

NAWIC Region 9 Annual Forum
McMenamins Edgefield (Portland)

May 16 – 17, 2014

I was lucky enough to attend this year's annual Forum event, put on by the Portland Chapter and located the infamous McMenamins Edgefield in Troutdale, Oregon! I was looking forward to the new format, where Friday was spent on more industry-related topics, with any and all welcome to attend! We had many guests from outside of NAWIC attend, and that in my mind is a great way to spread the word of NAWIC while also educating our industry on current issues!

Friday morning started off with a welcome from our very own Yasmine Brandon, current NAWIC National President – she encouraged us to ask ourselves “Why we do what we do”. She suggested the book “Start with why” by Simon Sinek – I’ve purchased it, and look forward to reading it! She noted that “A leader’s influence is directly linked to how much greatness she is willing to grant to others”words to live by!!

We heard from John Wied the CFO of Walsh Construction Co., as he spoke upon the topic of “Business Models in an Evolving Market” – a nugget I learned from him, as a new business owner myself, was to go through an annual budget analysis to evaluate where the business is and maintain a rolling 5-year financial plan.

The rest of Friday was spent learning from a panel of folks sharing their thoughts on the value of women in the industry, an “interview” setting between an engineering firm owner and a recent college graduate to learn more about hiring and working with new graduates, and I learned how to create my own website during a workshop led by Dalene Bloom!

Saturday was a cram-packed day spent solely on the topic of NAWIC!

- We heard Yasmine speak to “embracing change and taking risks”.
- We learned that United Rentals continues to be a supportive sponsor to our organization and is committed to supporting female employees as NAWIC members.
- There is a great collaborative opportunity with the CONSTRUCTION Expo, which is a massive event with over 20 national construction associations represented.
- Jenny Browne, a Portland chapter member, shared her own personal story with mentoring.
- Connie Leopard, our NAWIC national treasurer spoke on the subject of making high quality connections!
- NAWIC business included a discussion on increase in dues, the redistricting of chapters/regions as Robin mentioned in her report, the 2018 AMEC will be in Orlando, Florida.
- Lastly – we got up and moved around as part of our lunch break, which included an Edgefield site scavenger hunt – that was a great way to get out of our chairs, team build with other ladies in our region AND learn more about the Edgefield development/history! (attached is a copy of the scavenger hunt “hints” and a map of the site)