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The Best of the Best

NAWBO Member Elaine Arrieta Skyrockets to the Top 500 List of Hispanic-Owned Businesses During her First Year!



Arrieta Construction has made leaps and bounds during its first year in business-capped by its placement on the Top 500 List of Hispanic-Owned Businesses President and CEO Elaine Arrieta reflects on the past year and shares a few best practices for fellow NAWBO members and women entrepreneurs.

Maintaining good relationships with clientele has been the key to Arrieta Construction's quick success. "A lot of work and dedication has brought back returning customers who are satisfied with what we do, how we do it, our timeliness and the fact that we're neat. We're getting a lot of direct contracts and we don't have to bid jobs against a lot of other people, which is great," Elaine says. With more than nine years in the construction field, Elaine has developed previous business relationships with clients, like NASA, who brings

anywhere from five to 10 proposals per week—a significant contribution to say the least. Elaine fondly shares, "NASA gave us a shot when we were new."

Even with years of industry experience under her belt, Elaine had to acquire new skills as owner and CEO of Arrieta Construction. "As president of the company, I had to learn a lot of things that I didn't have my hands in before. I feel that because this is construction, I did have to adjust my approach as a woman in a man's field."

The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) played a significant role in Elaine's learning process and helped foster new business connections. She attended various training workshops and marketing seminars and just recently completed a 12-week program on entrepreneurship and business plan development. "The best advice I could give is for business owners to make the most of what the SBDC has to offer. Workshops are usually free and when they do charge, it's a minimal fee. Either people don't know about these phenomenal programs or they just don't take advantage of them."



Elaine wears many hats as president and CEO and regularly handles accounting and payroll for Arrieta Construction. She actively checks NAWBO emails, newsletters, write-ups and anything else she can find for business insight and valuable tips. Elaine notes, "NAWBO has helped a lot with marketing and making connections. Many businesses reciprocally help each other with advertising by featuring blurbs in their newsletters." Advertising has huge payoffs as Elaine recently discovered. "We had an ad in the Yellow Pages about two or three months ago but didn't expect a big difference with all the technology out there. To our surprise, tons of residential calls flooded in," she says.

In preparation for next year, Arrieta Construction plans to expand their commercial and residential division to accommodate this high demand. They will also apply for an 8A certification in hopes of obtaining direct contracts working with the Navy, Army and other government institutions.

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