right now by associations in the flooring and concrete market to start skilled training programs. They are on a mission – unions and the private sector – to train the next generation of workers. It's an effort that will pay for itself in the

CCR: How do you fix that? These types of conversation have been happening for several years. When the recession hit, some people just left the construction industry.

Retail Maintenance Specialists' Buhay: They had no business. In my husband's case, 75 percent of his client base was gone. Something he built for 30 years was gone – all of the relationships and business, gone. He rebounded, but many didn't. For example, a major builder in Georgia, a partner of his, was told by the banks to cut their losses and close out. They said you're just not going to win here. It was sad.

P&C Construction's Giere: We're experiencing this a lot with our superintendents who are either retiring or wanting to help train the next generation to replace them when they do retire. One of the things that we have started to do is to visit local high schools & colleges that have programs related to construction. We talk to the students and put the vibe out there about what we do. A lot of young people may not recognize construction as a career that will be able to take them somewhere. It's about building relationships and sharing the available opportunities.



long run. They have to find the talent, whether it's the millworker or carpentry area. I am constantly saying that people should get interns. We have to start training these young people in our trades before it becomes a dying breed.

AC-Tech's Czarra: It's not something you can learn electronically.

Retail Maintenance Specialists' Buhay: No, it's not. You have to physically do it. They have to get out there and learn. We all learn at different levels. I am a doer. I need to physically do something in order to learn how it works. Learning a craft takes time and effort.

“Customer service and the timeliness of responding to any bid is important, especially since we plan to triple in size within the next two years.”

– Melisa Baune, Core State Group

Hilliker Corp.'s Suen: Now this is obviously a broad generalization, but speaking for the younger generation, I think the mentality for some is, “What's in it for me?” If we're not aware of the potentials of a career—we don't know what's in it for us—automatically, that option is out. We don't even want to take the risk to find out the rewards.

You know, we grew up in a world where instant gratification and stability are placed well above time investments and risks. If something is not within our reach immediately, it's not something we will consider.

So in the case of real estate construction, if the younger generation is not educated on the benefits of having a career in that field, then we are less likely to pursue it.

Retail Maintenance Specialists' Buhay: Do you think a part of it is the lack of direction or the lack of wanting to do something physically? Let's face it – the mentality is to become doctors and lawyers, not carpenters. In my opinion, you can succeed in whatever you do, shine shoes, wait tables, whatever it is you

“We are in the process of some acquisitions and sales, which is very exciting.”

— Patty Kelly, Broad Street

choose to do, you just need to do your best. If you do your best — you can make an excellent living. It's about having work ethic and not expecting everything be handed to you. My parents didn't hand me anything so I had to work for it. I think that's the disconnect.

Hilliker Corp.'s Suen: I think there is definitely a disconnect. Like I said before, our present culture encourages instant gratification and results. How do we become successful fast? How do we get rich fast? Manual labor doesn't necessarily represent that, but the idea of going to law school or medical school, getting out and having a high salary job does. It's a much more streamlined approach, which is far different from the “grind til you make it” mentality in the past.

Retail Maintenance Specialists'

Buhay: Not everybody can be a doctor or a lawyer. We need mechanics, too. Do you remember “The Jetsons?” Who would have thought watching back then than when a phone call came in the person would pop up on a screen? I mean, that's FaceTime today. Everything is automated these days. Businesses keep cutting and cutting people, so, why not learn a trade?

TD Bank's Thompson-Floyd:

I think part of the problem is that we're requiring kids at age 15 or 16 to know what they want to do for the rest of their lives. I can tell you, I still don't know what I want to be when I grow up. Some high schools have designated programs like international business or engineering. For a percentage of kids these programs are perfect, but for most they have no idea what these jobs entail.

I think we're doing them a disservice by not allowing them to explore different things, by not offering an education that exposes them to a wide range of possibilities and opportunities. There are so many things out there. If we want today's kids to have better drive, we have to give them better tools. And all of the different programs that could provide that are the first to get cut. We want people to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps, but what if they don't have boots? So how do we provide the tools that

they need? Where should we provide career fairs that showcase different career options? How do we teach them that everyone's definition and path to success is different?

JHM Hotels' Koch: I think one of the things we have to think about as an industry is how can we make it attractive again? How do we make it attractive to Millennials? We went through this whole

period in 2008 and 2009 where it was the bottom-line. Survival was all that mattered. The lowest bid won the war. And that meant you didn't hire the guy with five kids. You hired whoever had the lowest bid. And we got away from having a responsibility to our craftsmen. We took the lowest possible bids, and that drove everybody out of the market. I think if we want to be really true to ourselves and say we have a big responsibility to these craftsmen or to these trades to take care of them, we need to pay them a fair wage. I think this helps everybody.

Retail Maintenance Specialists'

Buhay: But typically, if you have a relationship with someone that you really adore and you really want to work with, do you not turn around and say, “Okay, we want to deal with you, but at this point, you're 20 percent higher. What can we do to even this out a little bit?”

JHM Hotels' Koch: I mean, I have — I personally have gone back to some of my favorite vendors and said, “You're probably not going to get awarded this job because you're 20 percent higher.” And sometimes they'll come back and say, “Thank you very much. Can we rebid?”

That means everybody gets to rebid, and they still may not come out the winner. And then what do you do? Do you play that game until you give it to them? Or do you cut your losses and say, “You're not going to get the job.”

There comes a time when you want to be loyal to them, but you want to make a good business decision too. So where do you draw that line? **CCR**



'Round Charleston

Cities historic footprint on display for attendees



Cobblestoned streets. 18th Century homes and plantations.

The Battery. The museums and churches. And that city market. There isn't much that the City of Charleston doesn't have in the way of historical beauty and preservation. And thanks to an air conditioned ride in and around the city, attendees of the Women in Commercial Construction & Facilities Retreat received a taste of it all. The tour was part of the *Commercial Construction & Renovation* event, held August 4-7 at The Mills House Wyndham Grand Hotel in downtown Charleston. The retreat featured three days of networking, including a lunch and dinner gathers, industry roundtable discussion and the highly anticipated one-on-one meetings.

Blackbeard's last stand

Attendees visit final resting place of famous pirate leader



While attendees were busy exchanging business

opportunities, their significant others were mired in a trip through time, which included the place where the city held Blackbeard. The Provost Dungeon, which rests beneath the Old Exchange Building, is a fancy architectural jewel designed to house 18th-century assemblies. The building housed, among other historic gatherings, a "ghoulish prison" of the Revolution, the place where George Washington greeted his fellow citizens, a meeting place where slaves were sold for generations, and the balcony from which the Declaration of Independence was read. The tour, sponsored by *Commercial Construction & Renovation* magazine, was part of the Women in Commercial Construction & Facilities Retreat, held August 4-7 at The Mills House Wyndham Grand Hotel in downtown Charleston.

I'll have what they're having

Foodies get the 'Taste of Charleston'

If the history and architecture isn't enough to pull you in, the food in Charleston, S.C., will finish the job. When attendees weren't talking shop and exchanging opportunities, they were treated to several of Charleston's cooler downtown restaurants, including Magnolias and Cypress for dinners, and lunch at 82 Queen. The foodie treks were part of the Women in Commercial Construction & Facilities Retreat, sponsored by *Commercial Construction & Renovation* magazine. The event was held August 4-7 at The Mills House Wyndham Grand Hotel in downtown Charleston.



Magnolias...

A trendsetter in Charleston's culinary renaissance, Magnolias opened to raved reviews and expectations – paving the way scores other restaurants across the South. Led by chefs Don Drake and Kelly Franz, Magnolias remains a local staple – a place where the soul of the South meets the best in innovated dishes. (magnoliascharleston.com)

Cypress...

Housed in a historic two-story building on East Bay Street in the downtown district, Cypress is led by two-time James Beard nominee Craig Deihl. Using Lowcountry ingredients to showcase Deihl's signature style, its award-winning in-house charcuterie program features more than 90 types of meats (cypresscharleston.com)



82 Queen...

With a 300-year-old address nestled in downtown Charleston's historic French Quarter for the past 34 years, 82 Queen has become known for its gracious Southern hospitality and fresh local cuisine. Spread throughout three buildings, patrons can eat in one of its 11 quaint dining areas, including a turn-of-the-century courtyard featuring a mammoth Magnolia tree. (www.82queen.com)

