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Company of the Month: Wayne J. Griffin Electric encourages women to take the driver's seat

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For more than four decades, Wayne J. Griffin Electric has aspired to the motto of: “Work with the Best. Be the Best.” A leading electrical subcontractor throughout New England and the Southeast, Griffin upholds high standards for all its employees and encourages each person to be in the driver's seat of his or her career. For women who have chosen careers in construction, this approach is aimed to inspire each individual to pursue her own ambition.

“I believe in making an investment in people” said Wayne Griffin, president. “Women are leaders in life. If someone has the character and personal drive to strive for excellence, it is in the best interest of the company to make sure they succeed.” Throughout all levels of the company, women have played an important role. As the industry continues to evolve and experience growth, Griffin Electric remains committed to offering talented women the tools they need to chart their own course.

For more than 25 years, Griffin Electric has prepared many for rewarding careers in the electrical trade through its free, in-house Apprenticeship Training Program. The program is accredited by the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) and designated as an approved training site by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Throughout the school year, classroom and hands-on instruction takes place in the 27,500 s/f of dedicated training space that is part of Griffin Electric's headquarters in Holliston, Mass., and on-site at each of the company's regional offices in Raleigh-Durham, N.C.; Charlotte, N.C.; Pelham, AL; and Duluth, GA. In addition to 600 hours of classroom instruction, Griffin's apprentices benefit from on-the-job learning, where they earn excellent wages and benefits while gaining 8,000 hours of practical field experience under the supervision of a licensed journeyman.

At Griffin Electric, women dedicated to their craft who also possess the willingness to take on greater challenges have the opportunity to advance in various capacities and leadership roles. Those who have come through the Apprenticeship Training Program have grown with the company and even advance into foreperson, estimating, and project management positions.

A project engineer with six years of service with the company is one such employee who has come to learn first-hand the level of potential that exists at Griffin Electric. In describing navigating her career goals within the company, she said “When I started at Griffin, I truly never saw myself being anything more than a Journeyman. But after reading many Griffin Memos and The Griffin Wire, (company newsletter) I wanted to do more within the company.”

Through offering personal and professional development programs, the company is proud to support each employee through the various phases of their career growth. The project engineer, as well as dozens of others, have taken advantage of the company’s associate degree partnership with Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston. Griffin Electric covers up to 70% of tuition costs for the degree that enables accepted graduates of Griffin’s Apprenticeship Training Program to further their education. “I enrolled to get my associate degree in Electrical Engineering. Just a month ago I finally made the switch to be a P.E., and now I am on the road to become an assistant project manager.”

Recruiting, hiring, and training are key components of Griffin Electric’s success, and the company knows just how critical outreach and maintaining close ties to the community is. Often students are guided towards a traditional four-year degree, without much understanding of how a career in the trades could be beneficial. One first year apprentice at Griffin recalls, “I don’t think school does any

of the trades justice. I can't tell you how often I was told that working in a trade would not be as lucrative as going to school for four years and getting a degree for something else."

The company takes pride in helping students understand that there is no "one size fits all" approach when it comes to their future. The construction industry can be an important stepping-stone for anyone who is committed to working hard to develop the skills necessary in their craft. Collaborating closely, the company works with schools and organizations to educate women in particular that the apprenticeship pathway is a viable career choice. A project manager who has been with the company for nearly a decade credits her vocational school experience as having a lasting impression on her career. "I worked with my hands daily on a much smaller scale. It had a huge impact on all work-related decisions moving forward."

Whether someone is a high school or college student contemplating her options after graduation, or a seasoned worker in a more traditional career field, construction can offer excellent opportunities for her future. A long-term member of the Griffin team working as a mechanic in the company's Southeast region said, "My first interest in the construction field started because I had to support four small children on my own. Working as an electrician is empowering for me. My children are proud to tell their friends about my occupation."

In construction, the end result is ultimately what matters. Griffin Electric recognizes that having the knowledge and skill to deliver superior, safe, quality workmanship, whether by a man or woman, is what clients and project partners value. When it comes to results, regardless of the scope of a project, women are getting it done. This is evident each day across over 250 active Griffin jobsites in which the contributions of each team member play an important factor in safely completing a job on time and within budget.

For more information about Griffin Electric and its employment opportunities, please visit www.waynejgriffinelectric.com, call its recruiting hotline at 800-421-0151, or email your resume to fieldrecruiting@wjgei.com.

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