

# NEWSLETTER

National Center for  
Women's Equity in  
Apprenticeship &  
Employment

March 31st, 2023



Welcome to our newsletter! We will be recapping you on all that the Chicago Women Trades' National Center for Women's Equity in Apprenticeship and Employment was up to this Women's History Month 2023.

## Topics

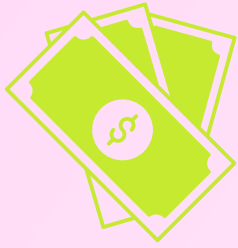
- **Equal Pay Day - A Word from Director Lauren Sugerman**
- **Partner Props**
- **Webinar Wrap-up**
- **What's to Come?**



## Recruit AND Retain Women

If you are a contractor or registered apprenticeship program looking to train or hire skilled workers, take our [Contractor Equity Survey](#) or [RAP Equity Survey](#) to ensure your establishment is employing best practices for an equitable and inclusive environment for tradeswomen.

**Every month is an opportunity  
to honor women's history.**



# EQUAL PAY DAY



While I am thrilled to have been at the White House celebrating Equal Pay Day, I can't help but be outraged that we are still marking what I prefer to call "Unequal Pay Day". We need to do better! A key strategy for achieving pay parity? Putting an end to occupational segregation by gender. With impending investments in infrastructure, we have a unique opportunity to accomplish this goal. However, we need clear and purposeful policies, guidance, and supervision in place. That starts with ensuring that women and people of color – who are still woefully underrepresented in the skilled trades jobs, are employed on these jobs. But tradeswomen know that this requires setting, meeting, and enforcing goals in a transparent way. I know firsthand that this works, and how it works. I entered the trades as an elevator constructor in 1980 only as a result of Executive Order (EO) 11246, and the agency that enforces the EO, the OFCCP, proactively ensuring that the contractor who only reluctantly hired me, understood that not just goals, but actual women's participation was a key requirement for getting a federal contract.

Over the years, tradeswomen's groups have continually pushed to see these goals enforced and raised, but without much success. Where we see success, is when projects are designated as Megaprojects by the OFCCP. A Megaproject has a comprehensive and holistic approach, including integrating equity into bid documents, guiding contractors that include tradeswomen and community groups, and supporting pre-apprenticeship programs. It also involves ongoing monitoring to ensure that women and people of color are not only hired but also provided with equal hours and respectful, harassment-free workplaces. Success also depends on equitable and inclusive apprenticeship programs that meet federal EEO regulations and unions that incorporate equity into their collective bargaining agreements. Unions must welcome us, mentor us, support us when we are targets of discrimination and harassment, and move us into leadership. Examples of these successful models set by the government or projects should be scaled and promoted.



Noreen Farrell and Jessica Ramey Stender of Equal Rights Advocates and Lauren Sugerman at the White House for Equal Pay Day, March 14, 2023 (credit to Jessica Ramey Stender)



# PARTNER PROPS

WINC is a Philadelphia-based, multi-stakeholder collaboration, that seeks to increase the participation of women in the skilled construction, manufacturing, transit, and utilities industries. The WINC initiative works in tandem with CWIT's National Center to provide pre-apprenticeship and career readiness training to women local to Philly (as well as technical assistance to Pennsylvania stakeholders to improve equity in the trades). We want to highlight their amazing accomplishments this month! WINC's wonderful Senior Associate of Special Initiatives and Steering Committee member, Sue Hoffman, testified with Noreen Buckley of IBEW Local 6 and SEPTA Construction Equipment Operator, Tanja Hebron at Philadelphia City Council to support local councilwoman Katherine Gilmore Richardson's resolution to proclaim March 5-11 Women in Construction Week 2023.



**L to R: Noreen Buckley, Tanja Hebron, Katherine Gilmore Richardson and Sue Hoffman. (Credit to Sue Hoffman and <https://www.facebook.com/wincproject>)**



Two graduates of WINC's Tradeswoman Readiness Program, Ana Figueroa and Gabrielle Wessels, were invited to Washington, D.C. by the Department of Labor to share their experiences as an apprentice glazier and electrician and celebrate Women in Construction Week 2023!

**(Link to these posts are [HERE](#))**



**Watch Ana's video speaking about her experience [HERE](#)**

**Be sure to follow WINC's [Facebook](#) page to keep up with their awesome achievements!**

<https://philaworks.org/winc/>



# WEBINAR WRAP-UP



What else have we been up to, you ask? Webinars, webinars, and more webinars!

On March 21st, Lark Jackson, Associate Director at CWIT's National Center, presented at the *Women in Construction* webinar, sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration and the Department of Labor Women's Bureau. The webinar focused on the new resources and innovative strategies that industry stakeholders are creating to recruit, train, place, and retain women in the construction workforce. Furthermore, the webinar highlighted the commitment federal agencies are making to champion policies and practices that safeguard the interests of women working in blue-collar, high-skilled trades. Vermont Works for Women also provided insight into how pre-apprenticeship programs provide a clear pathway to registered apprenticeship and how sponsors can better support women in the trades.

For access to the Strategic Workforce Development Toolkit, visit the Highway Construction Workforce Partnership/Strategic Workforce Development website [HERE](#)

For the direct recording, click [HERE](#)

On March 28th, Lark Jackson presented at *Advancing Women in Manufacturing: Perspectives from Women on the Shop Floor*, sponsored by the Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) with contributions from CWIT's National Center and the Working for America Institute. IWPR's new report highlights the policies and initiatives needed to create fair and equitable access to good production jobs in manufacturing where women are currently underrepresented. The report features the voices and experiences of women working on the shop floor and what helps and hinders them to enter and succeed in good manufacturing jobs. Read the report [HERE](#). Watch the webinar recording [HERE](#).

On March 30th, Sue Hoffman, Senior Associate of Special Initiatives at WINC, participated in a webinar titled "Supportive Services in Workforce Development," hosted by the US Department of Transportation and the US Department of Labor. The webinar focused on the use of supportive services as a tool to aid in workforce development, with examples from transit, transportation, and workforce organizations throughout the country. Hoffman shared examples of the types of supportive services that are available, funding sources that can be used, and policy limitations that can affect pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs.



## What's to Come?

CWIT's National Center and Jobs for the Future collaborated to jointly publish a brief titled *How Apprenticeship Programs in Construction Trades Can Establish Family-Friendly Policies*. Inadequate maternity and family medical leave policies within the construction industry impedes the ability of women to successfully and safely complete their apprenticeships. This can result in tradeswomen being faced with a difficult choice between their family obligations and their work. This brief offers insights and recommended strategies for construction employers to implement vital benefits in this regard. Read more [HERE](#). A new date for the webinar on this brief will be announced soon!

April is also National Welding Month so be sure to follow our social media to see all the latest updates and how we will highlight women welders worldwide (say that 5 times fast)!



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