

# Women in construction leaving impression in Tahoe

By Alexandra Spychalsky, Moonshine Ink

Construction is a driving force in the Tahoe economy.

The industry is the third largest employer in Tahoe, with 12.6 percent of the local population working at construction-based businesses. And yet, women are underrepresented in the field.

But some women are pioneers in the industry and have risen to the top of their trades, from engineering to architecture, from contracting to sales. They all agree that women face barriers in construction, but assert the industry benefits from the different perspectives that women contribute, and are optimistic about the future.

Patty Heller is the matriarch of Heller Construction, the company she and her husband Bob started together 30 years ago. In the '70s, Heller worked in interior design retail, and Bob was a carpenter. The two joined professional forces in 1987 to form what is now a multi-generational family business that specializes in building custom homes. Their sons Cody and Dan are a partner and a carpenter with the company, respectively.

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