

Merit Award



Rebecca Carrancho

Building Trades Program

Wexford-Missaukee Career Technical Center

Cadillac High School

Nominator: Frank Tilmann, Building Trades Instructor

Rebecca has always been interested in building things, so when she toured the Career Center and had the opportunity to build a bird feeder, she knew she wanted to join this class.

She credits her building trades class with opening many new doors for her. Rebecca is proud of the fact that she can now walk into a home improvement store and name most of the tools on display. She always liked seeing how things could be put together, or rearranged differently. Now she can not only measure and cut lumber, she knows how to use a nail gun, install shingles, and is an expert on following safety precautions at the worksite. Her instructor cited her carpentry skills and attention to detail as strong skills that she had further developed in the program. He noted that everyone wants her on their team because of her positive attitude and work ethic.



One of the exciting moments for her was when the walls went up on the Habitat for Humanity house the class is building. She loved seeing it come together as they added the roof trusses and it started to look like the image she had in her head. She also liked being a part of something greater than herself. She feels that her experiences in her building trades program has given her more self-confidence and independence. The program has helped her to believe in herself and to do things for herself. She is proud that she now has the knowledge to build and fix things and is able to maintain a home on her own. Problem solving is something that she enjoys and the program has helped her improved this skill. One of the challenges she has faced is being weaker than the “guys” in the program.

She has learned that it is okay to ask for help when there are things she cannot do on her own, like pick up a sheet of OSB plywood. She has learned that building is something best done as a team.

Rebecca is an honor student, plays tennis, and has a job as a waitress. She helped the 5th grade visitors to her program fasten hinges to the bird feeder project and is glad she had the opportunity to show younger girls that a female can be a builder too. Rebecca likes the feeling of knowing that she created something.

She plans a future career in construction management or architecture.

Your gender doesn't
define your capabilities.
~ Rebecca Carrancho