



For Immediate Release

UA 400 Pipe Trades and Mechanical Contractors Association of Wisconsin Host 2nd Annual Women in the Pipe Trades Open House

Kaukauna, WI (March 8, 2023) — UA 400 Pipe Trades and the [Mechanical Contractors Association](#) (MCA) hosted its Women in the Pipe Trades Open House on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at the UA 400 training center in Kaukauna, Wisconsin in conjunction with Women in Construction Week 2023. The event featured a one-hour panel discussion with five women working in the industry followed by a question-and-answer session. The panelists included Kim Bassett, CEO of [Bassett Mechanical](#), Laura Ceja, training and outreach representative for the [United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices in the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry](#); Hope Voigt, chief operating officer for [Tweet/Garot Mechanical](#); Kristen Vera, virtual design coordinator at Tweet/Garot Mechanical and UA 400 member; and Lynn O’Shasky, apprenticeship training representative for the [Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development](#) with UA 400 Business Manager Doug Dokey serving as moderator. The women spoke about the training and paid apprenticeships, shared their experiences and offered advice for women considering a career in the pipe trades. More than 100 guests toured the training facility, viewed training demonstrations by UA 400 tradeswomen and met with local contractors. In addition, Lieutenant Governor Sara Rodriguez welcomed the audience. Each guest received a pink T-shirt to commemorate the event.

“Pursuing a career in the pipe trades continues to gain momentum among women,” said UA 400 Business Manager Doug Dokey. “The women in our membership, just like their male counterparts, see the value in receiving training while also being able to work and provide for themselves and their families, which is crucial to the long-term success of UA 400.”

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), only 3.8% of welders, 2.3% of plumbers, and 1.5% of HVAC technicians were women in 2020. Aspiring UA 400 tradeswomen must complete a rigorous five-year apprenticeship that is fully paid to hone their technical proficiencies.

“The biggest risk I have taken in my career so far has been joining Tweet/Garot Mechanical’s virtual design team,” said Kristen Vera, Virtual Design Coordinator at Tweet/Garot Mechanical and UA 400 member. “It was a huge

decision to move on from the fitting and welding world to the virtual world of coordination and design. I'm extremely grateful to have had this opportunity and dedicated to continually learn and grow as a tradeswoman each day."

UA 400 signatory contractors at the event, representing the Mechanical Contractors Association (MCA), included Tweet/Garot Mechanical, [Hurckman Mechanical Industries, Inc.](#), Bassett Mechanical, [Team Industries Inc.](#), [AZCO](#) and [JF Ahern Company](#). Jeff Gaecke, executive vice president of the Mechanical Contractors Association also addressed the audience.

"Making the industry more equitable for women starts with getting the word out to women the opportunities that are available to them," said Laura Ceja, special representative for training and outreach with the United Association. "The United Association Local 400 Plumbers and Pipefitters open house event does just that, sharing the benefits, showing leadership opportunities, and putting the tools in the hands of women that will make them successful. So many more women would take advantage of this program if they only knew about it!"

UA 400 apprenticeships provide classroom instruction with UA Certified Instructors and on-the-job training with a UA 400 signatory contractor alongside experienced UA journeyworkers and apprentices. Once an apprentice has completed her apprenticeship and becomes a journeyworker, the education and training doesn't stop. Continuing education opportunities are available to all UA members through specialized training and certification programs.

For more information on paid apprenticeships in plumbing HVAC-R, fabrication and steamfitting, contact [UA 400 Pipe Trades](#).

About UA Local 400 Pipe Trades

The UA 400 Pipe Trades, headquartered in Kaukauna, Wisconsin with an office in Fond du Lac, is comprised of approximately 2,300 members serving eighteen counties in Northeast Wisconsin. The organization is affiliated with the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of Plumbers 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 fabrication as well as training for its members and qualified manpower to their 105 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 Domestic Abuse Program, Freedom House and Salvation Army. To keep up with the latest news and learn more about UA 400, visit <http://www.ua400.org> follow us on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

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