

# PERIS · BIRCH

## CONSTRUCTION SERVICES



**Elizabeth Birch,  
President & CEO,  
Peris Birch, Construction Services, LLC**

Elizabeth Birch has had an extensive career that spans the corporate, legal, public policy, communications and nonprofit worlds. She is passionate about design and construction, and has brought her multidimensional career experience -- as a lawyer, corporate executive, nonprofit, advocacy leader and corporate consultant -- to Peris Construction and Peris Birch Construction Services, LLC.

Peris Construction has been building exceptional commercial interiors in the Greater Washington area for almost a quarter of a decade. Peris Birch Construction Services, LLC was established as a woman-owned and managed companion company to Peris, providing commercial handyman (and handywoman) services to law firms, consulting firms, office buildings and nonprofits. Peris Birch ensures that clients can keep their space as beautiful and functional as the day a client moves in.

Elizabeth attended the University of Hawaii, where she majored in Oceanography and Political Science. She graduated from the University of Santa Clara School of Law in California and clerked through a Santa Clara program at the California Supreme Court. Later she was presented with a PhD in Humanities from the University of Hawaii for her contributions to the civil rights movement in America.

Elizabeth began her legal career in 1985 as a lawyer at the San Francisco based law firm of Bingham McCutchen (then *McCutchen Doyle Brown & Enersen*), where she was a commercial litigator. In 1989 she was the Ninth Circuit Pro Bono Lawyer of the Year. In 1989, she was recruited to serve as the Chief Litigation and Human Resources Counsel, worldwide, at Apple Computer, Inc. She also served as General Counsel for Claris Corporation, Apple's software subsidiary.

In 1995, Elizabeth moved to Washington, DC to head the Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest LGBT advocacy organization. For almost a decade, Birch saw the organization through a tremendous period of growth. Leading an exceptional team at

HRC, Birch reorganized and rebranded HRC and developed an approach to communications that helped drive a deeper understanding LGBT people and the issues that affect their families. Her goal was to move the dialogue about LGBT people from the streets to the living rooms of America. In concert with the boutique firm of Stone Yamashita, Birch introduced the now ubiquitous HRC Equal Sign, and transformed corporate America by introducing the HRC Corporate Equality Index (CEI), an index that has become the standard for LGBT workplace policies in the United States. Birch also operated as a social entrepreneur by building programs such as FamilyNet and HRC's Youth College to empower the next generation of LGBT and Allied leaders. She also headed *Building Equality*, a campaign that established the first headquarters building in the nation's capital dedicated to the advancement of human and civil rights for LGBT Americans.

Elizabeth is a well-known leader on Capital Hill, at the White House, and among progressive leaders. She has advised the Clinton and Obama Administrations, Members of Congress, and the Pentagon. She has also used her deep experience to counsel corporations on issues of engagement, talent, diversity, inclusion and how to drive better results through inspiration and great environmental design. Among her clients are: American Airlines, McDonalds, IBM, Intel, Cisco, General Mills, Google, Nationwide, Deloitte, U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Navy, Mass Mutual, VISA, Cardinal Health, and Kaiser Permanente.

For a period of two years, Elizabeth headed Rosie O'Donnell's production company and created new strategies to drive income to her foundations. During her tenure, a new home was built for Rosie's extraordinary program, *Rosie's Broadway Kids* -- a program aimed at the poorest school in Manhattan where young people learn leadership through the guise of musical theater. The building includes dance and music studios, and lots of infrastructure to ensure the participants have a place to study, are well fed and have a home away from home. In addition, Birch lead Rosie's response in the post Katrina aftermath by creating a township, complete with a myriad of social services and job training, on the edge of the largest FEMA trailer park. Rosie's investment allowed distraught parents to place their children in Head Start, Early Head Start, Art Therapy, Teen Programs and she ensured every child had the right school uniforms, supplies and backpacks for school. Rosie's Foundation sponsored every major holiday celebration for almost three years at this inventive installation.

An innovative educator and gifted communicator, Elizabeth has achieved high visibility, with appearances on programs such as *Last Word* with Lawrence O'Donnell, *Hardball* with Chris Matthews, *Good Morning America*, *the Today Show*, *20/20*, *This Week*, *Face the Nation*, *Nightline*, *Crossfire*, *the Larry King Show*, *the NewsHour* with Jim Lehrer and profiles in publications such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

Today, in addition to being the President and CEO of Peris Birch Construction Services and an Executive at Peris Construction, Birch offers global services through her nonprofit organization, Global Out. Global Out provides workshops and consulting services to companies and community-based organizations around the world on issues related to LGBT people.

At EBCO & Global Out, Birch and her strategic partners are driving business opportunities and solutions by creating better workplace environments and better approaches to building integrated, diverse teams. Elizabeth has helped companies and organizations strengthen their diversity and inclusion, ethics and social responsibility programs to enhance the ability to be an employer of choice.

Elizabeth is a licensed attorney in the District of Columbia and California. She lives in Washington, DC, with her partner, Anne Reiss, and her 15-year-old twins, Anna and Jacob.

*See also [Elizabethbirch.com](http://Elizabethbirch.com).*