



**January, 2020 Member Spotlight**  
**By: Therese O'Brian, Herbert Lutz & Co., Inc.**



**Sandra Gaurin –**  
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***How a world of risk becomes  
a world of possibilities.***

WCD Group manages and mitigates risk in the environmental, construction, and real estate marketplace. Their decades of expertise in the real estate, construction, remediation, property restoration, insurance, and legal industries, combined with a thorough understanding of claims and litigation, enable them to help clients fully recognize the business implications of environmental and construction risk issues and losses. This understanding helps to prevent, mitigate or eliminate those risks, while protecting workers and the public, and restoring their assets.

As the Director of Client Services, Sandra provides Environmental Construction & Risk Management Services and works directly with property owners, lenders, and developers, as well as their insurance carriers and attorneys, to manage and mitigate risk at every stage of the project life cycle. Beginning with a comprehensive site evaluation to establish and quantify the environmental risks, Sandra guides her clients from initial due diligence through project completion. Her team's ability to see the bigger picture and understand the scope, schedule, and overall cost of a remediation project, allows her to anticipate potential problems before they occur and quickly solve the unexpected ones. When a claim or litigation is initiated, she assists in quantifying, allocating, mitigating, or removing exposure for her clients.

Sandra is inspired by the diversity of her work and is motivated by continually facing new and more complex projects. For example, Brownfield Development presents a unique mix of complex environmental, health & safety, and insurance challenges. One of her favorite projects is Harlow, Advance Realty's luxury apartment building in Hoboken where WCD Group helped Advance turn a complex environmental challenge into an economic advantage.

Born and educated in France, Sandra earned a BS in Biochemistry and an MS in Industrial Biology Engineering leading to a role as a Research Laboratory Assistant in Hong Kong, where she completed her thesis; researching the impact of soil contamination on tea and potential health effects from metals found in tea.

Sandra's journey in this male-dominated industry has been a challenging one. In 1999, she moved to the United States and began her career with BEM Systems. She started as field technician where her responsibilities included developing sampling plans, conducting field investigations, data analysis, site characterization and report writing. She recalls being the only woman in her "*Asbestos Designer Inspector*" course initially questioning if this was the right career path for her. When she began working directly with clients and Insurance carriers, she felt that she had found her true calling. Being extremely well rounded, she learned how to manage risk for both the insurance firm and the client and was promoted to insurance department manager. Sandra loves the challenge of helping guide her clients through the very complex development and remediation process; providing valuable insights and industry knowledge every step of the way. She is inspired by the diversity of her work and never gets bored because she is continually facing new and more complex projects. Her association involvement has helped her build knowledge and confidence throughout her career.

Sandra is active in both the NY and NJ Chapters of CREW as a member of the Programs Committees, and a regular attendee and participant at monthly and special events. She is also on the Board of the Brownfields Coalition of the Northeast (BCONE), and a member of the Society of Women Environmental Professionals (SWEP). Sandra enjoys her involvement with CREW as it provides a forum for both personal and professional development. She appreciates the many opportunities it provides to network and absorb information from other professionals in the industry, while making personal connections and building long term friendships. Sandra would encourage potential members to connect and learn from the experience of the senior members and benefit from their wisdom, which would take years to learn on their own.

Sandra shared the following three Business Tips:

1. Be open minded and absorb as much as you can. It will help you help your clients.
2. Never take anything for granted – neither your clients nor your colleagues.
3. Be a "Dot Connector" – Look for ways to think outside-the-box and make connections among people, businesses, and the work that inspires you.

In her spare time, she enjoys horseback riding, domestic and international travel, and making memories with her family. She lives in Madison New Jersey with her husband and their two children a 14- year old son and 18- year old daughter.