



Here To Stay:

Black, Latina, and Afro-Latina
Women in Construction
Trades Apprenticeships and
Employment



#TradeswomenHereToStay #Tradeswomen



Webinar Schedule

I. Opening Remarks

Lark Jackson, Program Director, Chicago Women in Trades National Center

Ken Rigmaiden, General President, International Union of Painters and Allied Trades

II. Here to Stay: Black, Latina, and Afro-Latina in Construction Trades

Chandra Childers, Ph.D., Study Director, Institute for Women's Policy Research

III. Listen to Tradeswomen

- Monica Yamada, Tradeswoman, Sheet Metal Workers Local 104
- Zahrah Hill, Journeywoman, Plumbers Local 130
- Rochelle Walker, Field Organizer, Business Development, DC51-IUPAT

IV. Women Leading Change in the Trades

- Angela McDaniel (Moderator), Apprenticeship Diversity & Inclusion Lead, US Department of Labor
- Lilly Calderon, Manager of Health and Safety Programs for the International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers
- Cristina Barillas, Plumbers LU 130 UA, Labor Council of Latin American Advancement Board Member, Chicago Women in Trades Board Member
- Kina McAfee, Assistant Coordinator of Carpenters Training Program
- Wendy Webb, Apprentice Field Coordinator, LIUNA Local 79

V. Questions



Webinar Technical Notes

- Submit questions for the panelists through the Q&A feature. Ask or view questions by clicking the button at the bottom of the screen.



- Technical issues? Comment in the chat or email Mefferd@iwpr.org

- Please remain on mute during this webinar.



- This webinar is being recorded and will be made available on the IWPR website. The recording will also be sent to all attendees.

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NATIONAL CENTER FOR WOMEN'S EQUITY IN APPRENTICESHIP AND EMPLOYMENT
LESSONS FOR THE FIELD: BEST PRACTICES FOR BUILDING WOMEN'S INCLUSION

HERE TO STAY: BLACK, LATINA, AND AFRO-LATINA WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION TRADES APPRENTICESHIPS AND EMPLOYMENT

INTRODUCTION

The skilled construction trades provide opportunities to build careers that are both challenging and fulfilling, pay a family sustaining wage with benefits, and can be accessed through 'learn as you earn' apprenticeships.

Apprenticeships are particularly common in the unionized sector of the construction industry, where contractors and unions jointly run and fund apprenticeship programs.

Such registered apprenticeships (RAPs) provide paid employment from Day One, incremental wage increases, standardized instruction, and industry recognized credentials validated by the U.S. Department of Labor or state apprenticeship offices.¹

The COVID crisis has put a spotlight on the concentration of Black, Latina, and Afro-Latina women in low-wage jobs, including in many essential healthcare and retail jobs. These low-wage jobs do not allow workers to build significant savings or other forms of wealth which would help them and their families to be economically secure during economic downturns such as the current COVID-19 recession. The skilled construction trades have given many women an alternative to the poorly paid jobs in the service sector that many had to turn to before finding the trades. More than a quarter of a million women—291,000—work as electricians, carpenters, laborers, masons, plumbers, painters, sheet metal and iron workers, and other jobs in trades.²



Here to Stay: Black, Latina, and Afro-Latina Women in Construction Trades Apprenticeships and Employment

March 25, 2021



The Trades Provide a Path to the Middle Class

“I’m a single mother and I have to provide for my kids. **My oldest just graduated college. And I helped pay for her school.** I have a 16-year-old and a 10-year-old and nobody really knows this, but **I just bought a house a month ago. Without the trades I wouldn’t have ever accomplished this.**”

Health Insurance is Standard for Unionized Trades Workers

“...I just got a statement from a stay in the hospital, and it was, like, half a million dollars. I was, ‘Oh, my God. What if I didn’t have—’ **The fact that I have a bill that large, and I don’t have any out-of-pocket expenses is a blessing. And now I have my daughter and she has those benefits, it’s a blessing.**”

Tradeswomen Love the Work (And Being a Role Model)

“I love my job, I love the challenge, I love the fact [that] in my job we do a lot of problem solving. Every task we have there’s problem solving, nothing ever fits right, nothing ever works. I love that part, I love the fact that we change sites, that I get to jump from jobsite to jobsite, finish it, once it’s done you go somewhere else. And **the reason I stay is because I’m good at what I do.”**

Barriers to Success for Black, Latina, and Afro-Latina Women in the Trades

- Isolation
- Access to Bathrooms
- Tools and Equipment Designed for Men
- Access to the Full Range of Training
- Access to Overtime
- Racial and Sexual Harassment
- Being a Mother in the Trades

It's Not Just Gender...

“When you're a Black woman walking in and [the foremen] sees you and he knows you're an apprentice and he's like, ‘Oh, God. We must have needed a woman minority City resident.’ [I'm like] ‘No, I actually know how to weld.’”

It's Not Just Gender...

Shaping Access to Quality Training

“I went to the shop steward and told him that I **was doing fire stopping as a third-year apprentice and a first-year [male] apprentice was doing conduit work.** They sent me to another foreman [and he was like] **‘Are you legal in the country?’**, **‘You need speech for your accent.’** Things like that. And I became so drained. I became depressed and I thought, **‘Oh, my God, this is not for me.’”**

Experiencing Sexual Harassment as an Apprentice

I'm probably going to be the one to get moved to another job just so that they can keep him there because they need him. I'm an apprentice. I felt kind of expendable at that point. What, I'm going to get a lawsuit, get some money and then what? Am I going to have a job to come to? Or am I going to be blackballed in the business? [They will say] 'She likes to sue.'"

Access to Overtime

“It seems like **women must fight to advance and to learn new aspects of the trade that men automatically get to do.** Just for me to get overtime on Saturdays was like... **I had to ask my male partner to ask the foreman for me, to kind of like vouch for me to say, ‘Yeah, she could do it.’** Other than that, women don’t get overtime.”

On Being a Mother in the Trades

“When I got an apprenticeship, it was the hardest time because I'm paying family members to babysit, I am buying food for the house - but they- it still didn't matter they say, "Well, I don't feel like it tonight." So, at one point I had to tell my kids, look, all we got is each other. Y'all going to be in this house while I go to school ... Just do not let the youngest girl go in the kitchen because she might burn herself.”

On Being a Mother in the Trades

“That phone call *kids are sick*, depending on who you’re working with, it may or may not be frowned upon. ‘Why are you answering your phone? What is this—do you need to leave? Is this too much for you? Can you deal with this?’”

Infrastructure Investments & Construction

Job Growth: A Key Opportunity

- 308,000 Women Worked in the Construction Trades in 2020
- Women were 3.6% of Federally Registered Apprentices in the Trades in 2019 . From 2016–2019 the number of:
 - Black women trades apprentices increased by 50 percent
 - Latina trades apprentices nearly doubled
- Women's 2018 Full-time Weekly Earnings
 - Unionized Women Construction Trades Workers: \$1,134
 - Women Elementary and Middle School Teachers: \$982
 - All women workers: \$789

THANK YOU!!

Check out our Briefing Paper:

**Here to Stay: Black, Latina, and Afro-Latina
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Apprenticeships and Employment**

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Thank you!

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