

Fueling

the Workforce

Senior Welder Cathy Maloy

They say most people find their first love in high school. Did you ever think it might be your lasting career? Cathy Maloy first gained some welding skills in high school in a small town of 600 people. Her options were home economics with the other students she calls “bickering girls” or agriculture with the boys. Wanting to stay neutral with the girls, she chose “Ag,” that’s where she learned to stick weld. Now, in her early forties, Cathy is senior welder



at a nationally recognized bobtail manufacturer, serving the propane industry’s delivery vehicle needs. Her path there was not a straight line. Finding the career that suited her joy of working with her hands took different turns along the way and eventually brought her back to her youthful beginnings.

When our company teamed with Vets2Techs to spread the word about the great potential for military veterans to find successful and meaningful work in the propane industry, I volunteered to write this article although I didn’t know who the subject would be. But I knew where to find a likely candidate because my dad, Casey Jarvis, had founded the propane truck building company Jarco after his WWII service in the Army Air Corps and was certainly a model of what this story series stands for. I called the company’s current president (the business was sold to new owners in 2010) who immediately identified the person on their team who always works to demanding standards and is 100% compliant, his senior welder. I liked that this staff member was a woman and I wanted to learn more.

making racks for newly painted truck hoods. Off and on through the years, she worked as a welder. She tried to join the military in her younger years, following her dad’s footsteps, yet health issues over an extended time kept her from joining the Navy. Eventually, she shifted gears and took on a new educational challenge having decided to become a nurse. It didn’t take long for her to ask herself, “What am I doing?” She is, in her own words, “a creative soul that loves to work with her hands.” She knew nursing wouldn’t make her happy and a trip to check out Jarco helped her decide to change majors from nursing to welding, which she recently earned her degree in.

I like hearing about her welding career and am especially impressed by her descriptions of landing a valuable job at Jarco 2 years ago. She says, “I take pride in my work and I’m so happy Jarco takes pride in me.” She learns from her team members and is encouraged by company leaders to do her best. “I’ve never worked for a company that has been so good for me or treated me with so much respect,”



Cathy says. She went on to explain details of hydro-testing tanks and various welding treatments needed to ensure the safety and viability of the tanks that will be hauling large amounts of propane around the country.

My takeaway from Cathy’s story is two-fold. The military pride that runs deep in families led me to discover Senior Welder Cathy Maloy at a company my dad started in the 1950s. On a related note, family-owned businesses are also a source of deep pride, and the propane industry is chock full of family-run businesses. It’s why many of us in the industry often talk about the “family feel” of the industry itself. I found a standout worker whose path wasn’t always clear until she discovered her fit at Jarco. Your fit could be in propane or heating oil too. **Check out the Vets2Techs website vets2.org/organization/vets2techs and investigate this welcoming workplace space.**



Cathy Maloy is one of the fortunate ones to be introduced to a true vocation for herself at a young age—however, too young to know it! She said, “I’ve always loved working with my hands and absolutely loved it.” From high school, she continued her welding education in vocational classes, hoped to attend Tulsa Welding School, yet

lost the opportunity because of her own “young and dumb” errors. She then took a job as a MIG (metal inert gas) welder,



Nancy Coop, Director of Marketing
Cetane Associates
ncoop@cetane.net



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