

THE WORK ZONE

# NAWIC NO. 1 Of Rhode Island

## Chapter 52



## Message From Your President

Dear members,

“Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right.” Oprah Winfrey

As you know, each NAWIC year begins in September with the changing of officers. The September 11<sup>th</sup> meeting lends itself to a great way to kick-off the year, by both honoring those who have served our country, including one of our very own members, as well as installing your newly elected officers.

The great lineup of events will continue throughout the year, due to a great strategic planning meeting held in August, including but not limited to: Networking, joint meetings with other professional women, jobsite tour, professional education and speakers. Rhode Island will also be the location of the Annual Northeast Fall Conference this year.

I look forward to another successful year, and to seeing our chapter grow in many ways!

Lindsey Desjarlais  
Chapter President

“Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement.” -  
Helen Keller

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FEATURED ARTICLE

## The Door is Open for Women in the Trades



Courtesy of achnews.com

Written by Danielle Putnam ( pictured above)

HVAC and women are not commonly connected in conversations; however, they're also not as uncommon as one may think.

As you know, reality and statistics show that the number of women working in the service industry isn't anywhere equal to the number of men. Questions have been asked many times over, "Why aren't there more women working in our trade?" or "Why does the service industry seem to have a gigantic partition between women and industry opportunity?"

In my own personal experience, being a woman who has been embraced by the HVAC community, the common devisor is not gender related at all. I believe it to be a perceived lack of opportunity. In the past 30 years, career equality between men and women has truly taken a turn for the better. Is it in the best place it can be? No. But, we have come far enough to stop using gender as the excuse. There are plenty of spaces that could be filled by women.

### NO LACK HERE

We have a large opportunity pool that's growing each year that consists of a mixture of men and women who are ready to roll up their sleeves, change out compressors, dispatch service calls, or maintain the company fleet. Being a woman active in our industry, I clearly vote more women. But, I believe the real draw, if the number of women

## Upcoming Events

### September -2017-/8 Installation

Please join us at Roma to celebrate and install NAWIC's 2017/18 Officers and Board of Directors .

September 11, 2017 6pm-8pm

### October 19 -Networking Event

Pella Windows & Doors will be a hosting a networking event for both NAWIC & PWB

268 1/2 Bellevue Ave  
Newport, RI

6-8pm

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## THE WORK ZONE

Featured Article con't from Page 2

interested really is that great, is in our male counterparts helping to lead this massive onboarding. When marketable acceptance is genuinely demonstrated from those who seemingly oppose, it opens the door for participation. And that's true for men and women alike. The issue is not a lack of interest or incompetency. Our industry is one that accepts all levels of skill and provides opportunity to build trade competency. If a woman who had no experience wanted to join our industry, she could. Opportunity is everywhere, from small apprenticeships to local technical schools. But, who said we needed more women only as technicians? If being a technician out in the field is not for you, there are still many supporting and leading roles to choose from.

### PARADIGM SHIFT

Let's shift our focus from the idea that we have a gender deficit. I would like to set in motion a new question, "What if we stopped making it about men and women and made it about who's interested?" Being an entrepreneur, a woman, and a member of the HVAC community, my opportunities were always matched with my desire to move forward, not whether or not the door was open. My skill, training, and intense interest in my career is what opened doors. So, it was about my desire to pursue, not my gender. With gender equality ever growing, the industry is evolving and, naturally, more women will feel an increasing amount of comfort to pursue careers as contractors or technicians. Industry leaders are the voices influencing these changes, and they are predominantly supportive and quite accepting. The door is open.

### OUR HISTORY

With the female workforce not formally materializing until around the 1930s, we must acknowledge that while our aptitude is high, our age in the workforce is still quite young. Let's give women the time to come around. Provide open doors and see if their interest sparks. My female counterparts are game for getting dirt under their nails, but maybe they want to do it in other ways. The HVAC team has an open co-ed roster and is setup to have a diversified lineup, but it's the choice of the player to show up to practice ... male or female. So, let's continue to open our doors to the masses while promoting unmatched opportunity.

Publication date: 4/10/2017

## Meeting Schedule

### September Meeting

2017-2018 Installation

September 11, 2017 6pm—8pm .

Location: Roma , 310 Atwells Ave,  
Providence, RI

### Up Coming Events

October 19—Networking event At Pella Windows  
Newport

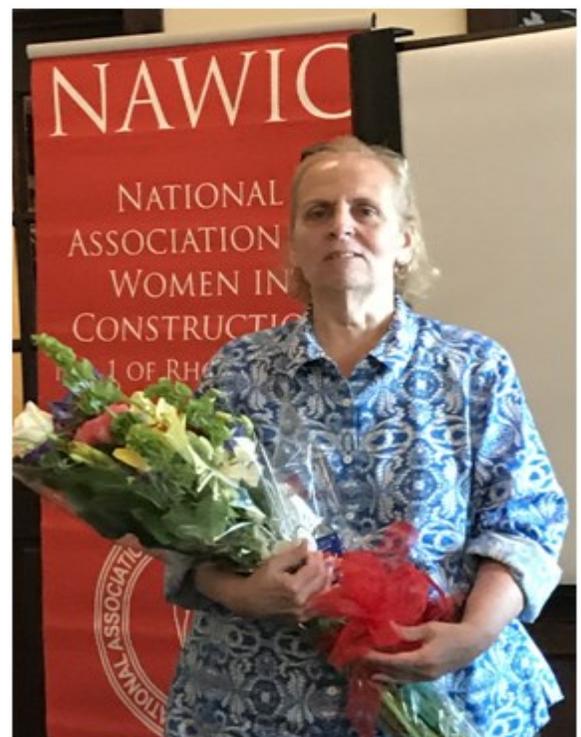
November 10-11—Fall Forum—Newport Harbor Hotel

December - Annual Holiday Brunch

Stay tuned for details!

## June Event recap

We honored two of our members, Carol O'Donnell and Pam House ( shown below) at the Greenwood Inn in Warwick, RI . Carol as member of the year and Pam for her 25 year membership Anniversary. There were many relatives and close friends in attendance for this special event.



## Member Spotlight

# Nora Benson

Arden Engineering Constructors



### How and why did you get into the industry?

*I came to work for Arden Engineering through an advertisement for office help. I was not specifically looking to get into the construction industry. I had been laid off of my job at a container storage company where I was the office manager/dispatcher. Prior to that I had sold CPR and First Aid classes to businesses through the Red Cross in Boston. Being a single mom I needed to start to work as soon as possible after the lay off. I applied for the customer service coordinator's position where I would be responsible for receiving incoming emergency service calls, assign the service technicians to their work assignment, reconcile receipts of goods that were purchased for the jobs, reconcile payroll for the service technicians, and process the invoices to the customers for the work that was performed. This was an office position that I knew I could handle. I worked at that position for almost 11 years and during that time I learned a great deal about the HVAC industry. Working closely with the service technicians and the service manager I learned about different types of HVAC equipment and services that we offered. One of the ways we get and retain our customers is through our planned maintenance programs. Bringing on new customer and selling those programs seemed like something I could do and would like to do. Arden is a company that offers growth from within so I discussed my goals with my boss and he agreed to let me move into the sales department and become one of the sales account managers. That is the position that I hold today.*

### What challenges do you see associated with being a woman in a traditionally male-dominated field?

*I believe there is inequality and challenges in all fields of work when it comes to women, but in a male-dominated field it is even more obvious. We need to re-educate people that if there is a need and a demand in any industry, anyone who wants to should go after those jobs, look at as equals and given the opportunity to succeed in that job or career.*

### What is the most rewarding part of your job?

*Being valued by my customers for my dedication and knowledge to handle their needs.*

### Why do you think so few women are attracted to the field? Ideas for how to change that?

*Any male dominated fields that are not considered "jobs or careers" for women, keeps qualified women from pursuing them. As I said before, it's all about changing the perspective on how we look at the industries, who is qualified and capable of doing these jobs/careers and making everyone feel included when they pursue these opportunities.*

### What made you decide to join NAWIC?

*After attending the Christmas brunches for many years, I inquired about who at Arden Engineering belonged to NAWIC and I was told no one. We were just invited as other members of NAWIC did business with Arden Engineering. After finding that out and learning more about how a NAWIC membership could help me connect with other women in the industry and help build contacts that could potentially help me with my job, I decided to join. I have been very pleased with the support and encouragement that I have received from other NAWIC members and enjoyed the events that I have attended so far. I ran for the office of Secretary and was elected and will be installed at the September 11<sup>th</sup> meeting and am looking forward to working with the others to help grow our chapter.*

## Advertisements

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ywcari.org

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**NAWIC** No. 1 of Rhode Island  
National Association of Women in Construction

<p><b>Calendar of Events</b></p>	<p>September 11th Installation of Officers</p> <p>&amp; Honoring of Veterans Speakers to include one of our own</p>	<p>October 19th Networking Event at Pella Windows</p>	<p>November 9th - 12th Northeast Fall Conference</p>
<p>December (TBD) Holiday Brunch</p>	<p>January 8th Mid-Year Review</p> <p><b>2017</b> LOADING...</p> <p>Members Only Meeting</p>	<p>February 12th Heart Health Month</p> <p>Fitness Themed (TBD)</p>	<p>March 12th Women in Construction Week</p>
<p>April 23rd Joint Meeting with Boston</p> <p>Jobsite Tour</p>	<p>May 14th Drafting Design Competition Award Ceremony</p>	<p>June 11th Speaker: Nancy Hughes A female business Owner Telling her Story</p> <p>Followed by Elections</p>	<p>July/August Summer Outing (TBD)</p> <p>But there's more... want to get more involved? Here's how: Assist with Block Kids on 2/12 (Contact Virginia Bligger) Assist with Drafting Competition Judging in May (Contact Lindsay Desjardins) Assist with Rosie's Girls in the summer (Contact Carol O'Donnell)</p> <p><small>For contact info/add'l info, go to nawicri.org or our other social media outlets listed below.</small></p>

Come join us - Everyone welcome! You don't need to be a member.

WE'RE SOCIAL Follow us on your favorite social media sites. NAWIC RI @NAWICRI info@nawicri.org

## Contact Information

### NAWIC NEWS

Please send all articles and content recommendations for this chapter to [jpagel@gopella.com](mailto:jpagel@gopella.com).

### CONTACT INFO UPDATE

Members can update contact information through the member center which can be found after signing in at [www.nawic.org](http://www.nawic.org).

### IDEAS FOR OUR CHAPTER?

Contact the board members listed on the front page of this newsletter if you have any ideas for the future of our chapter.

### WEBSITE

Visit our website at [nawicri.org](http://nawicri.org)

### FACEBOOK

Connect with us on Facebook at [facebook.com/nawicri/](https://facebook.com/nawicri/)

### MAILING ADDRESS

NAWIC  
P.O. Box 10205  
Cranston, RI 02910

# NAWIC

National Association of Women in Construction No. 1 of Rhode Island Chapter 52

***Please join us as we install our  
2017 - 2018 President Lindsey Desjarlais  
and Her Officers & Board of Directors***

To celebrate and honor those who served in our U.S. Armed Forces, one of our own members, Renée Pineo, and Lt. Col. (Ret.) Joseph A. Hoey will share how their service helped their careers in construction and engineering

Please bring a personal item to donate to the Providence Veterans Administration.  
[Click here](#) for donation suggestions

***Monday, September 11, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.***

*Via Roma Restaurant*

*308 Atwells Avenue, Providence, RI 02903*

*Valet Parking*

*Dinner Buffet, Dessert & Coffee, Cash Bar Available*

***Members: \$35.00 Guests: \$40.00***

***Please RSVP by September 7, 2017***

To: Katharine Kohm at [kkohm@PierceAtwood.com](mailto:kkohm@PierceAtwood.com)

Checks payable to: NAWIC, P.O. Box 10205, Cranston, RI 02910

OR Pay online with PayPal at [www.nawicri.org](http://www.nawicri.org)

*No-shows/Cancellations after September 7, 2017 will be billed*

**All welcome! You need only be a supporter of women in construction!**

## YOUR BUSINESS NAME HERE!

### Want to advertise in the Work Zone?

We are selling business card size ads in our newsletter for just \$25 for members. Your advertisement will reach our entire distribution list via email. We will also have a link posted to the newsletter on our website.

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