

Three Sisters Building Careers in Manufacturing at Toyota Kentucky

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Sisters Emily Bastin, Heather Craven and Hannah Geneve have more in common than their genetics: All three women are building successful careers in manufacturing, working in maintenance roles supporting various shops at Toyota Kentucky.

“We’re all working in the same plant, and if they need anything from me, I’m there to be supportive,” says Bastin.

The family’s career journey started with the Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (FAME) Advanced Manufacturing Technician (AMT) program. Founded by Toyota in 2010, FAME is currently operated by the Manufacturing Institute, the National Association of Manufacturers’ workforce development and education affiliate.

Completion of the two-year AMT program leads to an associate degree and the FAME certificate. Students undergo a combination of classroom education and hands-on technical training, allowing participants to graduate ready to enter the workforce.

“They came to my school — the AMT program — and I was like, let’s give this a shot,” says Bastin. “I didn’t realize I would have this kind of potential. This was cool stuff.”

Part of the Family

Bastin was the trailblazer, being the first in her family to graduate from FAME. Now as her sisters are working their way through the program, she’s around to help with schoolwork and lend a supportive ear. Craven and Geneve are simultaneously working at Toyota while completing their classroom instruction and are expected to graduate in May of next year.

“It’s nice to have that sister love to lean on,” says Craven. “They understand the frustration of school and work, and it’s been a pleasure to work with them.”

Beyond the family ties, all of the sisters have found a supportive environment at the company. Craven says of being at Toyota Kentucky that she feels like part of the network of Toyota.

“Everyone has been super nice, super helpful and super welcoming,” says Geneve. “When you start out, it can seem intimidating, but everyone’s willing to help you out. They really want you to succeed.”

Paying It Forward

Something the sisters know firsthand is how important a positive environment is at work, especially for women fostering careers in traditionally male-dominated fields like manufacturing.

“The mentorship I got helped me gain my confidence while I was learning,” says Bastin. “And even now, the teamwork that goes into everything, every day — it’s been a nice surprise.”

Although the sisters are taking different career paths, they are excited and surprised to be working at the same manufacturing facility. Bastin had taken some robotics classes in middle school prior to joining the ATM program. While Craven had always enjoyed working with her hands, Geneve moved to manufacturing after working in customer service.

“Working in manufacturing doesn’t necessarily mean you’re working on a factory floor,” says Geneve. “There’s an administrative side, an HR side —there’s a lot more to manufacturing than people expect.”

The sisters are working to challenge the prevailing misconceptions about manufacturing careers, hoping their experiences and programs like FAME raise awareness of the diverse opportunities within the sector.

“I do see us being examples for women who might not normally see themselves in the field,” says Craven. “You want to see women come in and say, hey, I did it, and you can, too. It’s nice to see yourself reflected back.”

This article features information and quotes from [the National Association of Manufacturers](#).