

Women In Trucking's Voie earns CDL

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Plover, WI: After attending truck driver training, Women In Trucking's President, Ellen Voie, has earned her Class A Commercial Driver's License (CDL). Voie attended the Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) driver-training academy in Cleveland, Ohio, for three weeks in December, and recently passed the CDL driving exam.

"It was an intense three weeks, with ten hour days and frigid temperatures," Voie said, "but it was also one of the most enjoyable learning experiences I have had." Along with three other students, Voie completed the written portion of her training after the first week of the course. The final two weeks were spent on the skills pad and on the highway, where Voie and her fellow classmates learned to shift a ten-speed transmission, back a 48-foot trailer, and maneuver through Cleveland's rush hour traffic.

"My goal was to better understand the training experience, and to be able to lead the organization with a level of sensitivity for our driver members, that I couldn't have appreciated without doing it myself," Voie stated. Although the founder of WIT has been in the trucking industry her entire career, she had not previously been in the driver's seat of the cab. "I can honestly say that I now know how to drive a tractor trailer," Voie added, "and my respect for those who do this on a daily basis is even greater."

Kreigh Spahr, Tri-C's Program Manager, challenged Voie to obtain her CDL and suggested she complete their accelerated program. "Ellen's successful completion of the course, and her ability to pass the required skills and practical test shows that our program can provide the necessary training for students entering the trucking industry," Spahr said. The Tri-C Driver Training Academy opened in September of 2008, and accepts only four students per class to allow the instructors to work closely with each individual based on their needs.

Voie is writing a book about her experience, to provide information to anyone considering attending truck driver training at any facility. "The book will outline my experience, but will offer readers insight on what to expect while attending a community college and when they are preparing for their CDL exam," Voie said.

The Women In Trucking Association (www.WomenInTrucking.org) was formed to encourage and support women who work in the trucking industry. The nearly 1,200 members are comprised of both men and women who support the nonprofit's mission to encourage women to consider career opportunities in transportation, remove any obstacles that might inhibit their achievements and to celebrate the successes of its members.

Cuyahoga Community College (www.tri-c.edu) is one of the largest and earliest established colleges in Ohio. They offer more than 1,000 credit courses in 140 career and technical programs.