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2018 Women in Construction: Phoebe Cusack, Skanska

March 30, 2018 - Spotlights

Phoebe Cusack, Carpenter/Steward/EHS Coordinator, Skanska - Local 328

Years in the industry: 10 years

Why did you choose to be a carpenter? I became a carpenter because I needed the salary to support my mother who had Parkinson's disease.

Advice/Keys to Success: The most practical advice anyone gave me was arrive 30 minutes early for everything and learn to squat. The steward on my first job said to watch TV squatting until I could do it for hours. It has saved my knees doing endless runs of baseboard and that kind of thing.

The most important thing I learned about being a woman in the field is just to be myself. When I started out I thought I had to be perfect. Eventually I realized there is plenty of room for 100 types of men in our business so really accepting and welcoming women mean there is plenty of room for all types of women. All you have to do to succeed is make money for your company. If you are making them money, then just relax and be yourself.

2017 was a big year for me. After 10 years in the field and 6 years teaching, I got my CSL and got a job for Skanska as an EHS coordinator, otherwise known as Site Safety Officer. This means my days swinging a hammer are over, which for me is a relief! It's good to work hard and it's also good to get out of the cold!

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