

CAREER

Help Wanted: Why Women Should Consider Careers in Manufacturing

NewsUSA

(NU) - Women represent a vast, untapped talent pool for the manufacturing industry.

In 2016, women made up 47 percent of the American labor force, but only 29 percent of the manufacturing workforce, according to a survey conducted by The Manufacturing Institute, APICS and Deloitte.

“Many women don’t realize the possibilities for personal and professional satisfaction and a stable career in the manufacturing industry,” says Julie Davis, Association of Equipment Manufacturing director of workforce development. “Women who need to reposition their post COVID-19 careers should step forward into manufacturing.”

Reasons for women to consider a career in manufacturing include:

- Financial: Wages for women in manufacturing tend to exceed those paid in traditional female-filled positions.

- Educational: Money is available from many businesses for retraining women for manufacturing jobs. Given the job losses many women have experienced in industries hurt by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, such as the restaurant, hospitality, and other service industries, the manufacturing industry offers an opportunity to learn new skills and embark on a new and sustainable career path.

- Practical. Many manufacturing jobs that used to demand more in terms of size and strength no longer apply; the adoption of technology means new, high-tech jobs that level the playing field for male and female employees.

- Inclusive. The manufacturing industry is committed to diversity and inclusion. For example, safety equipment is now available in women’s sizes to reflect the changing demographics of the industry and desire to reach out to women about the benefits of manufacturing careers. Apprenticeship programs are available across the United States to help women enter



An assembly associate at the AGCO Jackson, MN facility begins building a hydraulic pump that will allow the machinery’s operator to control its movement.

the manufacturing industry and to provide solidarity and support with other women professionals in the field.

The Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM), an organization dedicated to supporting North America’s manufacturers of construction and agricultural equipment, offers four tips for women who want to explore careers in manufacturing:

- Look locally. Investigate which manufacturing facilities are located in your area, and check out their job listings and training opportunities.

- Look nationally. Get support for your job search by connecting with the National Center for Women’s Equity in Apprenticeship and Employment.

- Look for help. A local job center may have leads on jobs and training, and also may be able to provide child care, housing, or other support for women while they participate in training programs.

- Look online. AEM offers an online toolkit at <https://www.aem.org/workforce-solutions#toolkit> for more information about the potential for success in a manufacturing career.