



Breaking the Mold

These students are blazing trails



**Check inside to see more trailblazers
and learn what inspires them.**

What is Non-Traditional?

Non-Traditional is when less than 25% of the people working in an occupation are either males or females. Choosing a non-traditional occupation takes courage.

“I actually returned to Athens Tech for welding because my mom suggested it. She has always been very mechanically minded, and so have I. I get my creative/mechanical side from her. I didn't think too much about the fact that I was going into a male-dominated field when I applied back in 2022. I certainly was aware that it would be male dominated, so I was going to have to work as hard as I could to do as well as I have. My instructors have been incredible through it all, super supportive and encouraging.

To any ladies who are looking to go into a male-dominated field, I say do it, and don't be afraid to do it. As long as you enjoy the work, you won't care who's in class with you or who you're working with. The guys in my classes have all been wonderful to work alongside, and I've made some good friends.



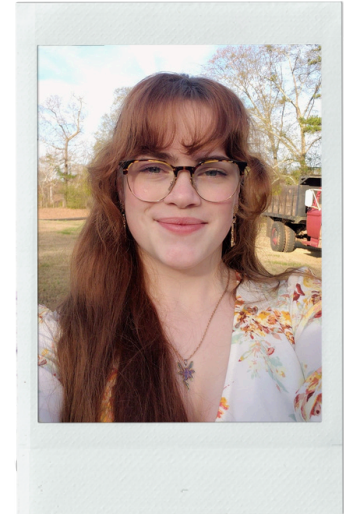
**Maddy McKeel,
NCCER Welding**

Why?



Tiras Anderson
**PC Repair & Network
Technician**

- Job Satisfaction
- Fresh Voices & Viewpoints
- Higher Pay
- More Options
- Be an Example
- Align with Skills & Interests



Lilliana Cabaniss
**Engineering Technology &
Applied Science**

"I've always enjoyed working with computers and learning how they work. As a teen, I was always the person family called when they couldn't figure something out on their computer. Being that this is something I've always been interested in, the fact that it's a male dominated field has never crossed my mind. If anything, it encourages me to keep striving for my goal to be that representation for women like me. I would say to women who are interested in fields of work that are dominated by men to focus on the fact that this is something you want because if you want it, you CAN achieve no matter what."

"I chose to pursue Electrical Engineering because I have a passion for electrical and technical systems and circuit diagrams. I was influenced throughout high school, by my time in agricultural mechanics and the Future Farmers of America. For me it did matter that this profession is male dominated. I wanted that challenge both socially and professionally. I wanted to show that even in the face of challenge and discomfort I could be just as good as any of my male peers. I want other women and girls to see that we have just as much space in this industry as anyone else does."

Don't Just Take Our Word

MACKINZY DEMARAY, BARBERING

"I would love to help inspire more women. I chose the barbering program because I've always loved hair but wasn't interested in the "female hair" aspect of it. My dad retired with 21 years in the military and was told he had to be clean shaved. Once he retired, he grew a beard and I watched him fall more and more in love with his beard. I wanted to help be a part of the process. When I applied for the barbering program, I knew it was a male dominated industry and I wanted to stand out by being one of the few women."



ANNETTE HUNT, COMPUTER SUPPORT SPECIALIST

"I chose that field not knowing it was male dominated. But now I'm almost finished with the program. I really just liked computers at the time I started attending Athens Technical College. I still like dealing with computers but don't know the reason. I'm so very fascinated by how the system works and operates so many things in life."

Ready To Lead

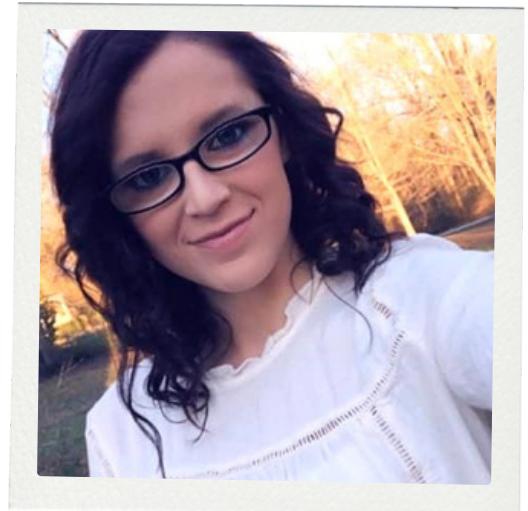


FRANKIA WALKER, BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

“Management is something that has always been deep down in my heart. Discovering and exploring it was the most rewarding part of my journey. Coming to Athens Tech was my confirmation. Since starting my first job, I'd realized that my true calling lies not in being a crew member but in taking on leadership roles. Also, My dad has always had the knack for selling, and I aspire to develop the same skill. The fact that Business Management was a male dominated field didn't matter to me because when I'm passionate about something there's nothing to keep me from my goal.”

DEANNA LACKL, BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

“I chose this career field, because I like to lead. I have always been the type to take charge in situations, so this type of work seemed like a good fit for me. I have worked in manufacturing for years now and my goal is to become a supervisor. I am happy to be an inspiration for other women to choose male dominated careers. I want to show people that I work with and others that we are capable of being smart and being in charge just as much as men can be.”



Law & Order



Cortlyn Britt, Conservation Law Enforcement

“My passion for animals was evident from a very young age. My initial goal was to become a veterinarian, but as time changed, I realized I wanted to protect them and their habitat for future generations to enjoy. The thought of contributing to the well-being of wildlife and safeguarding their habitats inspires me to want to play an essential role in preserving the beauty of our natural world. As a woman, I found it inspiring that this field is dominated by men. I want to prove myself even more and prove to other women that they can follow their dreams regardless of societal norms.”



Dasia Hale, Criminal Justice Technology

“In Spring of 2022, I realized that criminal justice is something that I really wanted to do. I wanted to do Criminal Justice because I'm good at investigating things, and I like to watch true crime shows. When I watch those shows, I would research the names of the victims and the perpetrators. It didn't matter if the profession is male-dominated or not, I wanted to continue this program of study and I'm taking it seriously.”

Men In Healthcare

ADAIR VALDEZ, SURGICAL TECHNOLOGY

“I really enjoy helping people, I started out in nursing and realized that wasn’t for me. I looked around for other ways I could help people and I came across surgical technology on social media. Surgery has always been an interest of mine. I think few males are in this field because they may want to be doctors instead. This career is a good first step into surgery.”



ALEX SOLANO, DENTAL HYGIENE

“I chose dental hygiene as a stepping stone to be a dentist down the line. Even though it's not my end goal, I have enjoyed my time in this program and come to love the accomplishments I've made learning. I asked my hygienist, and she just cemented it more that I wanted to try it out. I think men are under-represented due to a variety of reasons, but I believe it mostly has to do with a lack of knowledge of the field. Of the people I've asked they've all enjoyed having or working with male hygienists. If you enjoy helping others, a career in healthcare is very fulfilling. Embrace your passion and learn to value diversity.”



Women in Heavy Metal

RYLIE SEAWRIGHT, DIESEL EQUIPMENT TECHNOLOGY

It certainly does take a lot of courage to actually want to try to prove that a woman can do anything that a man can. I would like to think me working to be a diesel mechanic would hopefully encourage other women to try it out. What really made me want to become a diesel mechanic was that I wanted to be different from the other women in my family and to prove some guys wrong when they said I would end up backing out of it. I didn't listen, I just followed my heart. Hopefully more women gain the courage that I did and try to make this more female dominated. All I have to say to other women is never let a man tell you what you can and can't accomplish.”



KADENCE VAN DRIE, AUTOMOTIVE COLLISION REPAIR

“I chose this program because I personally love working on older cars. I feel it is a very interesting course, and getting my hands dirty has never been a problem for me when it came to things like that. I grew up with a hard background so I knew this profession was male dominated, and I wanted to show that being a female doesn't have to stop you from doing what makes you happy. Me knowing that this profession was male dominated had no effect on me because I wasn't focused on the men. I was focused on learning the material to become a successful mechanic.”



Represent the Future



BIANCA PATE, DRAFTING TECHNOLOGY

“Gender really has no weight on my decision at all, in fact it is not even something I considered, or would consider. I've always pushed myself to never think within the confines of gender almost as a sort of protest to the patriarchal world that we live in. I've been looking into architecture for years, and my grandfather is also a drafting engineer. My passion is in the design of spaces that are conducive to human life and wellness, while also being conducive to the life of the planet and the lives of all other beings who inhabit it. My goal is to ultimately secure my associate in architectural drafting engineering, then pursue a bachelor's and eventually masters in Architectural Engineering. From there I hope to design spaces that address the climate crisis, the housing crisis, and the mental health crisis. I would like to perfect a version that is accessible and realistic for our modern world that so desperately needs a new generation to save it from the clutches of non-sustainable building practices.”

LEVI LATOCHA (HE/HIM), AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE

“I chose this program because I really like chickens and science. Two of my special interests in one. I don't mind too much about it being male dominated, but it does feel extremely intimidating.”

I want to look out for the LGBTQ community as well, since it only takes up 3-5% of agriculture, and even less being transgender. I also am part of the neurodivergent and disabled communities. I do stick out as a sore thumb, and it will be very difficult for me later down the line if I choose to work for the USDA or any poultry related industry. But I can make it work. I don't want to give up because I want to pave a way for people like me so they can be comfortable knowing that I managed to get through.”



Dreaming & Doing

JAMIYA SIMS, COMPUTER SUPPORT SPECIALIST



“Since I was a little girl, I've always been very interested in learning more about tech. My love for technology has always been there; I just didn't realize it until Mr. Reid had me think about what I actually wanted to do. Mr. Reid then went on to connect me with Mrs. Helen Hall, who is the Computer Support Specialist Chair. I immediately reached out to Mrs. Hall to get more insight about the Computer Support Specialist program and instantly knew that it was the program for me. On the first day of classes, I was discouraged to be one of three females in a class full of males, but I didn't let that get the best of me. I think anyone who is interested and anyone who puts their best foot forward will fit right in. To all the females who are second-guessing whether to enroll in this program or not: I highly recommend it!”

ERICA ELLIS, BUSINESS MANAGEMENT MAJOR

“I chose this major because I believe there needs to be more people in the management world that have caring hearts and an understanding of diverse people. As part of the queer community and having grown up in the ethnically diverse state of California, it breaks my heart to see these groups of people not represented in management as often as they should be. I want to get into the diversity and inclusion sectors of the management world. If you are a female and are considering a major outside of the stereotypical female ones, do it. Oftentimes you will find that the qualities that they say should keep a female out of that field, are exactly what will allow you to excel.”



Practical Matters

SOPHIE USRY, GAS METAL ARC WELDING



"I chose to take welding because the welding field has a lot of job opportunities and welders make good money. My dad was a huge help in making this decision. He has always told me that I need a good skill on the side. It did not matter that this field is male dominated. I went into this class knowing there could be other girls or no girls at all, and there were no girls. I was a little nervous at first, but the more the class went on, the nerve went away. It is always good to take risks, and this was a good risk-taking class. If a girl wants to take a class that is male-dominated, they need to do it and not let other people tell them otherwise."

OWEN EISS, SURGICAL TECHNOLOGY MAJOR

"I was always interested in being involved in surgery and was planning to go to PA school at some point. One of the requirements for PA school is to have a minimum of clinical experience. I was trying to decide how I wanted to get those hours and my dad, who works in the medical field, suggested that I look into Surgical Technology. So far I have enjoyed the program and glad that I chose it. I initially wasn't thinking about the gender difference in the program, I thought it was just more important that I was around like minded people. "I really enjoy helping people, I started out in nursing and realized that wasn't for me. I looked around for other ways I could help people and I came across surgical technology on social media. Surgery has always been an interest of mine. I think few males are in this field because they may want to be doctors instead. This career is a good first step into surgery." Alex Solano, Dental Hygiene Major Adair Valdez, Surgical Technology Major I think some males haven't fully looked at all their options, like myself, before deciding exactly what they want to do. I think exploring all the options, especially if your interested in medicine and not fully sure what you want to do yet."



One More Testimonial



KARLA DELANGEL, CRIMINAL JUSTICE TECHNOLOGY

“I am hoping to further my education in law or forensics one day. Knowing that this was a male-dominated field did not bother me one bit because I knew that I could mentally do it, and that I was up for the challenge. When you put your mind to it, you will make it, but always remember to work for your goals. Being a woman does not mean we are weaker; we can also be aggressive learners, strong-minded, and independent. Support other women, but most important, be proud of yourself and gentle at the same time. Every day, try to be better than the woman you were yesterday, for yourself.

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