

## 2023 People to Watch

### Perlla Deluca paves way to open up the construction industry for women, people of color

Like an artist ready to unveil a new project, Deluca, an entrepreneur and owner of the Des Moines-based general contractor firm [Southeast Constructors](#), said her vision for this space is simple: She wants to create an inclusive school to equip the next generation of young adults — young women, especially — with the right set of trade skills to work in construction.

Deluca was chosen as one of the Des Moines Register's 15 People to Watch in 2023 because, come next year, she and her team plan to reopen the former elementary school at 1801 McKinley Ave. under a new name — the [Iowa School of Construction](#) — and welcome their first batch of students. The students, 20 of whom have already signed up, will take a 12-week course that includes lessons on the basics of carpentry, welding, masonry, power tools and other machinery. Registration is ongoing, with classes set to start in February.



Perlla Deluca

