

2016 Top Young Professionals in Architecture, Engineering and Construction



Kristin DiStefano.

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Project Manager at Richter+Ratner

You never know what's going to be behind some of the walls in the older buildings of New York City. In the case of a recent renovation at the Au Bon Pain at the Macy's in Herald Square, Kristin DiStefano said there were layers upon layers of earlier walls.

"It's cool when you work in a building that has that much history," she said.

While she spends a lot of time in one of Manhattan's most famous department stores, DiStefano's real forte is working on the construction, renovation and expansion of schools. Most recently, she oversaw the construction of a new wing for Xavier High School, which connected to the century-old main building at 30 West 16th Street between Avenue of the Americas and Fifth Avenue.

"You're connecting to a 100-year-old building," she said, "so you don't know exactly what you're going to run into with a building that old."

She got into the education construction business through her first job at HESS Construction after graduating from Pennsylvania State University in 2008. With a degree in civil engineering, DiStefano didn't want to build roads; she wanted to build buildings (it's in the genes; her father is an architect).

DiStefano, a native of Port Washington, N.Y., worked her first few years in and around Washington, D.C., with HESS. By 2014, she decided to move back to New York and get a job with Sciam Construction before joining Richter+Ratner a year ago.—T.C.