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WOMEN IN PHCP

Meet Paula Bowe



Q&A with Paula Bowe, vice president of sales and marketing at Josam Co.

By Ashlei Williams



In December, Paula Bowe was recognized as PHCPro's Featured Woman. Continuing that conversation, Plumbing Engineer is taking the time to delve more into Bowe's career and experiences.

In 1987, Josam Co. was transitioned to the ownership and management of the Holloway family. Bowe was right there when the manufacturer of quality plumbing and drainage products made the change.

As vice president of sales and marketing, Bowe along with her peers in the management team and employees have earned an upstanding reputation and many long-standing relationships. In the following interview, PHCPro sheds light on some of Bowe's journey in the plumbing, heating, cooling and piping (PHCP) industry.

PHCPro: How did you get into the PHCP industry?

PB: I didn't necessarily say this is what I wanted to do one day. My mom had worked for the Holloway family and they gave me an opportunity to work at Josam. When the Holloway family bought Josam, they asked my mom to come over from the supply house side. At that time, she was getting ready to retire and the Holloway family gave me the opportunity to move over from the Holloway-owned PVF house to Josam. I did, and I started out in customer service, and collections. What better way to break a young kid in than by putting them in collections? Eventually, I got into the sales side of the business.

PHCPro: How would you describe Josam and your role there?

PB: Our company is a manufacturer of commercial plumbing drainage products. It's a small, family-owned business. My role at the company is to oversee the entire sales team, including representatives and regional sales managers to ensure that the company reaches its overall goals and forecasts and develop strategies for us to hit those goals and forecasts. I also oversee all the marketing for the company.

PHCPro: What do you consider your professional specializations?

PB: Having started at the bottom and leveling up with this company, and as I entered into a management position, I apply simple life lessons and experiences to my management style. Whenever I make a business decision, I always

try and put myself in the shoes of the person the decision effects. However, in doing that I also have to have the company's best interest at hand and be cognizant of the impact that decision has on the company.

PHCPro: What are your career highlights?

PB: I would have to say being a part of this company when the Holloways bought out of bankruptcy and seeing where it is today. It's a joy and I take great pride in saying that I was allowed to be a part of that success and fortunate enough to expand and build a team to further the success of the company.

PHCPro: What professional organizations, events, etc. are you aligned with?

PB: I am a member of American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO), Mechanical Contractors Association of America (MCAA), and American Society of Plumbing Engineers (ASPE).

PHCPro: Do you volunteer?

PB: Yes. Whenever time permits, I do volunteer work with my daughter through her school. One of the impressive features that led us to her current school was their commitment to help the less fortunate.

PHCPro: Do you have a woman you consider a mentor?

PB: On the work side, I can't say that necessarily. But my mom is certainly my mentor. I was raised by both a hard-working mother and father who instilled in me great work ethics and morals. Both of these traits are also instilled by the Holloway family.

PHCPro: Do you mentor other women in the PHCP industry?

PB: Any opportunity that I find a young woman in this industry, which is unfortunately not often, I love to get her aside and talk to her. I look at being a woman in this industry as an advantage, not a disadvantage. Once a customer in front of you knows that you are knowledgeable and com-

mitted to carrying out your promises, you can command their attention very easily.

PHCPro: Continuing on a more personal note, where are you located and where are you from originally?

PB: I'm currently located in Philadelphia, which is where I am originally from, although I spent 25 years in New Jersey.

PHCPro: What are your hobbies?

PB: I have a husband, Les, and one daughter, Hannah. A 16-year old daughter can be your major hobby and take up most of your time. But, my hobbies ever since I was a child have been sports. I enjoy all types of sports, basketball, football, and baseball. Although playing sports is a pastime for me, the competitiveness and commitment I learned from playing remains with me today in a business environment.

PHCPro: How would you describe your personality?

PB: I'm the type of person who can't hide how they feel. With that in mind, I'm obviously not a good poker player. If I keep it in, you will surely see it all over my face. I tell every single person that I interview that I'm interested in hiring that I'm pretty easy to work with, no drama. Just do what you promise and get the job done in an ethical manner and if there is a problem along the way to air it out and get it

off our chest, learn from our mistakes and move on. Life is too short for you to guess what I'm thinking and me to guess what you are thinking.

PHCPro: Is there anything striking or notable that happened to you in the past year?

PB: I've lost some people that are very close to me unexpectedly, which made me really think about how you should enjoy every minute of every day of your life and the people around you.

PHCPro: Is there anything you are looking forward to in 2020?

PB: On a personal side, my daughter is getting ready to start looking at colleges. I look forward to getting her into the next phase of her life. On the business side, 2019 was an exceptional year for Josam and this momentum will continue to accelerate in 2020. We have some great business plans for 2020 and I can't wait to carry them out.

PHCPro: Finally, what does it mean to be recognized as a woman in the PHCP industry?

PB: It's quite humbling to receive this honor. I want to thank the Holloway family for giving me the opportunity to grow with this company and allowing me to show them what I was capable of. ●



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