Bonnie Barnett worked in Ohio as a skilled machinist. When she returned to Virginia, machinists jobs were not available but her years in the workforce taught her to be adaptable and to use her wide range of skills. Bonnie now works with our Project Services team.

Tammy Dean was working as a housekeeper when she decided to re-route her future and entered the Apprenticeship Program in 1994. Tammy was the first female plumber and the third woman to successfully complete the Program.

Carpenter Jennifer Maiorano works on many renovations including the historic buildings. “A lot of people know UVa’s history but seeing it first hand is a whole different experience. I take great joy in knowing that I am a part of keeping this beautiful, 200-year-old University, alive and functioning to its fullest potential,” she said.

Electronics Technician Rona Rose began her apprenticeship in electronics while she was completing her undergraduate degree in information technology. Her Energy & Utilities mentors were always supportive. “I like the variety, pace and the chance to work with different people,” she said.

At the University of Virginia, women are making successful careers in the trades. Join us to create your career.
Meet some of the women who are creating successful trades careers at the University of Virginia.

They have diverse backgrounds and a range of experiences. They have different goals, career plans and family responsibilities. And they share this fact: the trust, respect and opportunities at UVa Facilities Management are the reasons they work here. Here are their stories. Join us to create your career and your story.

Mariah Kurpel said she knew since she was in the sixth grade that she wanted to be a plumber when she grew up. As a teenager, she helped with renovations on her family's home. Mariah entered UVa's Apprenticeship Program in 2010. “My mentors have been great about teaching me the trade and treating me with respect,” she said.

When Daisy Dejesus toured CATEC with her seventh grade class years ago, she watched carefully as masons demonstrated their trade. “I can do that,” she recalled saying to herself. Masonry is an art, like playing the violin – it requires dexterity, Daisy said. She has learned the trade well. She plays violin well, too.

Kristi Williams' interest in plumbing began when she was helping a friend snake lines, repair water heaters and pull well pumps – not delicate tasks but she enjoyed the work. She became a plumber apprentice in 2013. Kristi’s favorite part of her job is getting to use the advanced tools UVa makes available.

Nikki Lemmer wanted to be an auto mechanic but she knew that after high school graduation in 2011, college was not an option. She was accepted as an electrician apprentice that same summer. “I enjoy the challenge – it's like a great puzzle,” she said, “and I have the satisfaction of seeing the finished product.”

On the front: Cheryl Larocco completed her electrical apprenticeship in Sacramento, CA and mentored other apprentices there for 20 years. She joined Facilities Management in 2012. “I love electricity and I love the variety here,” she said. “The big wires, the major distribution, full buildings – there’s always something different and entertaining.”

Caitlin Murtaugh had already completed her Bachelor's Degree in Art History and Architecture at Pennsylvania State University before she entered the Apprenticeship Program in 2011. She chose the plumbing trade because she is fascinated by construction. Caitlin’s goal is to move into project management.