



Allana Kapcsos '14, left, and Chloe Hoyak '13 are making an impact as women of mass construction at Breslin Ridyard Fadero Architects in Allentown, Pa.

Women of mass construction

By SUSAN SHELLY

They're independent. They're go-getters. They're not afraid to blaze new trails. They're employed in an industry made up of more than 90 percent men, and they credit Northampton Community College for helping them establish their paths to success.

Allana Karo '15, Chloe Hoyak '13 and Allana Kapcsos '14 were hired in the construction industry after earning degrees at NCC. We caught up with them to find out how they're doing, where they're working and what stands out about their time as Spartans.

ALLANA KARO

Allana Karo got hooked on carpentry as a high school freshman during a visit to the Bethlehem Area Vocational-Technical School.

After touring the culinary and cosmetology classrooms, Karo, 24, was guided toward the carpentry area.

"The whole classroom sounded like hammers pounding, and it was great," she said. "I don't know why I liked that so much, but it felt like home."

After graduating from the Vo-Tech in 2012, she enrolled in NCC's construction management course as a recipient of a Stabler Scholarship.

An internship with Quakertown-based Klover Contracting Inc. resulted in a job starting before her graduation in 2014.

As an assistant project manager and project coordinator, Karo oversees more than 150 employees and subcontractors.

"I learned early what it's like to be female in a male-dominated field," Karo said. "I'm used to being on the leading edge and educating people about what it's like to be a woman in

this type of job place."

While it's challenging, Karo loves her work and is grateful for the opportunities she's received. She's repaying her Stabler Scholarship and looking forward to being able to help others.

ALLANA KAPCSOS

Allana Kapcsos, 24, was drawn to architecture at an early age, with parents who indulged her interest with visits to notable structures such as the Biltmore Estate in Asheville, North Carolina, and the mansions in Newport, Rhode Island.

Born into an NCC family (her mother is director of Institutional Research and her father is facilities manager), Kapcsos' decision to attend the college was an easy one.

After graduating in 2014 with an associate in applied science in architecture degree, Kapcsos was accepted as the

only female transfer student to Penn State's architecture program. She earned a bachelor's degree in architecture in 2017, after spending a semester in Rome and another studying in Japan and South Korea.

Kapcsos currently is employed as an associate at Allentown-based Breslin Ridyard Fadero Architects, where she works in the design of educational facilities.

Through her designs, Kapcsos strives to make school a fun and exciting place to learn. "If we can be successful in making children want to go to school and truly engage them in the learning process, we've not only succeeded in helping them on their educational journey, but

their overall future. This is important to me."

CHLOE HOYAK

Chloe Hoyak, 25, is all about collaboration. Whether it's working closely on a project with co-workers or teaming up with like-minded people to pursue a common interest, her interest in bringing people together is evident.

That's what led her in 2011 to work with Daniel Ebner, chairman of the Interior Design Department at NCC, to form the Interior Design Club.

Following her graduation from NCC, Hoyak spent three years at Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), taking one semester to study in Hong Kong before graduating in June 2016. While looking for a job, Hoyak was contacted by Michael Bell, a principal at Allentown-based Breslin Ridyard Fadero Architects and an adjunct professor at NCC.

"He contacted me for an interview, and two weeks later I had the opportunity of a lifetime," Hoyak said. As an interior designer at Breslin Ridyard Fadero, she assists the firm's architects in developing interior spaces and is responsible for all aspects of the design process, including schematic design, design development, construction documents and presentation.

While her skills and abilities have increased tremendously during her employment and time at SCAD as an interior designer, Hoyak credits NCC for providing her with an invaluable base. "NCC was my stepping stone, and it taught me so much," Hoyak said. "It really put me on the path to where I am today, and I'm very grateful for that." ■

"The whole classroom sounded like hammers pounding, and it was great. I don't know why I liked that so much, but it felt like home."

Allana Karo