

WTC 'Impactful Organizations' with Christi, Angela, and Alex

[00:00:00] **Christi Powell:** Hey, podcast listeners. Thank you for joining us today. I'm here today with Angela and Alex. How are you guys doing? Awesome. Good. Good. So today we are introducing our guest co host. Um,

but a lot of times it's going to be because we want her perspective on her generation of ideas and Um, forward thinking that they have, um, we love learning from Alex. So we hope that you do too. So Alex is with us today. Today we are going to talk about organizations, the organizations that we love and we're a part of.

And this is just a very small list. Keep in mind if we missed you, I'm sorry, we only have 20 minutes. So, um, these are just some of the things that we have been involved with. We've been able to support, we've been able to get support from, and we're really proud to know these folks. This is not a, an extensive list of all the things that are out there because there's so many great people doing great things.

So we want to highlight some of the best podcasts we've had on the show. One of them is Jennifer Wilkinson with NCCER. Deb Bradley with, um, she's actually the North Eastern Director for Women Construction Owners and Executives. I'm happy to say that I'm on the board in 2024. Really excited about that opportunity and, um, just lifting up women construction owners and executives.

It seems like it's a very small pool of folks and being able to be a part of that and help build that, um, organization makes me happy and a lot of women are gaining a lot of knowledge from that. So let's just start off, I'm going to let Angela start off and talk about some of the, of the organizations that are really important to her and that she's involved in.

[00:02:02] **Angela Gardner:** Sure. Well, these are organizations that we're all involved in and, and actually most of these have been on our podcast. So, um, and the first one I'll start with is Girl Up Greenville. Got to say that right. And that's, I mean, we had Kim and Jessica on and they are doing wonderful things in our area, in the upstate of South Carolina to help the underrepresented or females population here.

And I just can't say it right enough things. You need to go find them and follow them and even support them. I'll share one more and that would be Perla DeLuca. And she has started, she has her own construction company and she started a school. Iowa School of Construction, and she is doing some awesome work too.

And I think it's only about two years old, right? Mm hmm.

[00:02:50] **Christi Powell:** Yeah. They're doing very well. They've had several graduates already.

[00:02:53] **Angela Gardner:** I mean, that's just, so two great female run organizations doing awesome things for females.

[00:03:01] **Christi Powell:** Yes. And for our workforce.

[00:03:04] **Angela Gardner:** Yes, exactly. For our workforce.

[00:03:07] **Christi Powell:** Anytime we're building up folks, um, it's going to help our workforce, right?

Oh, exactly. Alex. Name a few of the organizations that you love. Yeah, um,

[00:03:18] **Alex Iacovelli:** I have way too many to list, like you said, in 20 minutes. But a few of my favorites that we're all involved in are, of course, Habitat for Humanity. They're amazing all over the country and just do such great work for Everybody, but I've also had the privilege of being on the women build committee in our area 2 years in a row, which has just been really special to me that is special.

[00:03:45] **Christi Powell:** And then, of

[00:03:46] **Alex Iacovelli:** course, the women's builders council, I know, I think Renee sacks has been on. Yeah, I cast before her and, of course, that whole organization, um, every time I go. To any of their events, like just the community there is so amazing and uplifting and of course, Christy would never tell you, but she's won an award through them.

Another great 1 for community is the National Association. A women in construction, I think we had Jennifer. Jennifer morale morale here, and we love her too, but that organization specifically is always just so warm and inviting and I feel like everywhere across the country that we go, those women just.

Are there to help lift each other up, and it's a great

[00:04:30] **Christi Powell:** group. Yeah, it is a great organization for making you feel like you're not alone on an island, right? Yep. I am happy to, to be able to mention a few others. Uh, Brian Gallagher with, uh, Groundbreak Carolinas. They have a, uh, publication. And, um, Dan Polstra and Joan I'll let you pronounce Okay, Krause.

I was going Pronounce her last name. All three of those folks are doing some great things with their publication, just shouting out for our industry, all the things that we're struggling with, all the things that are great going on, all the people who are making an impact, they even have an awards every year.

And Angela and I got to win one of their groundbreak awards. We got this little statue of a shovel and, uh, really excited. Yes. Really excited to have that. Just that company who really sees the need for supporting women and, and those are not all women, which I love that about Brian Gallagher and Dan Polster.

They really do care about women, uh, understanding the construction industry and wanting to get involved. And then Mike, um, I can't say enough about Mike, our president of Associated Builders and Contractors. Um, you have to look up ABC. I get to be on the executive board this year. For ABC as a secretary in the Carolinas, but I'm nationally involved with IDM.

I'm on that committee for inclusion, diversity, and merit. And I typically don't sit in a seat that I don't believe in the goals and the aspirations and the inspiration that comes from the organization. So really proud to be a part of ABC because they are making a big difference in our industry and our workforce problem.

Um, they're addressing that. They are doing a lot of training, so excited about ABC as well. I think we have mentioned a lot of these, um, that we wanted to talk about today. Let's talk a little bit. I'd love to hear from Alex because she is not my age. Uh, what these organizations mean to you personally and professionally, like not one in particular, just how it, it affects your business position or how it affects you personally.

Would love to hear the addition that that makes for you.

[00:06:50] **Alex Iacovelli:** Yeah, absolutely. I think joining organizations like these is probably one of the most valuable things you can do in your career. Honestly, the amount of growth personally and professionally that's come from,

you know, joining committees in these organizations has just been like, I can't even.

Describe, um, you know, I think everybody's there with a common goal, right? Everybody's there for the same reason. Everybody's there to help each other, support each other and help their business and support their business and all of those things. So it can be a really good place to find support and mentorship.

Like I know we talk a lot about mentorship. It's a really great place to find things like that. Also, of course, an amazing way to make connections and build relationships and do business with people that you have a personal relationship with, which in my opinion is the best way to do it. I'd rather do business with my friend any day than some stranger.

So yeah, good

[00:07:52] **Christi Powell:** point there.

is focused on connecting the design, construction, economic development, and commercial real estate communities in the Carolinas. Our wide range of exclusive content and thought leadership is intended to help design and construction related businesses be successful. Groundbreak is the only platform that reaches key AEC decision makers and influencers in our two state region.

Visit groundbreakcarolinas.com and be sure to sign up for our free bi weekly newsletter.

How about you, Angela? I know you've been involved in many organizations over the years and um, just love to hear your insight on it. I just started being involved in organizations three years ago, so I think your extensive uh, background might be really

[00:08:53] **Angela Gardner:** beneficial to us. Yeah, I've kind of lessened mine later in life.

It was early on I was Yeah, I go, you know, first, before I answer that question, I just want to mention a couple other organizations. Oh, okay. Yeah. And that would be Tanya Hicks. She can do anything. She's out of Atlanta. She has also been on our podcast. She is awesome. Yeah. And there is, um, Peter with, um, AGC associated association of general contractors and, um, they recently launched with Procore Project Engage, which is so awesome.

Such a cool leadership platform for construction folks. And lastly, there is crew collab that we had eight and Amanda and Hayden on our podcast from that nonprofit that is doing wonderful things in the, for the skill trades. And so you asked me the question about like. How's it impacted me? I loved Alex's questions and how I would like to respond is like my, what came from like examples of what she shared.

Like, so one of the, I've been, I've sat on boards and everything, and I would just, just suggest to everyone do exactly what Christie said. You have to feel committed and inspired and passionate and driven behind whatever it is that they're pushing. I mean, you can't do it unless that, and you have to give 100.

That was my thing too. If I couldn't give 110%. I didn't need to be on that board, or participate in that organization. And, of course, if you're in an organization, you need to get involved. You need to get on a committee. And, I mean, I have been so grateful because of all the friendships I've made. And, actually, out of one of them, and I'll just mention their name here, it's Crew Network.

I actually spawned off of that to other groups that I'm now like, if we call ourselves the BA women, and it's five of us that we get together for lunch at least five times a year and we do nothing but just share and help each other. And I know I can call these women and they would help. I could text them or reach out to them, and they would do anything for me.

And then Rachel and I started the Women Construction Forum out of that group because we met, and we saw a need, and you know, we addressed it, and so, so many things can come. Um, and you know, all of the things that Alex said, I have learned so much. I have gained so many connections. I have made so many friendships.

I mean, there's some that I've known for 30 years and I still talk to today. Of course, some of them are retired and drinking, you know, coladas on the beach,

but it's just, it's something that you can feel good about. and contribute to, but then you can also know when you need to end it too.

[00:11:45] **Christi Powell:** Yeah, that is the tough part. And I'm going to share that a little bit since I started three years ago. And I, I really, I, I handle a lot of different areas in the United States.

So I really didn't know where to start. So honestly, I dove into a lot of things because I took this role in 2020. So I could be in a lot of states in one day. So

that was cool because virtually that was possible, but it is really important for you to find what's the best. And one of the things that I make really clear with our team is it's got to be a good ROI for me personally.

It has to be a good ROI for our department and it has to be a good ROI for our company. And if it doesn't fit all three of those, that's how we started dwindling our, our participation down as far as my department goes. Me personally. I'm all about what I said earlier. I have to truly, I want to be, if I feel like I want to be a cheerleader for you, that's the place for me.

And Women Construction Forum is a, you know, it's a cheerleading place, Skilled Trades Alliance, which I forgot to mention earlier. We are a group of people, Al Boulding's been on our podcast and so has Adam Hoots, I'm on that board. We're a group of people just wanting to pull people together to make the workforce better.

I think they all have been. I think every one of them have been on. Jennifer's been on too. I forgot about that. Yeah. The only person we haven't had on is Mary Allison. We need to have her on. She's great at HR stuff. Yeah. But yeah. So I think it's really important that you feel on the inside and the outside that this is an organization that you can support before.

You decide I'm going to put 110 percent effort in, and then I'm just going to tell you from experience, jumping into a whole bunch of them at once. As long as it's COVID and you can be on virtually all the time is great. But if you can't just be virtual and you have to be in person and you start working in a committee or a board, you really do need to devote, you know, Real time to where you've chosen to be a cheerleader and to be the best that you can be for the organization so that you can do a great job or you feel dissatisfied or feel like you haven't done a good enough job.

So just be careful as women. I think we're notorious for taking on more than we can handle. Because we think we can, and then we realize that we've fallen short because, you know, our hands are in too many things. Just be conscious of that. I wish somebody had told me that three years ago. I think Angela tried to tell me, and I wasn't listening very well, but, um, I did listen.

That's how we started, uh, pulling some things out, but I think it's important.

[00:14:25] **Angela Gardner:** One thing I want to add, Christine, I think you'll add to this, is the thing I got when I did that too, We've all done that, gotten too

involved. I started to learn to ask, because I think us women, we say yes before we ask, what is involved?

Yeah, good point. How much do you need to meet? What do you expect of me? What do you know when all of this helps you prioritize and along with I agree so much the ROI for yourself, your company and your department really matters. So,

[00:14:58] **Christi Powell:** yeah, thank you for sharing that. That's, that's very true. Um, I'm so good at that now.

You're next. Okay. Like I would like to, but how often are we going to meet and what do you need from me? Yeah. Right. Yeah. Like if you need me to spend a ton of time on the backend working on paperwork. I'm probably not going to have enough time to be good and it's okay to say no. Yep. And this is how I say no.

I respect you more. I think I like to do things with my whole heart. And if I can't, I feel like I'm not going to do a good job for you. That's how I say no. That's how I say it too. It's, it's much easier. Like I, if my whole heart can't be involved, I'm not gonna do a great job for you. And it's okay. Um, to be able to say that because people do admire that because they're asking you Mm-Hmm.

Because they do need your help. So if you tell them yes, and then you can't help, that really puts that person in a bind. Yeah. Mm-Hmm, . So keep that in mind. I, I always

[00:15:52] **Angela Gardner:** say if I can't give 110% of myself. Then I just, I don't feel like I can do this. I have used that every time, even when I've left a board, um, or a committee or an organization.

Right.

[00:16:05] **Christi Powell:** Yeah, for sure. I think it's important for all of you to know that some of you been on committees. Some of you've never been on a committee. And how do you get on a committee? I think, um, Alex can probably speak to that pretty easily. She not long ago was like, what, why do I want to be on a committee?

What am I going to do on a committee? So maybe share a little bit, Alex, about, um, you know, how you went about it and tell us how easy it was compared to what it was in your head. Because I remember us talking about that. Um,

[00:16:38] **Alex Iacovelli:** yeah, absolutely. I think when you, you know, get into networking for the first time, unless you are just like the most outgoing person ever, it can be pretty intimidating.

At least it was for me. I am not the most outgoing person ever. But, you know, the reality is, like I said before, everybody's there for the same reason to like help. each other and to help themselves, right? And like these organizations need your help and they want your help and they want your input and they want your perspective and all of those things.

So really it's just about asking, right? Um, I tend to go to, usually there's a membership director who's going to have all the information you need about that organization. I think like you said, with making sure the ROI is. Um, I think one of my go to questions is, you know, what, like, what committee do you guys need help with the most that would also be beneficial for my company, right?

So that I make sure that I'm adding value where this organization needs it. Cause if they've already got a hundred people on a committee, they don't need 101. Good point.

[00:17:53] **Angela Gardner:** Very good point. Can I chime in? Yeah. So what I would do was, and I encourage others to do this too, is ask someone up here that's on that committee or in that organization.

Tell them you're interested or ask questions about it and then tell them you're interested. That's how I would do it. And, or I would have me, yeah. And then they would share because they sit on the board or committee and goes from there. Yes.

[00:18:20] **Christi Powell:** And that is the best. That's how I did it too. What is this? Um, will you tell me more about what you do?

And then, oh, that might be interesting to me. And the next thing you know, they're like, well, would you like to be on the committee? So normally they

[00:18:33] **Angela Gardner:** have no clue that you're out there, right?

[00:18:35] **Christi Powell:** They don't know you're interested.

[00:18:37] **Angela Gardner:** No, no, no. I mean, of course, Alex's way is great to just get in touch with us and tell them.

[00:18:43] **Christi Powell:** That's the bold way to do it. It is. I love it. I did

[00:18:45] **Angela Gardner:** it the indirect way.

[00:18:48] **Christi Powell:** I love it though. I, yeah. You know, sometimes when you're in a role, and Alex does serve in a role where it, it's required of us. Yeah. Right. Yeah. To be involved in organizations. So. Yeah. It's okay to be a little bold in that situation.

So please feel free to do that. Um, when you get to where I'm at, where I'm trying to juggle all the things, you know, bold would not be something I want to be because I want to learn as much as I can learn about an organization before I decide I want to take it on. And to be honest, I seem to overcommit, so I have to be super careful about that.

And I have really good friends, Angela and Alex are, are two of them that tell me, when are you going to do that? I just had an aspiration in my head one day. It really wasn't, I was going to run, but I had an aspiration, Oh, I would love to be lieutenant governor to so and so. And Angela looked at me like, and when are you going to do that?

So I was like, Oh, good point. You know, so you need friends like that in your life too. I know we're talking about organizations today. But this is where we meet our friends and those people that are holding us accountable to. So, um, thank you for, for sharing today and I hope you all enjoyed us talking about the organizations that mean a lot to us.

Just some of them. I hope that all of you organizations that we did mention, appreciate the shout out. We are so proud to be involved with your organizations and what you're doing for the organization and what you're doing for women all over the country, not just in construction, but in Many other aspects of careers and roles and um, thank you all for being on and listening to us today and we will see you next Monday.

Thank you. Bye everybody.