

Kathy Luz Herrera

Kathy Luz Herrera has been a union member for over 22 years. In 1973, she became one of the first female telephone installers in Houston, Texas, shortly after the federal government obtained a consent decree from Bell Telephone for years of job discrimination against women. The Communications Workers of America was glad to have her, even if Southwestern Bell wasn't. After seven years of this heady non-traditional work, Kathy was hooked, and went on to a career of mostly non-traditional work in the skilled trades. In 1988, Kathy was hired as an electrician by Cornell University, and was admitted into Local #241 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. She has been a member in good standing for fifteen years, and, despite being Latina, openly lesbian, and female, was elected shop representative and head representative of the Cornell Building Trades Council. Kathy's willingness to bargain with Cornell to improve the lives of workers is well documented. In the workplace, Kathy also tirelessly supports recognition of issues of diversity, and labors on behalf of women and people of color. In 2002, she was elected to the Tompkins County Board of Representatives, due in a large part to her record of activism and to strong union support. Kathy also continues to work full time as an electrician, and is pursuing a degree in Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell.