

Women in Manufacturing Skilled Trades

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About IWPR

- We build evidence to shape policies that grow women's power and influence, close inequality gaps, and improve the economic well-being of families.



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Part of a Series:

- Women and Green Jobs (2013-16)
- Pathways to Pay Equity: Narrowing the Wage Gap by Improving Women's Access to Good Middle-Skill Jobs (2016)
- Women, Automation, and the Future of Work (2019)
- A Future Worth Building: What Tradeswomen Say about the Change they Need in the Construction industry (2021)

Report here:
<https://iwpr.org/iwpr-general/advancing-women-in-manufacturing-perspectives-from-women-on-the-shop-floor/>

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The 2022 IWPR Women in Manufacturing Survey

Why now

- **Responding to Issues Raised by COVID-19 and the Murder of George Floyd**
 - Occupational segregation- women being overrepresented in low paying service and care jobs: a major factor behind the gender wage gap
 - National reckoning with issues of racism and discrimination, including in access to good jobs
- **Extraordinary moment**
 - Billions of dollars are flowing into manufacturing as a result of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the CHIPS Act, and the Inflation Reduction Acts
 - Urgent need to replenish the skilled workforce as experienced workers are retiring
- **The challenge**
 - Women are much less likely than men to work in manufacturing jobs
 - Women are just 29.5 % of all manufacturing workers, just 25% of production workers. And just 7.8 percent of CNC tool operators or programmers.
 - Women are much less likely than men to be in high earning production jobs
 - 48% of men, 23% of all women, and 11.6% of Latinas earn at least \$1000 per week
 - Women are more likely than men to leave manufacturing altogether.



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The 2022 IWPR Women in Manufacturing Survey

Lifting Up the Voices and Experiences of Women Working on the Shop Floor on What Works and What Needs to Change in the Industry

- **What did we ask**
 - What attracts you to manufacturing? How did you learn about job opportunities?
 - What is it like to work in manufacturing? As a woman of color? As an apprentice? As a mother?
 - Is anything pushing you out of manufacturing?
 - What helps you succeed in manufacturing?
- **Who answered the survey**
 - 424 women and nonbinary manufacturing workers
 - 58.5% are union members
 - 35% completed apprenticeships, 12% active apprentices,
 - Responses from 45 states and DC (top states MI, CA, NY, IL) across 15 manufacturing subsectors
- **When and how**
 - Spring and Summer 2022
 - Distributed through Women's Committees of AFL-CIO Industrial Union Council members, women-focused pre-apprenticeship programs, apprenticeship programs, social media: snowball principle



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Why did you Start to Work in Manufacturing?

Customer service jobs, call center jobs, retail jobs...
They were literally draining my soul. And that was really all that was available to me and other women in this area

Equal pay to a male.

Since childhood [this has been an] ambition, parents also wanted me to engage in this line.

To work with stuff and not people because people tend to suck

The local opportunities that are available with having 2 college degrees are no where near the income level I should have had. Being an electrical apprentice has changed all that for me. I have less than a year to go to complete the program.

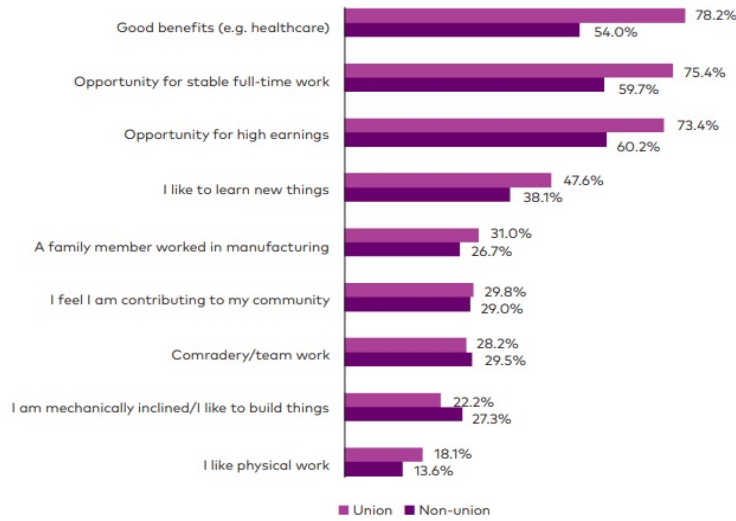
I knew a good union job would provide for my family for many years



Source: The 2022 IWPR Women in Manufacturing Survey

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Why did you Start to Work in Manufacturing? Top Reasons Rated as “Very Important”:



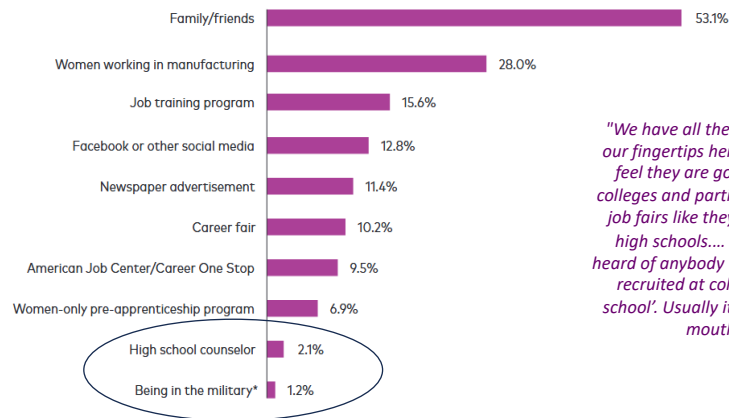
Source: The 2022 IWPR Women in Manufacturing Survey



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How did you Find Out About Opportunities in Manufacturing?

High School Counselors and Job Centers are Failing to Reach (out to) Women



"We have all these colleges at our fingertips here. And I don't feel they are going to these colleges and participating in the job fairs like they should. And high schools.... I have never heard of anybody who said 'I was recruited at college or high school'. Usually it is all word of mouth."

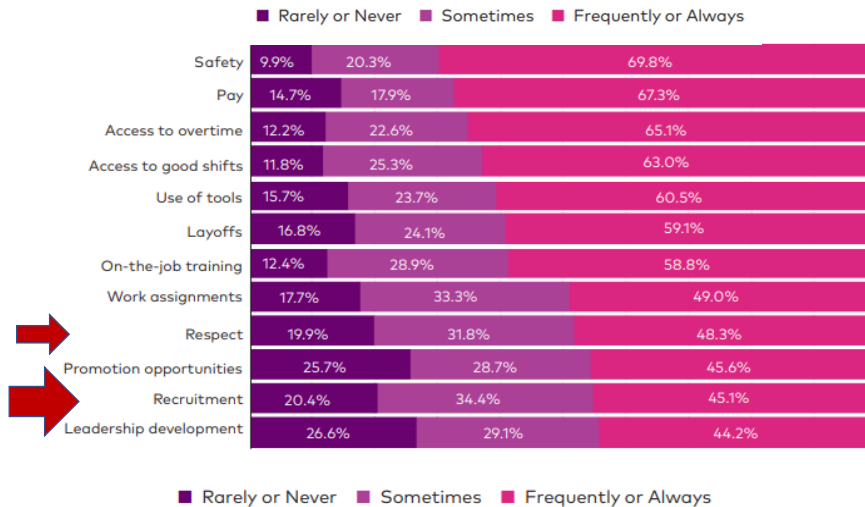
Source: The 2022 IWPR Women in Manufacturing Survey



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Do You Think You are being Treated Equally to Men at Work?

The good, the bad, and the ugly...



Source: The 2022 IWPR Women in Manufacturing Survey



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The Challenges for Retention: Respect, Advancement, Family Time & Care

Almost one in two (46%) have/are seriously thinking about leaving manufacturing altogether

What are the most common 'most important' reasons for wanting to leave the industry?

- Lack of respect/harassment (40%)
- Lack of prospects for promotion/advancement (39%)
- Wanted to spend time with my kids (39%)

Child care is not the 'most important' reasons for leaving for mothers of kids under 13

- Lack of advancement/promotion (43%).
- Difficulties finding child care (32%)

At least some employers are doing something about child care

- 25% of mothers of kids under 6 report access to workplace child care;
- 49% child care subsidies

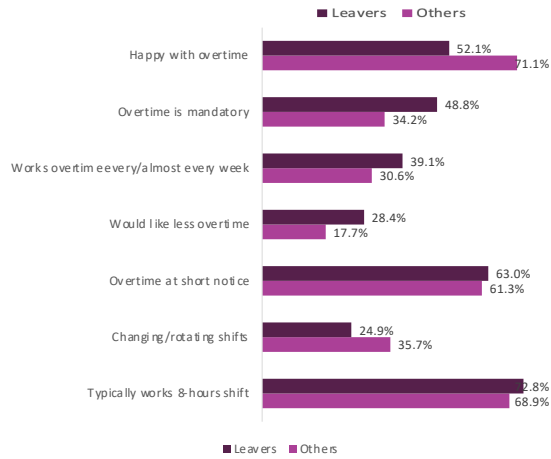
Source: The 2022 IWPR Women in Manufacturing Survey



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Respondents who want to leave the industry are more likely to work mandatory overtime

“Working mandatory 7 days- missing family time”



- Those who are unhappy with the industry are more likely to frequently work overtime.
- Shift working (night shifts, rotating shifts) was less important as a factor than we expected.



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Policies and practices for generating change

- ❖ Recruitment and outreach
- ❖ Apprenticeship programs
- ❖ Respect! Diversity, equity and inclusion
- ❖ Work family supports



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Policies and practices for generating change

Recruitment and outreach

- **The messenger matters (a lot):**
 - Include women employees in outreach
 - Include images of women in all outreach materials
- **Re-purpose the Families & Friends Network (most important recruitment channel):**
 - Daughters, sisters, nieces, girlfriends...
- **Model projects on engaging young women and girls**
 - Internships, community events
 - Parent evenings
- **Review your recruitment criteria (and your recruiters)**
 - Are you sure they are unbiased?



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Policies and practices for generating change

Apprenticeship programs

- **California is lagging behind other states**
 - CA: 5.9% (113 of 1788) manufacturing apprentices are women!
SC, TN, TX, VA – all at least twice as high proportionately
- **California Apprenticeship Initiative (CAI):** lots of opportunities for support
 - Partner with equity focused pre-apprenticeship programs to help with outreach and support
 - e.g. [Rising Sun](#) – focused on green jobs and construction
 - Partner up with other manufacturers to develop taster programs
 - e.g. [Philadelphia WINC](#)

Twice as many of survey respondents those who completed/are in apprenticeship say they are very happy with training (49 v. 22.5%)



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Policies and practices for generating change

Respect! Diversity, equity and inclusion

- **Traditional sexual harassment & DEI training programs** are not very successful: newer approaches focus on 'bystander' training; new shorter delivery
- **What happens if something happens?** Complaint processes
- **Mentoring, networking, and community**
 - If not in your company- somewhere else?
 - Cohorts in community college & beyond
- **Monitoring** Goals, targets, keeping track



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Policies and practices for generating change

Work & Family

- **Let's start with men**
- **Working hours and scheduling**
- **Childcare: who can you partner with?**



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Thank you!

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