

## Weston EMS profile - Diane Slovak: What it takes to be a Construction Queen

Written by Susan Jordan, Weston EMS  
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You probably see her around town in her black Jeep with The Construction Queen sign on the side. You also see her around town wearing a Weston EMS uniform. But Construction Queen and emergency medical technician are just a part of Diane Slovak's story.

Ms. Slovak's early career was in biomedical engineering. She did research in orthopedics and worked on bone remodeling with race horse fractures.

"We were able to get race horses back on the track — literally," Ms. Slovak said.

She also did research on gap osteotomy, or bone lengthening, for humans. Ms. Slovak worked closely with the orthopedic surgeons. "I was right behind the doctor in the operating room."

With Ms. Slovak's medical background, it seemed like a natural fit to volunteer as an EMT. "I wanted to give back to the town of Weston. It's a great town. And I love the medical field. Once my girls grew up, I went for it," she said.

"I love being an EMT and I feel honored to be part of such a talented, dedicated group of people. And they're all volunteers!" Ms. Slovak continued, "I like how we work as a unit when we're on a call. Everyone leaves his or her ego at the door. We all have the same objective: helping the patient."

From biomedical research to emergency medical technician isn't such a stretch, but how about the construction business? Ms. Slovak told the story of how she got into construction.

She had just had her first child and was on leave from her work. She was also having a new house built. The contractor would patronizingly say to her, "Don't worry, honey, I'll take care of everything."

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But after he was finished, the house was always cold. When she later had work done on the house, imagine her surprise when she discovered “there was no insulation on the outside walls!”

That was motivation enough to start learning about the construction business. Ms. Slovak went to night school to study building code enforcement, and she was on her way to becoming The Construction Queen.

Ms. Slovak started her firm 24 years ago and works in both Fairfield County and in Manhattan. Her company is a design and build firm, which means she does the whole job from start to finish.

She likes to “demystify the construction process for homeowners ... and make it pleasant,” she said.

Ms. Slovak has lived in Weston for 20 years. She has two daughters, one in New York City and the other in Washington, D.C.

She moved from Maryland, where the snow often melted right after a storm, to Weston, where she would be snowed in for days. “Moving to New England was an adjustment, that’s for sure,” Ms. Slovak said laughing.

But wait, there’s more! Ms. Slovak is a skeet and trap shooter and often competes on weekends. She also loves flamenco and salsa dancing. She has been a horsewoman her whole life and played polo in college. She has helped train the Bridgeport Mounted Police. Ms. Slovak is also a certified AKC judge for all pointing breeds of dogs. And, she was a model in the fashion industry!

One of Ms. Slovak’s current construction jobs is working on Ridgefield Town Hall. “It’s a big job,” she said. During a recent interview she got a call from one of her workers at another job and

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said to him, “give me a call when you start doing rebar and I will go in and inspect.”

That’s what it takes to be a Construction Queen.