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Worcester customer brings human service approach to construction

When you meet Geovanna Diaz-Chavez, you may not guess her role as CEO of a construction company. She notes that in the industry, there are people will say it's too hard or that it's a male-dominated field. However, Geovanna has learned the value of perseverance and staying positive, which has help her succeed in managing her family's business.

The business, Style and Comfort, is a lot more than just a construction company. It leverages the Diaz family's background in human services and management to best serve their customers, while addressing the need to support people with physical and mental challenges, while keeping families together.

Geovanna and her family grew up in Ecuador. Her mom ran a business, and the family was involved in nonprofit work, supporting children with cleft palate. After a divorce, Geovanna, her mother, and her brother moved to Worcester, a place they had never visited before, but did have some connections through the nonprofit work. Her mother went from managing a team of around 60 people to working in human services. The family became involved in the community quickly, and Geovanna would go on to attend Worcester State University, graduating with a degree in Spanish and Psychology, and later a Master's in Spanish. Geovanna then spent a decade working in human services, while her brother, Abraham, joined the construction field right out of high school and served in the Air Force.

Fast forward to 2015, when the family had a poor experience with a home renovation to better accommodate Geovanna's grandparents, who were living in the house at the time. Despite the challenges faced, she saw an opportunity for change.

"I felt frustrated and talked to my mom. I wish we could have an opportunity to do something to help families in need, that want to stay together, and be able to do some renovations and preserve their vision, without breaking the bank," Geovanna said.

In 2020, Style and Comfort was born, combining the family's management, construction, and human services experience. Recently, they were granted a state contract through the Mass Rehab Commission to do renovations for people with different challenges. However, the company continues to do private projects, where Berkshire comes into play.

"We're just so thankful for the opportunity that [Berkshire] offers. Not only is it quick, but the rates are fantastic, and our customers have been very satisfied," Geovanna said. She also mentioned quality support, after-hours assistance, and financial education for clients as reason why their partnership with Berkshire has succeeded. Her mother initially made a connection with VP, MyBanker, Sonia Descormiers at a different financial institution, and the company, along with some clients, followed Sonia when she joined Berkshire.

Style and Comfort currently has three teams and hopes to expand to six or seven by the end of the year to accommodate more projects at once. They have partnered with the Southeast Asian Coalition Association to do work for refugees and immigrants, and continue to stay involved with and support the Latino community.

In addition to her role with Style and Comfort, Geovanna teacher per diem at Worcester State, including a recent course on health in the Latino community for nursing, psychology, and sociology students. Here, she's able to utilize her experience an expertise to educate and inspire the next generation of leaders.

"Every business has its ups and downs," she noted. "You have to stay positive. I always tell that to my students. When you're down, the only way is up. We all have our potential; we just have to find the light. You have to find where you're worth the most."