

Erika Castillo

Tradeswomen Heroes Award
Winner - December 2024



Level of Experience: Apprentice

Years in Trade: 3 years

Union: Roofers

Local: 33

City: Providence, RI

Bio

My name is Erika Castillo, and I am from Providence, RI. Growing up in a family of five siblings, I faced many challenges including addiction and housing instability, but through it all, we persevered together.

My journey began when I became a mother at 16. In 2010 I moved to Worcester, MA, where I joined the youth build program, gaining a GED and construction skills- a path that empowered me to become independent.

Tragedy struck when my mother was diagnosed with throat cancer, leading me back to Providence to support her in her final days. After her passing, I sought fulfillment in my career and discovered my passion for the roofing trade, inspired by my brother and brother-in-law. I connected with my cousin, who offered me an apprenticeship. After a while, I decided to join Local #33 alongside McKenna Roofing out of Pawtucket, RI. This was the best decision I have ever made. The men I met along the way helped me to prove to my 13-year-old daughter, at the time, that women can achieve anything.

Recently I competed in the Northeast Regional Apprentice competition and placed 1st place. To my surprise, my skills were enough to supersede the competition. This all proved to



me to embrace your challenges and use them as stepping stones to create a brighter future- for yourself and those who look up to you.

Why Erika Was Nominated

Erika came to Local #33 in March. We took her on with some experience under her belt and we almost immediately received good feedback from the workers out in the field about her. We started our apprenticeship training school in September and after a few classes, it was clear to me that she was one of our more valuable apprentices. Every class, Erika comes in with questions about the trade looking to further her knowledge.

Not only does Erika show that she wants to be better at what she does but she also looks for workers who need help with any task throughout the day and helps show them how to tackle the task at hand.

Recently the roofers union put on an apprentice competition for the northeast region. Erika went up against 11 other 3rd/4th year apprentices throughout the day. It was clear that Erika would be one of the top runners for the competition. When the awards were being announced to our pleasure Erika came in 1st place. This has proven to us that even though she was going up against the

best apprentices in the northeast - mostly men - she, and other women, have the ability to out-perform.

Erika's hard work, dedication, and determination to be the best at what she does, along with showing her daughter that life is only what you make it, shows day in and day out. I couldn't think of a better candidate for this award.