

Institute for Women in Trades, Technology & Science

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Case Study: Louisiana Truck Driving Program Actively Recruiting Women



Out of the 138 graduates of the two-year old Trucking program at Louisiana Technical College's Lafourche Campus, 26 are women (18% versus the national average of 7%). This is because Louisiana Technical College (LTC) has made a specific effort to recruit women to their program. When a woman comes into Administrative Assistant Helen Moore's office and asks about the Trucking program, Helen stops whatever she's doing and takes the prospective student on a tour of the facilities, while giving her more information about the opportunities that the career can offer her. The tour includes passing by a bulletin board listing all of the companies that are currently hiring truck drivers from LTC. She then asks a current female student (if available) to talk to the woman about the program.

The Trucking Program at Louisiana Technical College began because of the high demand in the Trucking industry with donation of equipment (truck and trailer) and an instructor from a local business and industry. Through the [Pathways to Construction](#) grant, LTC was able to hire two instructors and build an enclosed setting for learning backing maneuvers. Since the minimum driving age in Louisiana is 18 (or 21 to drive cross-country), LTC didn't post at high schools, but instead focused their recruitment efforts on churches and social service offices, as well as a TV ad, emphasizing the various career opportunities that trucking can offer. For women that would rather stay close to their families, there are local options, while women that may desire to travel can study for country-wide truck driving certification.

The Technical Competency Certification is 6 weeks long, with the first 2 weeks focused on rules, regulations and other important skills needed for the DMV test. The remaining four weeks are hands-on, teaching backing maneuvers in a controlled campus setting and finally, behind the wheel road-time with an instructor. Because they only have a limited number of trucks, the class size is small and each student gets individual attention, an important strategy when trying to retain women (or men). Two weeks after a student graduates, LTC makes contact with them to see if they have found a job placement. A month later they follow up again to see how the student is doing and finally, 6 months later they do a final call to see if the company was a good fit for the student.

"Small steps are what you need to accomplish the goals you want," stresses Helen, who also keeps up with the [Women in Trucking](#) organization and updates the female students about events and resources that are available to them. Throughout the year, female students that have graduated from the program come in and talk to the class about their current positions.

The instructors emphasize the variety of companies that employ graduates, including sanitation, concrete and cross-country trucking companies. At LTC, SWIFT, Acme,

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Gaubert Oil and ACE Transportation, along with Venture Truckline and PFG-Caro are major companies that hire graduates of the program. Furthermore, they stress that trucking can provide financial stability, with salaries ranging from \$34K (beginner) - \$80K and most companies offer generous health benefits. Women who had never realized that trucking was an option for them are suddenly telling their friends about the program.

Helen figured that if she was to get more women interested in getting into the trucking industry, she had to put her foot where her mouth is. Currently, she is taking the class to earn her CDL (Commercial Driver's License) Class A license. Helen stated, "I want women who come in here to understand that there are additional things we can do than sit at a desk and type all day. So, the more information I have on the trucking industry the more information I can pass on. I always say, knowledge is power."

[Inspire your Female Students with Career Videos of Women in Trucking](#)