A PROFILE OF
BRANDY KUCY

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Getting into the trades

Growing up in Fort McMurray, Brandy was surrounded by the skilled trades. In her high school, she joined the Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP), which enabled students to earn high school credits as they gained hands-on experience with a local employer. After hearing that women often did well in welding, she decided to give it a try. She began her apprenticeship in 1993, a decision that started her on a career path she never imagined. Within five years she earned her Red Seal certification in welding and has worked on projects she is incredibly proud of. Looking back, she says that the opportunities she has had and the people she has worked with have made for an incredibly rewarding career.

The impact of mentorship

Early in her career, Brandy realized how important mentorship could be. The journeypersons who took the time to teach her, answer her questions and make her feel like she belonged had a lasting impact on her confidence and her success. She believes that learning a skilled trade alongside a supportive mentor is invaluable. In addition to teaching technical skills, mentors help apprentices to navigate challenges and avoid common mistakes. In this way they help to build the confidence that all apprentices need in order to succeed. This combination of skills training and encouragement inspired her to give back by mentoring and passing on to others the knowledge and support she received.

Growing through the Mentor Development Program

When Brandy discovered the National Mentor Development Program, she knew it aligned with her values. She says she always looks for opportunities to grow so she can better support others entering the trades. She found the program's discussions about awareness, bias, belonging and mentorship especially valuable. She says that the opportunity to network with tradespeople from across the country has given her new perspectives. She says, whether in the workplace or the classroom, her ability as mentor has been strengthened because of the program. This is what has made the experience very rewarding.

A program she recommends

Brandy believes that you should never stop learning because it not only strengthens individuals it also helps to create workplaces where everyone feels they belong and, as a result, the skilled trades will continue to become stronger. "We should always grow and invest in equality and belonging," she says, because this is how we make the trades better for the next generation of journeypersons. She hopes for a future in the skilled trades where everyone feels safe, valued and included.

SUPPORTING EQUITY IN TRADES

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