Are you feeling stressed and depressed about the Covid life and the general ongoing challenges of being a tradeswoman? Do you want a daily reminder about the importance of being a workplace pioneer and role model? Do you want to see powerful pictures and read stories of strong, smart and impressive tradeswomen that will put a smile on your face and make it easier for you to go to work every day? Then, no matter your craft or blue collar career you need the 2021 Ironworker Tradeswoman Calendar! This calendar is different from any calendar you have ever seen! It is designed by Ironworker Jeanne Park and filled with powerful moving pictures of tradeswomen on the job. You will want one for home and one for work so all of your male coworkers can see these pictures of strong women in the trades and help to change their attitudes about what is supposedly "men's work"! Put the calendar on your toolbox, locker or somewhere else on the job and celebrate the community of women that are changing the definition of who does the work. Get some as great gifts for that tradeswoman friend, partner, wife, coworker and all other allies that support us in this work. This has been a very hard year. Make next year a little easier every month as you become inspired by this calendar!

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Cover Story, Timberlie Laramie-West
2021 Ironworker Women Calendar

Timberlie is a lifelong Oakland resident. After aging out of foster care at 18, she found herself homeless and sleeping in her car. She decided to participate in a construction pre-apprenticeship program through Rising Sun that she found out about at the welfare office. She applied to almost all of the building trades but settled on the ironworkers, after getting an opportunity to be sponsored. Timberlie’s first job was in Oakland at Brooklyn Basin. “Just 2 years in and my life has done a complete 180, I’m now married with a newborn baby girl, and am working towards buying a home. Oh, and also, my husband, in seeing my success has become a union ironworker as well.”

Proud to be a Blue Collar Woman
Orgullosa de ser una Majer de OFICO
作为一個藍領婦女為榮

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Many workplaces have dress codes and with tradespeople the parameters are pretty universal; shirts with sleeves, long pants, sturdy work boots, etc. Throughout my career as an electrical worker there have been many aspects of my job that require me to don additional specialized garments or PPE. There are leather jackets and face shields for welding, Arc-flash suits with hoods for hot work, and fire rated coveralls needed for most refineries.

Close to the middle of my apprenticeship up to a few years after graduation (approximately 7-8 years) I worked for a company I will call 'CannonBall Electric'. My employer CannonBall Electric had a maintenance contract with a very large corporation I will call 'SquirrelCo' that had many complexes in the San Francisco Bay Area. I bounced back and forth between the various locations for several years.

I was at one of the smaller office buildings for SquirrelCo as an apprentice and it was decided that all core maintenance workers with permanent badges would be required to wear shirts with their name and company who employed them. (I was considered a ‘float' with a temporary badge that was renewed every 30 days). Our union contract strictly defines what items we bring to work so questions arose about the rules and responsibilities for these sacred shirts. The job steward posed all the questions to those in charge. Who gets shirts and who doesn't? Are they company property or purchased by us? Who stores them and where? Who launders them? Where do we change?

A meeting was held and we were all told the following: Shirts will be rented from a company that supplies uniform apparel. They would come once a week to drop off clean shirts and pick up dirty hampers. They are company property so do not bring them home. And the decision made about a dressing room was “you don't need one because it's waist-up dressing only and it's going over an existing shirt just like you would with coveralls”.

Fast forward a few years. I am now a journeyman for CannonBall Electric working at the corporate headquarters for SquirrelCo which is a multi-building campus that houses the president CEO. CannonBall Electric has a much larger footprint at this facility with a material room, break room, print storage area, and our own office wing for our foremen and project managers. There was even a room for the shirts with lockers, benches, and hampers.

One day the foreman told me they decided to put me on the maintenance crew. He said the uniform guy was coming to inventory our supply and update people's measurements on Friday at 9am. He instructed me to be in the locker room at that time to give the guy my info. The end of the week comes and it's shirt measuring time. One by one the men file in. A special fellow I will call ‘Bernard' is visibly taken aback when he walks in and sees me.

“What are you doing in here?” he demands.

“Foreman ‘A' told me to come in here and get measured for shirts. They're adding me to the maintenance crew” I answered.

He was stunned. "But you can't be in here” he said. When I asked why, he said because it was a locker room. “This is a waist-up dress only locker room. It's not a changing room where anyone is supposed to be getting undressed. I was told this was fine. We are putting a shirt on over our existing clothing. No different than when we stand next to each other at a refinery and put Nomex over our clothes”.

His reply was “I don't care. You don't belong here and I don't like it. It's wrong and you need to leave”. I repeatedly asked for a concrete answer for why I didn't belong in the room or a specific reason I should leave but from then on his answers were only “it's wrong and I don't like it”. I told him I wasn't going to leave a room simply because someone didn't want to look at me. I guess looking in another direction hadn't occurred to him. By then I was starting to feel harassed. There were many other crew members in the room now, some who had witnessed the whole thing. Nobody said a word because of the usual "I don't want to get involved...none of my business”.

I fill out the paperwork and am told my shirts will come in on the next batch. In the days following, Bernard tries to rouse a consensus that I should dress elsewhere. Nobody else cared and the thought hadn't even occurred to them. Some of the guys laughed in his face because he was still pursuing the issue. Being unsuccessful with that approach, he next lodged a formal complaint with our steward.

While performing my daily job duties I received a call over my jobsite radio to come see the foreman in his office. I found the job steward and general foreman there as well. They told me about the complaint and said they wanted to hear my side so I described my interaction with Bernard. We had to stop and analyze parts of the 'incident'.

“So he asked you to leave the room?”

“Yes"

“And you refused?”

“Yes"

“Why”

I was extremely annoyed this meeting was taking place but told myself that if I expect to be taken seriously when I have a complaint then I need to respect the process. I calmly explained that I did not feel I should leave a room when someone won't tell me why. I pointed out how I felt discriminated against and harassed because I wasn't given a valid reason to leave while being commanded to do so.
When those two deadly words 'discriminated' and 'harassed' left my lips I saw the foreman take a labored sigh while removing his glasses to rub his eyes. Notes were taken and some stuttered phrases attempted but the room was tense because I was not making this easy. I knew the internal struggle they were having. Do they side with the cranky old-timer they feel obligated to respect? Or the opinionated young woman who is making their jobs VERY difficult right now? Oh what to do!

One of the men told me Bernard suggested I change in the restroom. Some of the bathrooms had extended add-ons with a tiny shower and lockers to encourage people to bike to work or use the sporting fields on campus. I said that was unacceptable to me because:

1. The nearest bathroom with lockers was an entire building away. Why should I have to try to come early or be late?
2. Lockers were for day use only. People were supposed to put tags with their contact info so security didn't cut them off. Using first-come-first-serve lockers didn't guarantee I would get one on any given day.
3. The shower/locker area is one tiny room divided by a curtain. Water collected and trickled into the locker area if someone was showering and often groups of people biked to work so a line formed crowding the area. Too close for comfort.
4. Using a bathroom stall was gross and I wasn't going to risk dropping my sleeve into the toilet since they had no lids.

They were frustrated and perplexed. They wanted me to tell them what to do but I only asked questions. When I asked why they couldn't just tell Bernard it was basically a unisex coat room not a locker room they replied, "Well it seems you already told him that and he wasn't happy about it." I asked why they couldn't ask Bernard to dress in the bathroom since he thought it was such a great idea and he was the ONLY one with a problem. They didn't want to ask him because he had been there first.

I was curious how this would all play out so I decided to be generous and offer a temporary two week period where I would dress in the bathroom. Surely that would give PLENTY of time to call the hall, consult a mediator and find some kind of solution.

During those two weeks my routine consisted of knocking on the door to the locker room, waiting until all the guys were done bullshitting and drinking coffee, go in and grab my shirt, take it to the bathroom and dress. The end of the day was similar. I had to take off my shirt in the bathroom (it was very important I remove the shirt in the bathroom, NOT in the hallway even though the shirt I had underneath was what I would be walking down the hallway in) then I had to wait outside until all the guys were done so I could throw my shirt in the hamper. Often I was late to the morning meeting or going home. It was a huge inconvenience. Also I want to point out that there was no company policy on baring arms/tattoos on the premises and many of the men wore tank tops/T-shirts under their work shirts and also undressed in the hallway without a word from anyone...ever.

The two weeks go by and there isn't a peep about a solution. I had to ask management for a meeting. Obviously they were hoping I would continue using the bathroom and keep quiet. During the meeting they informed me that they had not come to a conclusion and asked me if dressing in the bathroom was still unsatisfactory. I said it was more than unsatisfactory and disgusting. Their faces sagged. Why couldn't I be a good girl and stay in my stall? Finally they asked what I would suggest.

I said "Either hold a meeting stating it is a unisex waist-up dress area only and hang proper signage, or build me my own room".

Meanwhile during my two week purgatory I had discovered the room already had a lock mechanism. The door was usually propped open for the uniform guy. I proposed that from now on I would change first since there was only one of me. The men would have to wait. The rest of the crew got tired of that real quick and much bitching and moaning ensued. Then a few days later PRESTO! All of a sudden a decision was made to build a separate Ladies' room complete with benches, lockers and mirrors just like the men had.

While all this was going on, the powers that be in charge also realized there were three other women (one who was the foreman) on the sound and communications crew. They had been changing in the foreman's doorless cubicle for years. They never wanted to make waves and didn't know how to broach the subject so they just stayed out of sight.

I heard an exhilarating comment about diversity one year at the Women Build Nations conference that stated how companies sometimes struggle to fit everyone at the table. So what do you do? Build a new table. I'm writing that twice so you can read that again. Build a new table. If your company won't do it, if your sisters don't know how, please let those words inspire you and YOU do it. Don't make the woman rising up behind you start a new table from scratch every time. Build something she can improve and make stronger every year.

Share your tools with her.
Carry those planks for her.
Pound that nail for her.
Swing that axe and smash these old boards that serve no purpose and build her a seat in a place she rightfully belongs.
“Come on you can tell me,” says Bobby. “Are you gay?”
Bobby is a machinist who usually works in the machine shop but today he is helping me change fixtures in the warehouse at the water department yard. I’m the only electrician and sometimes I need a helper. There was no laborer available and I am up on a 16-foot ladder.

The song by the Police, Every Breath You Take, is playing on the boom box he carries around with him.

“They sounds like a song about stalking,” I say. “It’s a threat.”
“Hmm, I never thought about it that way,” he says, “but I guess you’re right.”

I’ve been at the San Francisco Water Department for a few months and I’m getting along alright. Especially considering I’m the only tradeswoman there except for Amy, the only female plumber. Amy is out digging up the streets every day and so I rarely see her. Sometimes we convene a two-woman support group in the women’s restroom and it’s good to know she’s there.

I think about how to answer Bobby. It kind of annoys me that he would just ask me like that. But on the other hand I appreciate his directness. I like Bobby and he’s as close to a friend as I have among the men, but I know if I give him any information about my private life it will be all over the yard within 24 hours. Do I want all the guys in all the shops to know?

“That’s none of your business,” I reply.

Yeah, I’m a lesbian and my lover is Del, who works at Park and Rec. We were both female firsts—she the first carpenter and I the first electrician to work for the city of San Francisco. Being the first is always a burden. You are aware that you set the stereotype for all the women who come after you. You feel the whole of womankind rests on your shoulders. You know you can’t make mistakes but of course you do, and then you imagine all of womankind suffers.

Del is five foot two and slender but you don’t see her as small. Her wiry gray hair gives her a couple more inches of height. She’s got broad shoulders and large hands. And she gets power from her low voice; she sings tenor with a gay chorus, the Vocal Minority.

Del and I don’t live together but I spend a lot of time at her apartment on Potrero Hill with its sweeping view of the bay and downtown. At my place on Bernal Hill I have a roommate, Sandy, another electrician. She’s messy and has a lot of stuff and a coke head girlfriend I don’t like. So I often stay with Del. Truth is I can’t stay away. I’m mad for her.

Since I got in to the trades, my lovers have been tradeswomen. I can’t resist a woman with a toolbelt. The first woman I fell in love with was a carpenter. They say you either fall in love with her or you want to be her. For me it was both.

I watch my lover build a house. She wears dirty blue jeans and scuffed work boots. Sweat stains mushroom on her T-shirt, which reads Sisterhood is Powerful, under a women’s symbol with a fist in its center. Sweat drips from her nose and rolls down the side of her face. Her dark curly hair sticks out from under her hardhat.

Around her hips hangs the heavy leather carpenter’s belt. It has a metal ring for the hammer and slots for various other tools, and pouches for the nails of different sizes. A two-inch wide leather belt holds it around her ample hips. It’s helped by wide suspenders. She holds the nails in her mouth, then pounds them in to the wood with great efficiency. Tanned arms bulge as she sinks nail after nail into the sill plate. She is focused and fast, the epitome of strength and ease. When she takes a break, she rolls a cigarette and lights it with a match put to her boot. She sucks in the smoke with obvious pleasure and even though I’m super allergic to smoke and it will set me off coughing, that is the sexiest thing I’ve ever seen. How could a gal not fall in love with this image of power, strength, purpose.
I was smitten and I’ve been smitten by tradeswomen ever since. And they are the only ones who really understand what I go through at work. A person’s got to have a partner she can whine to when she gets home.

Lately it’s Del who’s been having trouble at work. Dick, her foreman at the carpentry shop, doesn’t like women or queers. He does everything he can to make her work life difficult. If it weren’t for Dick, Del would get along just fine. She loves the work, not the harassment. She once overhead him call her a dyke. That’s a word we lesbians have reclaimed and embraced but he meant it in the old fashioned derogatory way.

Negotiating homophobia and sexism at work is a balancing act for us. You just know that the foreman will use any excuse to lay you off. Del knows this too, that we women must always keep our cool in these situations, but sometimes she can’t help herself. She just loses her temper and then even she doesn’t know what she might do.

One time she held off an attacker with a hand saw. If you swing it at waist level, they can’t reach you. She swung the saw in a fit of rage, acting without thinking. In that case rage saved her ass, but mostly when this happens she leaves the confrontation feeling embarrassed that she could not control her emotions. She tells me I’m much better at not losing my cool and she ascribes her rage to her Italian blood.

I first met Del at a tradeswomen confab when I was working with the Wonder Woman Electric collective in 1978, but we didn’t get together as lovers until 1982 while we were organizing the first national tradeswomen conference that took place in Oakland the next year. We had both been working construction downtown before starting to work for the city of San Francisco.

“I lost my temper today and now I might lose my job,” Del told me one evening when I got over to her house after work.

By that time she was remorseful. “Why do I always lose my temper? How do you manage to stay so cool?”

I think the answer lays in the ways we learned to respond to stress and abuse when we were growing up. She was a caretaker type and I was the opposite. Del says she always felt like she had antennae, that she was super aware of her surroundings. I, on the other hand, would put on virtual blinders and just continue pretending nothing was going on. This method of avoiding conflict has served me well in the trades. I pretend not to see and often I really don’t.

Soon after we got together I accompanied her to visit her family in Chicago. Right away I felt at home. They are huggers, and loud talkers, people who like to cook and eat big family meals and who live in their basements, never using the living room upstairs where couches are covered with plastic. Her mother is part of a big Italian clan—all sisters except for one brother who is treated like a king but drowned out by loud women.

“Here’s what happened,” she said. “I wanted to get my paycheck earlier in the day than Dick wanted to give it out. I had an appointment and was leaving at noon. He was being totally obnoxious about it and I got really mad at him. I said “fuck it” and walked out without the paycheck. Now he’s trying to fire me for swearing at him. I wasn’t swearing at him, it was a general fuck-it. Anyway, just an excuse to fire me.”

“I’m scared,” she admitted.

“What are you gonna do now?” I asked, concerned.

“I don’t have a plan except to wait to see what he does next. Maybe it won’t go anywhere.”

A few days later Dick upped the ante. He set up a kangaroo court with his supervisors and friends in the yard who sat Del down and questioned her. She had no representation or support. It was just a set up.

That’s when Del went above the foreman’s head. We knew that the director of Park and Rec was an out gay man. Tom had gained a reputation as a respected department head who gave a shit about workers. He was also a player in the gay South of Market scene who (we heard) had tattoos all over his body. He always wore long sleeved shirts at work.
“Tom was absolutely great when I told him the story and showed him the daily journal I’d kept about the harassment,” she said to me. Soon after that Dick was fired.

Our gay ally had saved Del’s job, but what would have happened had he not been there?

“Are you out on the job,” she asked me later.

“Well, no. It’s none of their business.”

Del is a proponent of coming out at work. She says it’s better to give the guys the information so they will just stop gossiping about you. For women it might actually be a plus to be out. It’s a signal that you’re not interested in them romantically and you never will be, a good way to stop come-ons. Telling them you’re married with five kids works too.

At the tradeswomen conference she gave a workshop to help gay women come out. “If we all come out we won’t be alone,” she says. “We’ll be supporting our lesbian sisters.”

She quoted Harvey Milk: “Every gay person must come out. As difficult as it is, you must tell your immediate family. You must tell your relatives. You must tell your friends if indeed they are your friends. You must tell the people you work with. You must tell the people in the stores you shop in. Once they realize that we are indeed their children, that we are indeed everywhere, every myth, every lie, every innuendo will be destroyed once and all. And once you do, you will feel so much better”

Del was pissed when I admitted I wasn’t out on the job. “What!” She exclaimed. “You’re still in the closet at work! Don’t you see why it’s important for us all to be out. How can you leave me hanging out there on a limb? I almost lost my job!”

She had a good point—several good points. I thought about why I’d stayed closeted. It was easier. I didn’t want to risk the wrath and disdain of my co-workers. They weren’t really interested in my private life and I couldn’t care less about theirs. It was hard enough just being the only female on the job. You imagine the worst thing that could happen. They wouldn’t physically attack me. But they could refuse to work with me just as one white guy in the machine shop had refused to work with a black guy. They could refuse to talk to me, a trick men used on women all the time to get them to quit. They could fire me. I’d been hired on as a temporary worker with no employment rights. I wasn’t safe.

But I promised my lover I would come out.

My electric “shop” was a windowless closet next to the machine shop office where my boss, Manuel, and a secretary worked. They were always trying to get me to fill in when she was out sick, which happened with regularity. I had made the mistake of answering truthfully when they asked if I could type. I’d refused and I hadn’t relented even when Dave, the auto shop foreman cried crocodile tears as he tried to type with hands missing several of their fingers. Somehow the guy was still able to work on trucks. But that was men’s work.

One day Manuel made a reference to my husband. That was my opening. “I don’t have a husband,” I said. “I’m gay.”

When you come out to them, men are either totally shocked or they tell you they knew all along. Manuel was shocked, but he recovered quickly.

I didn’t have to tell anyone else. Word got around the yard. I heard one of the machinists, a religious nut, had moved me into the hated category. But he was someone I could avoid.

Bobby was cool. “I knew it,” he said. © Molly Martin, Santa Rosa CA 2020

At 71, Molly Martin considers herself a crone and an elder of the Tradeswomen Movement. She was a founder of Tradeswomen Inc. and Tradeswomen Magazine and she edited the book “Hard-Hatted Women: Life On the Job.” Along with a crew of tradeswomen volunteers she’s now writing the history of the movement. Her blog is mollymartin.blog.

Note about Wonder Woman Electric Collective
Wonder Woman Electric Collective circa 1978: L to R: Val Ramirez, Pat Manns, Jean Ulbricht, Sylvia Israel. On top: Susanne DiVincenzo, Molly Martin. The van was painted by Jeanne Clark. On the other side is a African American Wonder Woman.
Pandemic Nurse’s Diary opens this way:

“When I walk through the automatic doors into the ICU at 7 AM, I step into a war zone. There are overflowing trash buckets and debris scattered all over the unit. Four red crash carts sit outside the rooms, their drawers open and largely empty, witnesses to the chaotic night. One of the patients who coded survived, the three others died.

It is a grim scene, told in strong, simple prose by Nurse T, a veteran critical care nurse who wishes to remain anonymous (veteran nurse Timothy Sheard assisted with the writing). She chronicles her experience, from January when the first reports of a “novel virus” in China cause her concern, to the first cases trickling in to her hospital, to the avalanche of patients that soon overwhelmed them.

Her diary is also the story of a large New York City hospital (also anonymous) that serves a poor population, mainly people of color and immigrants. The aging infrastructure, inadequate supplies and lack of bold, effective response to the pandemic all come to light in her diary.

But the stories are not all sad or tragic. There are moments of triumph and precious expressions of humor. And through it all runs the solidarity and courage of the hospital workers who ventured back day after day, night after night, to fight a losing battle.

Some hospital workers succumb to the virus, adding to the grief that Nurse T and her colleagues suffer. There are many sleepless nights spent in a nearby hotel when she is working 12-hour shifts four or five days in a row.

The diary ends with a plea to allocate more resources to hospitals like hers, which have been under-funded for decades. Nurse T says:

“I most definitely don’t want to go through hell again, risking my life and the lives of my family, until the Federal Government raises its Medicare and Medicaid payments to a reasonable rate that will sustain and allow improvements that we so desperately need, and until it gives out-and-out grants for structural improvements, like upgrading the oxygen delivery systems.

Then I will gladly tie up my hair, hang my stethoscope around my neck, tuck my nursing shears in my pocket, clip my watch to my uniform and march with my fellow hospital workers back into battle, because that’s the deal I signed up for. That’s the oath I swore as a nurse. That’s the love I have for my patients and my co-workers. I’m ready to go—will you have my back?”

The diary is followed by a series of Meditation and Writing Exercises that the author hopes will “heal the wounded hearts” of her co-workers, not only in the healthcare field, but for all essential workers. There are suggestions to meditate on grief, anger, loneliness and more. The writing exercises encourage readers to open their heart and speak (on paper) to the patients, families and co-workers who played such a powerful part in their lives. Indeed, the Diary and the Meditations are just what essential workers need to help them cope, and just what the public needs to really see the courageous, compassionate hospital workers who toiled, and who toil yet today, offering comfort, saving precious lives.
Sheila White...Victory Update and youtube Video Link (BELOW)

“I had experience in working in a male oriented environment. When I began working for my employer I did not expect to face any problems that could not be resolved within the company. When I found it necessary to confront my new employer on my complaints about workplace sexual harassment, discrimination and retaliation I faced a great challenge. I found that an immense amount of courage along with persistence would be required to pursue a remedy. This is my story that led me to take this action—a giant fight, Burlington Northern and Santa Fe railroad (BN SF), Tennessee whale yards in Memphis Tennessee. I had no way of knowing that my action would lead me to become known as a national whistleblower.

In May 2006 the US Supreme Court heard the appeal of BNSF. On June 22, 2006 BNSF again lost its case when the court rendered its landmark decision—a unanimous (9-0) decision in favor of Sheila white.

My legal fight with BNSF covered a nine year period in the courts. It resulted in a landmark court decision that changed how sexual harassment, retaliation and discrimination would be handled in the workplace in every state. Because of the action I took against BNSF, and industrial giant, I became known as the first African-American female national whistleblower.

This case with its landmark decision has been widely researched and used extensively in many court cases and workshops and in courses in colleges and universities. I use the background material for the case against BNSF to write a book, Fighting the Giant, which shared specific incidents relating to sexual harassment, retaliation and discrimination and my reason for taking BNSF to court. As of 2020, because of national interest in each of the areas of sexual harassment, retaliation and discrimination, film backward/movie interest is being pursued. I am the first African-American female to speak at the national whistleblower’s summit for blue-collar workers.”

Sheila White, Memphis TN

Editor’s Note...the link below is a video of Sheila’s speech at the National Whistleblower’s Summit, Washington DC. We are proud to continue to update her herstoric journey in Pride and a Paycheck. A second printing of her book Fighting the Giant will be available through Pride and a Paycheck in January 2021. Watch for more information.  https://youtu.be/SdLL7k5d4FI
With the United States surpassing its own infection rates daily, the Coronavirus, which emerged late February, is nowhere near gone. While most hunkered down for the lockdown, some construction was deemed "essential business." It took many states, such as New York, months to breakdown the vague industry term "construction" into various levels of worker necessity. The construction industry has not been immune from Coronavirus infections, meaning tradeswomen are equally at risk for contracting the virus.

Women who work in construction comprise less than 9% of workers in the industry. In some states, women constitute less than 5% of workers. Indisputably, women are in a non-traditional occupation. So, what is it like to be a woman working through the Coronavirus pandemic?

Like most industries working during the pandemic, the major concerns for tradeswomen is safety. Fortunately, as skilled trained workers, tradeswomen are accustomed to ranking safety as a top priority. Unfortunately, the pandemic brings to the foreground pre-existing issues within the construction industry for female workers. Most construction Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is sized "one-size fits all." Since most construction workers are male, they are sized larger than most female construction workers. Ill-fitting PPE, while inconvenient, is also life threatening. A loose mask can allow in toxins and bacteria, while a loose harness could fall off while in use.

Due to the hazardous and dangerous environment in which tradeswomen work, it is imperative, now more than ever, to ensure your employer provides proper fitting PPE, and plenty of it! Another challenge for tradeswomen safety stems from their basic hygienic needs. Outside of the pandemic, clean facilities and hand-washing stations can be difficult to acquire on a jobsite. However, now during the pandemic, they are crucial to avoiding illness. While hand-washing stations and clean facilities are not guaranteed due to the pandemic, it is shedding light and increasing the severity to have these items on every jobsite.

Another safety challenge facing Tradeswomen during the Coronavirus pandemic stems from the nature of skilled trades work. Most construction sites require work in teams or groups. These groups ride work in extremely close proximity. If one trades worker in that group does not practice proper mask wearing and protocols, they put their entire group at risk.

If demands on the jobsite are not enough to stress out a tradeswoman, add on the family dynamic. Many tradeswomen are parents and the person responsible for ensuring childcare. With lockdowns and school closures, tradeswomen have been forced to make tough decisions regarding their jobs and their children. Some states, like Oregon and California, offer amazing childcare programs for union tradeswomen. However, not every state in the country offers life-saving programs.

Being a tradeswoman has never been easy. Coronavirus makes it even more of a challenge. But, tradeswomen are tough and will persevere.

Resources available for tradeswomen:

- Oregon Tradeswomen - https://www.tradeswomen.net/covid-19-resources/
- AFL-CIO - https://aflcio.org/covid-19

About the Author: Allie Perez founded Texas Women in Trades, an organization working to bring more women, minorities and young people to the trades, in 2013. She also serves as the vice president of marketing and operations at George Plumbing Co. in San Antonio and on the National Taskforce for Tradeswomen. A graduate of New York University, she has written for trade periodicals for seven years. To contact her, email texaswomenintrad@gmail.com.
Program Information

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School for Workers programming is switching to an online format. Classes are developed and led by faculty on a University of Wisconsin-Madison supported online platform. Each class is formatted to be accessible online as a self-paced institute or blended institute.

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✓ Knowledgable and supportive faculty
✓ Affordable and accessible

School for Workers online institutes
Program Schedule | Spring 2021

Families First Coronavirus Response Act, Sick Leave, and the Family Medical Leave Act
Mon, Feb 1 - Sun, Feb 21 | Self-Paced Institute
Tuition: $185 | Register by: Wed, Jan 27

Essentials of Union Leadership
Mon, Feb 22 - Sun, Mar 14 | Self-Paced Institute
Tuition: $185 | Register by: Wed, Feb 17

Advanced Union Leadership
Mon, Mar 15 - Sun, Apr 4 | Self-Paced Institute
Tuition: $185 | Register by: Wed, Mar 10

Grievance Arbitration
Mon, Apr 5 - Sun, Apr 25 | Blended Institute
Tuition: $185 | Register by: Wed, Mar 31

For full class descriptions and to register visit schoolforworkers.wisc.edu

Contact School for Workers
Ph: 608-262-2112 | E-mail: schoolforworkers@dcs.wisc.edu
CHECK THIS OUT....

**MOVE OVER BOB**  [https://www.moveoverbob.com/](https://www.moveoverbob.com/)
New online publication for women in the trades and those thinking about it!
(Sample article..CLICK BELOW)
“COVID Has Nothing On This Pre-Apprenticeship Program As They Celebrated Their First Graduating Class”
[https://www.moveoverbob.com/editorials/m6rv4n6r93nrtk13y9e7bewu17ttlt](https://www.moveoverbob.com/editorials/m6rv4n6r93nrtk13y9e7bewu17ttlt)

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**Shop Talk Trade Comics: For Construction Trade Workers by** Kahla Lichti  Winnipeg Canada

Are you ready for a Bring-Your-Reader-To-Work Day? Speaking from her own experiences as an electrician, Kahla Lichti’s comics deal with both the hilarity and struggles of blue collar work. From sexism, physics, apprenticeship, and actual technical trivia and know-how from the electrician lexicon - this zine has it all!

[https://microcosmpublishing.com/catalog/books/8](https://microcosmpublishing.com/catalog/books/8)
Plover, WI – Nov. 2, 2020 – The Women In Trucking Association (WIT) has announced Melissa Gaglione as its November Member of the Month. She is the founder and president of Safety4her, a high visibility women’s clothing company specifically designed for women working in hazardous work environments.

After years of working in the towing and trucking industry, Gaglione struggled to find comfortable safety clothing that fit properly. The existing market for safety wear was mostly for men with a “one size fits all approach.” The clothing was consistently too long, too wide, or too heavy.

With her background in insurance, Gaglione knew that a poor fit could cause women to face a higher risk of injury. In 2018, she founded Safety4her, designing clothing that met state regulations while being comfortable for women of all sizes.

The clothing line carries sizes X-small to XXL. The fabric uses spandex, giving a better fit for all shapes and sizes. This decreases the chance of clothing getting caught on an object, causing injury. Safety4her offers the first high visibility line of leggings which are patent pending with features that include high visibility striping, three pockets, water resistant, breathable, non-see through, and high waisted. Safety4her also carries class2 adjustable vests with spandex sides for a better fit option. “No more vest dress ladies,” said Gaglione.

In early 2019, Gaglione made her first sale and traveled all over the U.S. meeting women and selling products. She is now carrying her line with several companies around the country.

“I want women to feel empowered,” said Gaglione. “I want to set a positive example not just for my own children, but all young girls, that nothing can stop you from being who you want to be.”

You can find more about Melissa Gaglione and Safety4her at www.safety4her.com and also can follow safety4her on Facebook: @safety4her2018 and Instagram: @safety4her.

Women In Trucking Association’s mission is to encourage the employment of women in the trucking industry, promote their accomplishments, and minimize obstacles faced by women working in the trucking industry. 2020 Ellen Voie, President, Women in Trucking,

Women In Trucking Association, Inc. P O Box 400, Plover WI 54467-0400

AMERICAN TRUCKS SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

American Trucks Scholarship: 4 x $2500 scholarships to students pursuing a career in the traditional building trades such as HVAC, carpentry, electrical, or related fields of study. Two scholarships will be awarded every spring semester, followed by two additional scholarships to be awarded for the fall semester each year. Check out their Scholarship

https://www.americantrucks.com/scholarships.html
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Sheet Metal Workers’ Local Union No. 104 is the leader in 49 California counties in the fields of: decorative & architectural sheet metal; metal roofs; heating, ventilating, and air conditioning; and indoor environmental quality designed, built, maintained, and serviced to Sustainable Green Building Standards.
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If the values of stewardship, teamwork, integrity and respect speak to you, consider a career with the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD). EBMUD, one of the largest independent water and wastewater utilities in the nation, has an immediate need for sub-journey and journey-level Maintenance Machinists.

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*Recruitment Expected Winter 2021*

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Headquartered in Oakland, California, EBMUD is also actively looking for other skilled trades professionals who will continue our proud history of providing high-quality drinking water for 1.4 million customers in Alameda and Contra Costa counties and award-winning wastewater treatment that protects San Francisco Bay and serves 685,000 customers. EBMUD promotes a vibrant workplace culture that values our employees; maintains competitive pay and excellent benefits including pensions; provides meaningful and challenging work; supports innovation and learning, and encourages employee wellness and work/life balance.

EBMUD is an Equal Opportunity Employer: Minorities/Females/Protected Veterans/Disability

www.ebmud.com/jobs/job-opportunities
The Pipe Trades Training Center promotes women in the apprenticeship! If you’re interested please contact us!

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www.pipetradestraining.org
Pre-apprenticeships can diversify the pipeline of potential applicants entering registered apprenticeships and offer support to retain workers though apprenticeship and beyond. Portland State University researchers assessed two pre-apprenticeship programs in Oregon: Oregon Tradeswomen, which serves women, and Constructing Hope, which primarily serves people of color and those previously incarcerated. Both programs include classroom training and visits to apprenticeship training centers and active construction sites. They also provide career counseling, help students apply to apprenticeships, and provide financial and social support.

To assess how these pre-apprenticeship programs affect the skills, perceptions, and career outcomes of women and people of color, Portland State University researchers designed a longitudinal study of people participating in Oregon Tradeswomen and Constructing Hope. We developed the surveys in collaboration with Oregon Tradeswomen and Constructing Hope staff members. We focused on two cohorts of pre-apprenticeship students at Oregon Tradeswomen and two cohorts at Constructing Hope in 2016. For each cohort, we administered the study’s first wave of the survey on the first day of the pre-apprenticeship class, the second wave at the end of the pre-apprenticeship class, and the third wave one year later. We supplemented survey data with data collected through the Oregon Apprenticeship System (OAS), which tracks all registered apprentices in Oregon. Across all four cohorts of pre-apprenticeship students, 94 completed wave I surveys on the first day of class (of 94 students enrolled), 76 completed the wave II surveys on the last day of class (of the 77 who completed the programs), and 15 completed wave III surveys online or over the phone one year after completing their program.

- **Tools and skills.** Knowing how to work with hand tools or power tools and other construction skills, including safety and math;
- **Soft skills.** Having confidence, strong communication skills, a good attitude, and the ability to work in teams;
- **Knowledge about working on construction job-sites.** Understanding “construction culture” and productivity;
- **Knowledge about trades careers.** Knowing how to apply for apprenticeship programs and what resources are available

27 percent of Constructing Hope graduates and 20 percent of Oregon Tradeswomen graduates who completed a pre-apprenticeship in January and April 2016 entered a registered apprenticeship by June 2017. Many others found jobs in construction or other industries. We asked pre-apprenticeship graduates who were currently working in the trades, “What do you see as the most important things you learned from your pre-apprenticeship program that have helped you in the trades?”

**What do you see as the most important things you learned from your pre-apprenticeship program that have helped you in the trades?”**

“What the field is really like, how the industry is for women and minorities, and how to actually use the tools!” *(Oregon Tradeswomen student)*

“My program really prepared us to mentally understand and take in working in a male-dominated field. It also gave me the confidence I needed to trust that I can do construction despite my gender.” *(Oregon Tradeswomen student)*

“Honestly, it was all so important. I really appreciate the hands-on experience with tools, practice with measuring, and the expectations of an apprentice in a construction trade. It set the bar for my apprenticeship and has made me a much more effective apprentice than I would have been otherwise. My journeyman is a 61-year-old man who has been in the trades his whole life. He told me I’m the best apprentice he’s ever had, because I ask questions, I anticipate what’s coming next and make sure we’re prepared, and I’m not standing around. These are all things that my pre-apprentice program taught me to do.” *(Oregon Tradeswomen student)*

In an earlier analysis of the OAS data, which include all registered apprentices in Oregon, we also found that pre-apprenticeship has been an important pathway into the trades for women (and to a lesser degree, men of color). Among white women apprentices, 21.7 percent had completed a pre-apprenticeship, and 96 percent of them had completed a pre-apprenticeship through Oregon Tradeswomen. Among women of color, 31.5 percent had completed a pre-apprenticeship. This is compared with only 2.1 percent of men of color and less than 1 percent of white men who were active apprentices in Oregon in 2014–15.

Overall, pre-apprenticeships have had a significant effect on diversifying the construction workforce in Oregon and are particularly effective as a pathway into the trades for women.

**Among Oregon apprentices, 21.7% of white women and 31.5% of women of color ad entered construction via a pre-apprenticeship.**

Description of crafts within the program CTCNC encourages women to join the rewarding career in carpentry! No matter what your background is, there are many different crafts to choose from like; General Carpenter, Acoustical Installer, Drywall, Hardwood Floor Layer, Insulator, Lather, Millwright, Pile Driver, Scaffold Erector and Shingler. All these crafts work in different phases of the construction project and have different levels of expertise and skills required to be successful. Through your efforts at the apprenticeship you will receive college credits for the classes that you attend and with the successes on the jobsite you will gain the building blocks to climb the career ladder to the top. Maybe the company owner.

CTRL Click Sisters in the Brotherhood: A Film About Women Carpenters  
Thanks to Daniel Schultz

Sisters in the Brotherhood for more information about the Sisters or sign at nccrc.org/sisters.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LG1Jxxwrzn4  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmIhVESVcyA

Editor/Publisher Sheree Williams’ magazine “Cuisine Noir” was welcomed onto the pages of Pride and a Paycheck in the Spring issue and was a bit hit! “From food and wine to travel, Cuisine Noir magazine delivers what readers are looking for which is more than where to find the next great meal. And most importantly, it is a culinary publication that compliments readers’ lifestyles and desire for a diverse epicurean experience. It is the first magazine that showcases the stories of trendsetters, tastemakers and influencers from around the African diaspora. Weekly online readers are treated to exclusive stories about industry experts and professionals to vineyards and world class destinations around the world. Celebrity chefs featured include Tre Wilcox, Tanya Holland, Bryant Terry, Sunny Anderson, Jeff Henderson and Tiffany Derry. In addition, the magazine is also the first to showcase the “foodie” side of other celebrities such as the late great Dr. Maya Angelou, Wendy Williams, Kimberly Elise, Laila Ali, Gina Neely and Grace Hightower De Niro. Product reviews features the best in food and wine must-haves and the recipes make it easy to decide on you next meal. Cuisine Noir’s Book Grub is a curated collection of cookbooks with monthly giveaways.

Make www.cuisinenoirmag.com your daily destination and also connect on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for more news and updates, includes the release Cuisine Noir 2020 Global print issue due out this fall.

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Editor Note: Rochelle donates jewelry to benefit Pride and a Paycheck. Thank you Sister!

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Pride and a Paycheck is produced and published with Union Labor.

It's thick as you walk on the job. You feel it all around. Starting to push in on you like a wet blanket around you. "A woman is here!"

You can see it on their faces. Just as you feel it in the air. Trouble.

You know what comes next. The break trailer will be silent. No one will welcome you. The crew will walk on eggshells.

"Can we talk like we always do?"
"She’s just looking for a husband to take care of her."

Next the men will fall into two groups. The "Try to break her" and the "She can't do it… Let me do that for you."

Both groups have one common factor. "I have to carry her because of course she can't do this work/job"

The next phase starts. The men get comfortable. Relax a bit. You don't bite. BUT... Now the confident ones try to chat you up. Saying “Good morning” each day or stopping at your work area to chat.

You hear “She wants me.” Along with other nonsense.

You learn to be polite. Acknowledge them but never engage.

Again the rest say you can't do the work. Everything you do is critiqued times 100 over your male counterparts. Head up. Mouth shut. Eyes on the horizon.

I will not fold. I will conquer.

13 years later. I did not fold. I conquered!

© 2020 Maria Hughes, Oregon

Being a young woman I’ve learned a lot about white-collar activities like cooking cleaning etc. I personally like doing those things, but I knew that I couldn’t do that for a job. When my mom, dad and I build things like a garage, patio, deck and a pool, doghouse etc. I loved it all. My favorite thing to do was use a power tool. Power tools are way more exciting than cleaning a dish or cleaning a floor. Blue-collar is way more hands-on than white-collar. I wouldn’t have all the opportunities I would have today. Once I got to my school in Ohio at the Lorain County joint vocational school (LCJUS), as a freshman I wanted to become a mechanic but as I went through the year and sophomore year, I wanted to be an electrician. I knew how to do everything except electricity. Plus I’m the only girl in my family to become an electrician and I LOVE IT. So all I can tell you now is that I’m proud to be a senior in high school doing electricity. Some of the guys don’t like it but I don’t care. I’m proud to be a woman in the building trades.

© 2020 Amber Michalski, Ohio

What I Do

First I would like to say thank you to all the tradeswomen that have paved the way for me and many others.

My name is Patrice Raymond, NYC local 731. Excavation Heavy Road and Highway. That is what I do and I love it. Being a single mother of four baby boys is hard. But not anymore, thanks to my trade. I don’t have to worry about anything. Neither do my children have to see me worry. I’ve had a hard life but I must admit now that I love the changes I’ve been able to make as a trades woman and mother. I could have been anywhere but I’m here hoping to help other women behind me get on and stay on. Show up and show out ladies. I could tell you all sorts of stories but instead I’ll encourage more women into the trades. It will be the best decision you can make.

© 2020 Patrice Raymond, New York City

She’s strong in spirit and muscle. She doesn’t mind getting her hands dirty to make a living. Her generous paycheck, benefits, vacation and retirement package are worth more than any long painted fingernails. (She can always use “press-ons” if she wants to dress up on the weekend!)

She is every color, every ethnicity, every age and every shape. Her sexuality is her own business. She has children. She doesn’t. She’s determined to succeed in whatever she does. She learns from mistakes. She’s not afraid to ask for help because she knows what teamwork means.

She’s fiercely independent. Sometimes it comes off as stubbornness to those who don’t understand. Most of the time she doesn’t consider herself a pioneer. But then there are those days on the job site when she looks around and sees no one else like her. Those are the days that make her sad, defiant, persistent and proud all at the same time!

Her confidence is something she works on daily. She has to. Because on the job site there are still those few men who don’t want her there…want to break her will to succeed.

There are even some family members or friends who think she shouldn’t be doing blue-collar work. So she has to rise above it all….has to be good at her job….really good. Has to convince her employer, her union, her male co-workers, her friends and family that she is up to the task. While in her heart she knows that some of these people will never be won over. It doesn’t make her happy, but she faces that reality too. And she moves on. After all, she’s a tradeswoman!

WHAT KIND OF WOMAN IS A TRADESWOMAN?