



Modern Day Rosie the Riveter Chooses the Pipe Trades

Kaukauna, WI (October 29, 2020) – This is the story of a modern-day Rosie the Riveter. Three years ago, 25-year-old Genna Borths graduated from [Moraine Park Technical College](#) with a one-year Technical Diploma in welding. Following graduation, Borths was hired by [JF Ahern](#) in Fond du Lac and in 2018 she joined UA 400 Pipe Trades to pursue a five-year apprenticeship in fabrication for several reasons.

“I chose pipe fabrication because of the skill that’s involved to weld it, the pay and the amount of contractors that involve themselves in pipe production,” Borths said.

While Rosie the Riveter beckoned women to work in a male-dominated industry during World War II, today Borths is rallying the next generation of women to work in the pipe trades industry. By 2028, an estimated 3 million jobs will sit open in the pipe trades industry. From fabricators to plumbers, there are a range of profitable career opportunities offering economic mobility and career growth.

But first, the gender gap in the trades must close. In 2018, fewer than one in 20 construction trades workers were women. According to a study by the Institute for Women’s Policy Research.

Borths did not take any technical education classes in high school except Auto CAD. Ironically, a lack of early education – exposure at the high school level, like Borths experienced – is an obstacle to inspiring a rising workforce to enter the pipe trades. Thanks to the UA 400 Youth Apprentice Program and their mobile training unit more high school students in Northeast Wisconsin are now receiving hands-on and real-world exposure to the pipe trades.

As part of her apprenticeship, Borths has already worked for two UA 400 signatory contractors. Although Borths is under contract with JF Ahern, she is currently the only woman working in the field with [Coenen Mechanical](#). Thanks to the hands-on learning and classroom instruction through her apprenticeship program, Borths has excelled quickly in a male-dominated field.

Besides variety, women like Borths can look forward to excellent pay and other perks in this field including flexibility and autonomy. Fabricators make a median salary of \$72,000 depending on location, specialty and experience. But veteran fabricators can make \$100,000 or more, especially when there is a high demand.



“Currently, for the first time, I’m in the field,” Borths said. “There’s plenty to learn and they’re not shy about teaching it. I love both the field and the shop, which is why my main objective is to have a good understanding of both so I’m more flexible with being sent out for work.”

In the UA 400 apprenticeship program, just three of the 330 apprentices are female – and even that number is progress. The Institute for Women’s Policy Research reported a 17 percent rise in women working in construction between 2017 and 2018 – the highest percentage the industry has seen in 20 years.

Whether you’re just out of high school or looking to change your career, learning a trade can be your pathway to a high-paying career and UA 400 is helping women to find successful careers in the pipe trades.

“I’m a huge advocate for women in the trades,” Borths said. “I came into the welding trade as green as they come. If I can do it, anybody can. I would absolutely tell any girl that she can make it in this field. You get an education, equal pay, pension and many other benefits. I would tell her that it’s going to be hard and you’re going to want to quit and people will want to see you fail, but to keep pushing because it’s a glass ceiling. There are phenomenal female welders out there. Find one you love and let her inspire you.”

About UA 400 Pipe Trades

The UA 400 Pipe Trades, headquartered in Kaukauna, Wisconsin with an office in Fond du Lac, is comprised of approximately 2300 members serving eighteen counties in Northeast Wisconsin. The organization is affiliated with the [United Association of Plumber and Pipefitters](#) with an estimated 345,000 membership throughout the United States and Canada. The group’s mission is to be the preferred choice for industries, employers and workers specializing in plumbing, pipefitting, HVACR service and pipe fabrication as well as training for its members and qualified manpower to their 95 signatory contractors. The UA 400 takes pride in their partnerships and contributions to serve local communities with organizations such as [Cerebral Palsy Telethon](#), Special Olympics, [Rebuilding Together](#), Heat’s On Project, [Harbor House](#) and Salvation Army. To keep up with the latest news and to learn more about UA 400, visit <http://www.ua400.org> follow us on Facebook, [Instagram](#) and YouTube.

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