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“Here you have four women who are taking on leadership roles on a pretty high-profile project. I think that is pretty important.”

Four top-tier engineers for RTD’s 18½-mile North Line, opening in 2018, are women

By Monte Whaley The Denver Post

Female engineers remain scarce on America’s college campuses and work sites, but at a massive commuter rail project heading north out of Denver, women are running the show.

Jane Donovan, Nicole Harwell, Katrina Rodriguez and Jennifer Whiteside are lead engineers on the 18½-mile North Line that in 2018 will link Denver Union Station with Thornton and eventually run to Colorado 7.

Donovan is the deputy project manager, Harwell the drainage engineer, Whiteside a structures engineer and Rodriguez is the station architect.

“Here you have four women who are taking on leadership roles on a pretty high-profile project,” Harwell said. “I think that is pretty important.”

“To have women as the lead on diverse disciplines on this project means we are breaking barriers and changing tradition,” added Donovan, who began working at the Regional Transportation District in 2009.

She has the longest tenure with RTD among the women, but all



Regional Transportation District engineers, top from left, Katrina Rodriguez, Nicole Harwell, Jennifer Whiteside and Jane Donovan stand at the construction site of the North Line’s Denargo Bridge, which will span the South Platte River. Above, crews in March work on the North Line bridge that will cross East 104th Avenue in Thornton. *RJ Sangosti, The Denver Post (top); Denver Post file*

started with the agency by 2010. Rodriguez began work on the Denver Union Station project and then transferred to the North Line when work began on that project.

The women bring a varied set of skills. They are also still, sadly, an oddity in the American engineering workforce, says Megan Schulze, president of the Rocky Mountain Section of the Society of Women Engineers.

“Women continue to be significantly under represented in almost every

engineering field,” Schulze said.

Only 10.1 percent of employed civil engineers in the United States are women, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Compare this with mechanical engineers, where 6.5 percent of the workforce are women, and software engineers, where 24.6 percent of the of workforce are women, Schulze said.

“Considering that more women graduate annually with bachelor’s

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ELECTION 2016

Glenn fighting to stay in race

The GOP U.S. Senate hopeful has a tough foe in Dem incumbent Bennet.

By John Frank The Denver Post

Months before the election, Republican Darryl Glenn is fighting for his political life.

The U.S. Senate candidate is struggling to prove he is a viable candidate against Democratic incumbent Michael Bennet, as national political forecasters are increasingly suggesting the race is a lost cause for Republicans.

Colorado recently shifted to “safe Democratic” status in projections from the University of Virginia’s Larry Sabato — the third in a trio of prominent prognosticators to give Bennet the clear edge in a contest that once ranked among the most competitive in the nation.

Based on public and private polling, as well as party insiders, Sabato reported that Republicans in Colorado are losing ground.

“That includes the Senate race, too,” he reasoned. “(Bennet) should be able to run ahead of (Hillary) Clinton against an underfunded Republican opponent ... who national Republicans appear to have written off.”

The dismal projection for Glenn, a little-known El Paso County commissioner, comes at a crucial time as the national Republican Party and conservative groups consider how much to invest in the race.

The influential political network run by Charles and David Koch recently decided not to put money or resources into the Colorado Senate race, focusing instead on six oth-

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