

APPRENTICESHIP

A Word From a Journeyman

What does apprenticeship mean to you?

Christine Austria

IBEW Local 11

Low Voltage Organizer

In 2004, I was accepted into the Sound and Telecommunications program at the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 11. I was introduced and encouraged by my father whom himself is a member and an electrical union contractor. I was inspired to pursue this trade because of the need to help my husband with the financial burden when his company went bankrupt.

Early on, mentorship and activism were instilled in me. I never felt that being a woman was an issue in the trade and I give credit to those courageous women before me who fought the good fight and persevered. My male fellow counterparts embraced and mentored me to excel to a higher level such as becoming a Foreman.

My journey began when I was elected Recording Secretary for the Sound and Telecommunications Unit. Opportunities were presented to me that included a seat with the Sound Joint Apprenticeship Subcommittee as a Labor Representative, an Interviewer for the online applicants and finally, appointed to the Executive Board. This ultimately led to me being on staff for the last two and a half years as a Sound and Telecommunications Organizer and Business Agent.

The love for my career is the key to my success. Passion, hard work and dedication drive me to want more. I am a true believer that you should always pay it forward; therefore, I too, try to instill these same values in others coming into this organization. Obstacles that may come my way, if any, are viewed as a challenge and not a



"The love for my career is the key to my success." Christine Austria

deterrent. As a leader, I will support young-minded and strong-willed women to strive for the best as I continue to do so. Empowering the women of tomorrow and helping them flourish is key to strengthening our numbers and retaining members.

We too deserve good wages, great benefits and the opportunity to help provide a stable life for our families. I highly recommend an apprenticeship for those women who find themselves wanting all of this and more.

I am grateful to the IBEW for giving me the opportunity to be part of something GREAT!

These two influenced me:

My Mother's teachings: "Never walk behind a man. Always walk beside him."

My Father's teachings: "Listen to your mother!"