



For Immediate Release:

Friday, March 1, 2019

Contact: Julie Walsh, Julie.Walsh@mechanicalindustries.org

Phone: 608-288-1414

WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION WEEK

Honoring the hard working women of MSC/MAPC member contractors March 3-9

MADISON, WI – **Madison Area Mechanical and Sheet Metal Contractors Association (MSC)** and **Madison Association of Plumbing Contractors (MAPC)** are pleased to participate in the **National Association of Women in Construction’s (NAWIC)** annual **Women in Construction Week** held March 3-9, 2019, Executive Director **Julie Walsh** announced on Friday.

According to NAWIC’s website, 939,000 women made up 9.1% of total construction workers in 2016. Below is a breakdown of the positions these women held for their respective companies:

Occupation Sector	Number of Women	Percentage
Sales & Office	423,000	45%
Professional & Management	293,000	31%
Natural Resources, Construction & Maintenance	196,000	21%
Service Occupations	14,000	1.5%
Production, Transportation & Material Moving	13,000	1.4%

Each day during Women in Construction Week, MSC/MAPC will feature women from **1901, Inc., All Comfort Services, General Heating and Air Conditioning, Hooper Corporation, H.J. Pertzborn Plumbing and Fire Protection, J. F. Ahern Co., and Monona Plumbing and Fire Protection**, and sharing their stories online at www.mechanicalindustries.org, Facebook (@MechanicalIndustriesMadisonWI), Twitter (@MSC_MAPC), and LinkedIn (Mechanical Industries Center).

MSC/MAPC spoke with several women who work for the association’s union contractors on what it is like to work in the construction industry in Wisconsin.

“Women do belong in the construction industry,” explained 1901, Inc.’s Controller **Melissa Wood**. “It is enjoyable to work toward building something and driving down the streets of Madison saying (1901, Inc.) worked on that building or that project.”

Hanna Jeske is the Communications Specialist at Hooper Corporation and her family worked in the trades.

“I grew up in a union household,” explained Jeske. “I understand the importance that union’s hold. Working for one only seemed like a natural transition after college.”

-More-

Women In Construction Week (continued)...

Debbie Wuksinich is a comfort consultant for both commercial and residential HVAC systems with All Comfort Services and she finds that helping people is the most rewarding part of her job.

“I listen to what the customer’s concerns are and fit the system to their specific needs,” said Wuksinich.

Many of the women we spoke with stated their typical day at work is far from typical, every day is different.

“My days are crazy and involve a ton of multitasking,” said H.J. Pertzborn Plumbing and Fire Protection’s Business Manager **Ashley Kleven**.

Fourth year plumbing apprentice at 1901, Inc., **Elizabeth Schneider** explained, “There aren’t many ‘typical’ days. Everyday holds new challenges, and opportunities to learn. (Jobs) start from the bottom (digging ditches, laying out underground, playing in the dirt) and work their way up (roughing in wall, climbing ladders, driving scissor lifts, hanging pipes), then the finale when I make it look beautiful and no one knows what has gone into making all their fixtures work.”

With any job or industry that finds women in the minority, there are challenges to overcome.

“The obvious challenge is the mindset that construction is a ‘man’s profession’, which, early in my career, I encountered,” explained H.J. Pertzborn Plumbing and Fire Protection’s Purchasing/Inventory Manager **Teresa Hamilton**. “Just starting in the industry, I would ask questions and seek understanding of new concepts, which some viewed as lack of competency and ‘a reason why a woman shouldn’t be in construction.’ But as I grew professionally, I learned such was the mindset of a small group of people. Luckily, I belong to an organization where that challenge doesn’t exist and I couldn’t be happier to see people excel in our company regardless of gender.”

As far as advice for young women interested in getting into the construction industry, J. F. Ahern Co.’s Estimator **Michelle Schumacher** explained, “Never get discouraged! As women in the construction industry, we have to stay strong and stand together.”

“It is both challenging and rewarding,” said General Heating and Air Conditioning’s Design Engineer **Caryn Rader**. “We need intelligent, dedicated women in this industry!”

If you are interested in learning more about MSC/MAPC or speaking with one of the women associated with MSC/MAPC, please contact Julie Walsh, Executive Director at 608-288-1414 or julie.walsh@mechanicalindustries.org.

###