

January 2022 Fundamental Leader of the Month – Zaida Portes



Happy New Year! For the month of January, COAA FLIC would like to feature [Zaida Portes, P.Eng., PMP](#), Integrated Program Planner at [TC Energy](#) (TCE). Her current role consists of planning integrity work by assessing risk, budget, schedule and resourcing to ensure the company's assets are maintained and managed properly.

Zaida is no stranger to the construction industry and has dedicated her time to the field since joining TCE in 2013. As an engineer-in-training (EIT), she worked with TCE's Regional Asset Reliability (RAR) team looking after the maintenance of existing facilities. She then transitioned to Measurement Projects, eventually becoming a Project Manager, where she frequently visited site to oversee the construction of both greenfield and brownfield projects. Afterwards, she entered the Compression Projects team as a Project Engineer, in the commissioning space and subsequently to the project construction phase. After, Zaida joined TCE's Coastal Gas Link and Keystone XL major projects as a Project Engineer where she leveraged the invaluable experience she had gained while at site, which is something she continues to do in her current role.

Throughout her experience, Zaida has grown to understand the industry's effect in our communities, the importance of learning about these communities and giving back. While working on one of TCE's projects located near Amber Valley, Zaida had the opportunity to learn about the rich history of African-American settlements, which resonated with her on a personal level. She understood this to be the history of a group of people that had to travel long distances and face various hardships for the hope of a better future. The opportunities given to her after coming to Canada from Venezuela, have made her appreciate working in an industry that values diversity and cares about the communities they work in. More information on the history of Amber Valley can be seen here:

Secret Alberta: The Former Life of Amber Valley - YouTube
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OxXJubB2cPQ>

During her time in the field, Zaida described how humbled she was to witness the effort and dedication that is imparted by those that work in the industry. She also shared her thoughts about the various misconceptions that appear to be present with how projects are executed in the construction industry. Thus, she hopes that her experiences will continue to allow her to be an advocate in this space.

Zaida not only values her personal development but she invests time into others. Through her mentorship within TCE, Zaida goes out of her way to guide young EITs in their own professional development. She also takes pride in her work, truly understands the importance of the construction industry, the impacts on operations, and in everyday life.

Zaida's continuous curiosity, attention to safety and the strive to improve the construction industry are what makes her leader of the month!

#leadershipculture #energy #diversityinclusion