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Women in Construction

Dana Calonge

Project Manager
Nathan Alterman Electric Co., Ltd.

A past president of the San Antonio Chapter of the *National Association of Women In Construction (NAWIC)*, project manager **Dana Calonge** has 22 years of experience in electrical construction. She joined **Nathan Alterman Electric Co., Ltd.** as a Vocational Education student while still in high school.

"I worked on my first jobsite at the St. Anthony Hotel Remodel," Dana recalled. "The combined look, feel, smell and energy of the construction process snared my interest and I was hooked."

Dana, who attended the University of Texas at San Antonio, has supplement-



ed her professional education by completing the *National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA)* Field Managers' Conference as well as the Construction Project Management's Effective Project Planning and Management course. In over two decades her on-the-job project management experience includes the Marriott Rivercenter Hotel, Adam's Mark Hotel, the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center Expansion, and the SBC Center Arena projects.

"As project manager for a prime electrical contractor, I'm responsible for all costs associated with an assigned project, including the completion of the project on time and within budget; ensuring that manpower requirements are met through the duration of the project; material procurement and timely delivery to project; pricing and implementation of all change orders; and scheduling."

When *San Antonio Construction News* asked Dana to define her greatest challenge, she replied, "The most challenging aspect of my job is time management of daily tasks. The first phone call of the day will typically disrupt whatever I had planned. Most projects require rapid mobilization and have fast track schedules, so every second counts. Typically, I move

from Plan A to Plan Z before noon each day."

If Dana could improve one aspect of the industry, it would be to revert back to the way business used to be done.

"I'm referring to the days when an oral contract was as binding as that of a written contract. The personal interaction between colleagues seems to have dissipated. Unfortunately, now we consult our legal council to confirm that we're able to say good morning correctly."

Her advice to young women who choose a construction-related career path would be to learn as much as they can about all aspects of their job.

"Take advantage of on-the-job training, apprenticeship programs, and any available educational courses," Dana recommended. "Always work hard, strive to do your best to overcome the obstacles, but be yourself!"