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Janaya Hart, 32
Senior associate at Elkus Manfredi

BY NICK TROMBOLA November 30, 2023 6:27 PM

Like other successful young professionals, Janaya Hart’s upbringing influenced her career. Her parents’ DIY sensibilities led them to regularly update her childhood home in Boston, such as converting a two-family into a single-family, and building a patio and a fence in the backyard.

“I probably attribute my interest in architecture starting from those points, just watching them work on our house growing up,” Hart said.

Hart, who has been an architect at Elkus Manfredi for nearly 10 years and who primarily works on residential projects, including multifamily, said that she enjoys creating spaces for people and seeing how those spaces evolve over time.

One of her proudest achievements is Boston’s Ink Block 7INK, an apartment and co-living complex completed last spring. Hart said she felt a real ownership over the project, as she had the opportunity to work on the development from the early planning stages all the way through construction. 7INK won the project of the year award from the New England chapter of the Construction Management Association of America.

Hart also has an interest in mentoring other young architects. She’s begun helping Elkus’ recruiting efforts at universities like Syracuse and Cornell, her alma mater; attending the National Organization of Minority Architects’

annual conference; and having one-on-ones with students. Hart said her interest in mentorship stems from all of the teachers and mentors who encouraged her throughout her career.

Although one might expect a successful young architect to base themselves in a city like New York or Los Angeles, Hart has stayed in Boston due to her connection with the city.

“When it comes down to it, it’s really my place of home,” Hart said. “When I developed an interest in architecture, one of the first things I started to do was look up firms in my area. Elkus Manfredi does a lot of work in the area, so it was one of the firms that really stuck out to me. So, to be able to work here and know the influence that it has on the city, and the fact that I can work on buildings that my family can see when they’re on their way to work or anywhere downtown, is really gratifying to me.”

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