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More women playing role in I-4 Ultimate construction

From entry level to project management, women filling key positions

By Paul Giorgio (<http://www.clickorlando.com/author/paul.giorgio>) - Producer

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Field Engineer, Krysten Wilkerson inspects a temporary wire wall near Maitland Blvd.

ORLANDO, Fla. - Every day Lora McCray laces up her work boots and goes to work on the I-4 Ultimate. McCray, an erosion control specialist, is one of the many women employed along the 21-mile stretch.

"I think a lot of women are afraid," she said as she repairs silt fencing near Maitland Boulevard. "Not me, I love challenges."

McCray is a graduate of the I-4 Ultimate On the Job Training Program. According to Human Resources Coordinator Lisbeth Acosta, you'll find women in all positions from the field to upper management.

"It's just exciting to look for the female population and encourage women to research and see what's out there," Acosta said.

I-4 Ultimate spokesman David Parks says positions are available from entry-level construction positions all the way up to project management

"There's great opportunities in all levels within the Department of Transportation and also in the construction industry," he said.

Field engineer Krysten Wilkerson knew she wanted to be in construction at an early age. "I've been playing with Legos since I was a kid," she said. "I would build things out of anything around the house."

She's been on the project since it started. When we caught up with her she was supervising the construction of a temporary wire wall used to form the base of a future roadway.

"The industry is evolving," she said. "I like to be an inspiration to others."

Wilkerson spends a lot of time in the office but says when she's out in the field she notices drivers, both male and female, doing double takes but that's OK with her.

"To get out here and get a degree and get a job doing what I love everyday, it's just great. So now I'm showing them hey, if I did it, you can too," she said.

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