

A PROFILE OF CASSANDRA WHALEN



"The program helps you look at mentorship in a completely different way and gives you tools you can use not just at work, but in everyday life."

Getting Into the Trades

Cassandra Whalen is an Industrial Mechanic (Millwright) who entered the trades without a traditional background. Her journey began in pre-employment training, where she was learning foundational skills such as reading a tape measure for the first time. What kept her moving forward were the challenges and her sense of accomplishment that came with learning something new each day. This eventually grew into a passion for work that is hands-on and focuses on solving problems.

What she enjoys about being an Industrial Mechanic (Millwright)

For Cassandra, one of the most rewarding parts of being an Industrial Mechanic (Millwright) is the variety of work that's involved. No two days are the same and each job challenges her to think and adapt. She feels a great sense of pride every time she completes a successful work project.

The impact of mentorship

Early in her career Cassandra sometimes felt she didn't belong, especially when she was the only woman on the work site. Supportive mentors who encouraged her and believed in her abilities helped her to build more confidence and to persist, despite all the challenging moments. Recognizing that mentorship played a critical role in her journey is a big part of why she is now committed to helping other women in their journey through the trades.

Drawn to the National Mentorship Program

Cassandra joined the National Mentorship Program to build on the informal support she was already providing her apprentices and coworkers. The program deepened her understanding of mentorship, highlighting the importance of communication, trust and psychological safety on the work site. It also helped her reflect on the kind of mentor and leader she wants to be.

Paying it Forward

Now more confident in her mentoring approach, Cassandra focuses on listening, communication, and creating safe spaces for others to ask questions and to grow. She believes that mentorship isn't about being perfect, but about sharing what you've learned through your experiences with others.

Advice for others

Cassandra recommends this program to any woman in the trades, regardless of her level of experience. She believes the program offers a fresh perspective on mentorship and provides practical tools that are useful both on the job and in everyday life. Mentoring validates our experiences and both the mentor and the mentee learn new skills from one another. Cassandra believes mentoring is one of the most powerful ways to strengthen the industries we work in.



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