

# Business Record


**Helping businesses do business better.**

Construction leaders say despite continued workforce challenges, future for industry is bright.

**February 16, 2023 | Business Record E-Edition**

## **A STRONG FOUNDATION**

**Ongoing labor challenges don't  
dim construction industry outlook**



**PERLLA DELUCA**  
*president of Southeast Constructors and  
founder of the Iowa School of Construction*

# Business Record

## Could women be the answer to the labor shortage in Iowa's construction industry?

BY MICHAEL CRUMB, *BUSINESS RECORD*  
STAFF WRITER



Photo by Duane Tinkey.

The Business Record recently interviewed **Perlla Deluca**, owner and CEO of Southeast Constructors. Here is part of that interview.

**What challenges exist in the construction industry?**

**Deluca:** Labor shortage was a challenge before COVID, and it obviously got worse after COVID, but it's something that if materials [prices] go up, you're going to shop around and find the best price you can, but if you don't have guys show up, who's going to do the work? So it's been a struggle. Our older guys are retiring and there are not people in the middle who are in their 30s or 40s, but with younger employees, they still need to be trained, but we also have more technology. I believe that if we start training high-schoolers now, in 10 years we'll have a good workforce again. The other thing is women only make up 10% of the construction workforce. In England and South America, they make up 50%, so I think we could fill some of the gap by getting more women into the industry.