

When it comes to trash, women have been historically underrepresented— especially in collection and leadership roles.

Two former school bus drivers are working to change that.

Let us introduce you to Connie Miles and Vina Pratt.

Connie drives a rear loader for [Frontier Waste Solutions](#).

“I’ve actually been a CDL holder since 2011, but the trash industry, I’ve been in for five years.”

She says the job does come with its challenges...

“You get those jobs where men don’t think a woman is coming behind them. The turn buckles on the truck, for example. Sometimes they’re tight and you have to use all of your strength. You have to talk yourself through it. With repetition every day, it gets easier and easier. It is very challenging to be a woman in a male’s world because they don’t think you can do it. They don’t expect you to do it. They expect you to quit.”

But that doesn’t stop her.

“I love the challenge.”

For Connie, its only up from here.

“I want to see myself move to the top here. I want to move up. I don’t want to go anywhere else. I love it here.”

Vina recently accepted a leadership position with Frontier. She says as a woman, the path to get here has been anything but simple.

“We’re not looked at the same. You have to be patient and work very, very hard, twice as hard as the men do, to prove yourself.”

As a mother of three, Vina’s work doesn’t stop when she gets home.

“We as women, we don’t just carry the role of working in this industry. We run a household. I have three kids of my own. We’re not only here at work, we’re at home taking care of kids too. It doesn’t stop here. When our boots hit the ground, we’re rolling until we lay our heads down at night and it starts all over again the next day. It’s nonstop.”

Despite her busy schedule, Vina set and achieved a huge goal.

“I went to school a year ago to get my Class A so I can drive the roll-off with a pup. That was one of the goals I gave myself when I started in the disposal industry. I wanted to learn every truck. I wanted to know every truck. The more you know, the more valuable you are and the more serious they take you. The more knowledge you have, the better. I can go out there and start any of the trucks and run them.”

When asked about encouraging young women in the industry, Vina said:

“Don’t limit yourself. Don’t let anyone else’s criticism get in the way of what your goals are. There’s always going to be somebody who wants to step on you. Don’t let that be the reason. Do it 100%. In this industry, do it 110%, because those guys are going to want to walk all over you.”

Keep up the good work, ladies. We’re rooting for you!