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Strategy, goals give engineer successful edge

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Jasmine Azima has engineered her own set of strategies to help her along the way as she builds Jasmine Engineering Inc.

Mathematically inclined and female, she knew from the first day in class at the University of Texas at Austin that things would be tough.

An immigrant from Iran, she moved to Texas far away from family and friends.

It was 1976, and she chose UT-Austin because she wanted a good education in engineering, something she has loved since a child.

She sat in class and looked around. She quickly realized she was the only woman.

"I was outnumbered," Azima recalled matter-of-factly, pushing her lightly salted and dark hair away from her large, intensely green eyes.

Azima did not let the odds get her down.

From that day on she designed her personal goals and strategies to help carry her through both her school days and her first days as an entrepreneur.

"The truth of the matter is, I just don't try to prove I'm not a woman," Azima said during a recent interview in her offices in a colorfully renovated historic building at 309 Third St.

"I am a woman, and I can do things in a feminine way," she said "But I also make sure that

Entrepreneur

I can deliver good, quality engineering work," she added.

"I wanted to be an engineer," Azima said. "I was good in science and math, and I enjoyed it very much, so I decided to go into mechanical engineering.

"In general, it is an unusual field for a female in any country."

After graduation, Azima practiced under some other engineers before she decided to open her own firm.

It was 1985, when construction activity was at an all-time high and Azima saw great opportunities in San Antonio.

Describing herself as a goal-oriented person, she said she had plans all along ultimately to go into business and had everything mapped out to reach her goals. Things fell into place so well that she actually opened her first 250-square-foot, one-person office at Broadway and Interstate 410 a year ahead of projections.

Since then, her company has moved four times because of expansion. The firm has grown to a staff of 11, and from opening through 1989, Jasmine Engineering has completed more than 350 projects with 19 million square feet, involving more than \$575 million in mechanical and electrical engineering costs.

She was named "Entrepreneur of the Year" in the construction



PHOTO BY CHARLES BARKSDALE

Jasmine Azima of Jasmine Engineering Inc. is currently doing consulting work on the Alamodome.

and Inc. magazine.

The Texas construction crunch in the mid-1980s taught Azima some serious lessons she since has added to her list of business strategies: diversification and flexibility.

Her business services as a professional consulting engineering firm specializing in the design of mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems include a variety of areas, from small retail and restaurant establishments, to large office buildings, as well as schools and other public institutions, both in renovation and new construction

Current projects include consultant work on the Alamodome.

She also took part in the engineering design for the San Antonio Police Department's training academy in the South Side, as well as work for several school and college districts and the city's library system. She is doing several stations for the U.S. Border Patrol.

Her firm also assisted in the design of Colin Medical Instruments, and several retail properties, including certain Drug Emporium and Cloth World stores.

She has done jobs throughout Texas and in other states, includ-