

Kim Roberts discovers opportunity in developer surety niche at Trisura

STAFF WRITER – The Ontario Construction Report Special Feature

Spurred by an interest in finding a diverse and evolving career, Kim Roberts moved on from her background in banking to discover the surety and construction industries. She is now a developer surety manager at Trisura.

Roberts describes developer surety as a niche industry, one that she first learned about during her initial job interview. Today, she has gained more than a decade of experience working with developers of various sizes and levels of expertise. During this time, she has become knowledgeable about a very dynamic industry.

Roberts says that although there is a significantly larger demographic of men in the industry, the rate in which women have entered this space has steadily increased over time. “Things have come a long way,” she says. “I am fortunate in that I have female colleagues who have paved the way, making it easier for me and others to succeed in the industry.”

Overall, Roberts says she has been well received but understands why men encounter a learning curve in working with women. In most cases, she says it doesn’t take long before the main concern is expertise, and the contributions she is able to bring to the table alleviate doubts.

Roberts understands that rapport and relationships are key, and that networking activities are important. Though golf is still a key activity, she says the forums have definitely diversified.

“There are plenty of expanded networking opportunities such as learning events, site visits, milestone industry galas, holiday events, and social occasions for everyone, regardless of gender or interests. The industry, as big as it is, is also very quaint and opportunities to get together, to meet people and to hone relationships, are wonderful and a key component to success.”

Among her greatest challenges is finding creative ways to close complex deals that are often atypical. Another challenge is anticipating where her clients will be in the future



and how to tailor programs to meet their needs accordingly. “This is part of why I really like what I do – the people, the diversity between the analytical processes, the legal details and all the multi-faceted information that must be considered.”

With Trisura, Roberts says she has found an organization where she can continue to grow. “The company is nimble, dynamic, willing to evolve to meet the needs of the current market and be creative, yet disciplined. It is a good place to be a part of.”

Enjoying her own career and appreciating the many opportunities available, Roberts recommends developer surety as a career for women, but offers some advice. “To succeed, people have to believe in and be committed to

what they are doing. This is the only way you can stay ahead. This job is constantly evolving. There is diversity. One day I can be in a suit and the next in a hard hat on site somewhere. There are opportunities to build a career... to evolve a career.”

She also says it is important for women not to typecast the industry based on gender. “Have confidence in what you do and believe there are good people willing to mentor and help you get to where you want to be.”

For her part, she says she has been mentored by some great people along the way and she intends to offer the same to others.



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