

Tennessee Department of Transportation

The Civil Rights Division is celebrating Women's History Month by spotlighting some amazing women .

Employee Spotlight: Barbara Booker



Contract Compliance Officer 3
HQ Civil Rights Division Small Business Development

She enjoys attending church, teaching grief counseling, reading, traveling, shopping, and listening to gospel and jazz music. She also enjoys attending plays, concerts and professional sports games such as the NFL, NBA, and MLB.

She loves spending time with family, friends and especially her grandson Isaiah.

“Diversity is not about how we differ. Diversity is about embracing one another’s uniqueness.”-Ola Joseph

Joined TDOT Family September 2010

What does Women’s History Month mean to you and why?

Women’s History Month is a time to celebrate women accomplishments throughout our culture. It is a time to embrace all the wonderful achievements women have overcome to make a difference in their life as well as others.

What had the biggest influence on your career?

The biggest influence in my career has been my beloved late husband Kenneth Booker and our son Travis Booker. They have always supported and pushed me to excel in whatever endeavors, I was seeking to achieve.

The TDOT EPIC initiative was launched in January 2022, how do you see your role as empowering people and influencing the culture?

I see my role as empowering people and influencing culture by embracing differences, encouraging and motivating each other to meet or exceed their goals .

How do you suggest we create a workforce that supports diversity, equity, and inclusion?

I suggest we create a workforce that supports diversity, equity, and inclusion by having people with knowledge and work experience partner with new employees to the work environment because we can all learn from each other.



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Employee Spotlight: Dorothy D. Smith



TDOT Operations Technician Supervisor
Region 2 Floating Maintenance Division

She enjoys horses and hunting.

“Strength lies in differences, not in similarities.”
- Stephen Covey

Joined TDOT Family July 1992

What does Women’s History Month mean to you and why?

It means highlighting achievements of women, especially in a male dominated field like TDOT maintenance, signals to all women that come after me that we can do anything that we set our minds to and do it to the best of their ability.

What had the biggest influence on your career?

God has blessed me with a great family and a wealth of friends. He has put me in a place at TDOT to grow with people that started out as co-workers but have become part of my family.

The TDOT EPIC initiative was launched recently. How do you see your role as empowering people and influencing the culture?

Anything that gives people the power to grow and expand their careers, with the support of their management team, will be a positive in any situation.

How do you suggest we create a workforce that supports diversity, equity, and inclusion?

When everyone is given a seat at the table, then we all can see the blessing.



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Employee Spotlight: Giuliana Guglielmi

HR Business Partner 1, HQ Human Resources Office



She enjoys time outdoors with her husband and two dogs, cooking new recipes and going to concerts in Nashville.

“We will all profit from a more diverse, inclusive society, understanding, accommodating, even celebrating our differences, while pulling together for the common good.” -Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Joined TDOT Family September 2014

What does Women’s History Month mean to you and why?

Celebrating this month reminds me to acknowledge the accomplishments of women while honoring individual contributions and recognizing milestones in history. It’s a chance for me to look in the mirror and be proud of where I am as a woman while recognizing the women who have paved the way for women today.

What had the biggest influence on your career?

I briefly left TDOT in 2017 to pursue another job opportunity in the private sector. I quickly realized how special TDOT was and that a career in public service was my true calling. Ten months later, I was back at TDOT where I have grown, learned, and developed into the HR professional I am today. Since returning to the department, Delaine has pushed me to be the best I can be while trusting me to lead others, programs, and projects. Without all this, I would not feel as accomplished and excited for the work I do every day.

The TDOT EPIC initiative was launched recently, how do you see your role as empowering people and influencing the culture?

EPIC makes me excited for the future! It’s about creating a culture of accomplishment and ensuring development and growth for our people. Through internal communications, my focus is to deliver messages that build knowledge, inspire performance, and boost engagement. I want to promote the success of our employees through communications, be an ally for inclusivity and act as a champion for change.

How do you suggest we create a workforce that supports diversity, equity, and inclusion?

The most progressive thing an organization can do is focus on diversity by putting effort into building unity and an inclusive environment. Individually, we can commit to the respect and appreciation for one another and for others with different backgrounds. Diversity means different things to different people but it includes everyone. It involves culture, identity, and equality.



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Employee Spotlight: Kasey Vatter

TDOT Assistant Director, HQ Human Resources Office

She loves to read, watch the Vols play, and listen to true crime podcasts.

“I don’t like to give advice. I like to give people information because everyone’s life is different, and everyone’s journey is different.” – Dolly Parton

Joined TDOT Family March 2020

What does Women’s History Month mean to you and why?

I think it’s important to pause and recognize the competence and capabilities of great women throughout history as well as in the present time. There are so many amazing, kind, smart, talented and competent women that I have the opportunity to work with every day and I’m grateful for those who have pioneered a path for us to have a influential place in today’s workforce.

What had the biggest influence on your career?

The biggest influence on my career was seeing how hard my dad worked to complete his bachelor’s degree with three kids and a full time job. He and I actually graduated from the University of Tennessee the same semester. Now that I have kids of my own and a full time job, I have a much deeper appreciation for his accomplishments. My parents have always worked very hard to provide for our family and I am so grateful to have that example of a strong work ethic as a guide to help support mine.

The TDOT EPIC initiative was launched in January 2022, how do you see your role as empowering people and influencing the culture?

Most of my professional experience has been in higher education administration with an intentional focus on supporting individuals completing their educational pursuits to help them meet personal and professional goals. With this background, I hope to be able to help more employees identify and reach their professional goals through the most effective pathway available to them based not only on their educational attainment but also on technical competence and career experience.

How do you suggest we create a workforce that supports diversity, equity, and inclusion?

I suggest by being humble and helpful.

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Employee Spotlight: Katie McGinnis, P.E.



TDOT Operations District Manager
Region 4, District 49 Construction-Shelby County

She enjoys kayaking, biking, fishing, watching sports (Go Cardinals), woodworking, playing with her four dogs and spending time with family.

“We must not only learn to tolerate our differences. We must welcome them as the richness and diversity which can lead to true intelligence.”

- Albert Einstein

Joined TDOT Family February 2015

What does Women’s History Month mean to you and why?

Like other months and/or holidays celebrating minorities and identities, its always a wonderful thing to celebrate achievements and educate people on history. Highlighting triumphs is imperative to inspire young minds everywhere to follow their dreams and break stereotypes.

What had the biggest influence on your career?

I followed in my aunt’s footsteps by earning a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Christian Brothers University. Watching her achievements with the Corps of Engineers in Emergency Management, led to my pursuit of civil engineering and to work in the public sector. She has cheered me, encouraged me, and supported me in all that I have accomplished.

The TDOT EPIC initiative was launched recently. How do you see your role as empowering people and influencing the culture?

Hopefully EPIC will create opportunities and avenues for my team that will lead to an overall more enjoyable and rewarding professional life.

How do you suggest we create a workforce that supports diversity, equity, and inclusion?

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are all products of an open-minded and progressive society. A workforce with opportunities for professional growth and enrichment would lead to an open door for more applicants and will further these ideas.

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Employee Spotlight: Lea Ann Whitney, CSP

TDOT Safety Manager, HQ Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) Division

She loves camping, hiking, jogging, singing in choir at church, reading, spending time with her family and pets.

“If we cannot end our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity.” John F. Kennedy

Joined TDOT Family April 2018

What does Women’s History Month mean to you and why?

Strong, intelligent and capable women have existed throughout the history of this country and this world. I appreciate celebrating these women who sacrificed, influenced change and paved the way for all women that come after them.

What had the biggest influence on your career?

As a child, my Dad worked at a chemical plant. He always preached about wearing our seatbelts and he always wore safety glasses and boots when doing yard work. I didn’t understand until I was older that he was a champion for safety at work for his 33 year career. I realize I was influenced about safety from an early age but my decision to enter into the safety industry began with working on a manufacturing assembly line during my undergraduate studies in college. I saw first-hand the workplace hazards that cause serious injuries. I decided to further my education and become a Safety Professional. The woman who influenced me to go into this career path was my very successful aunt who is currently a Certified Safety Professional and had graduated from the same program. My passion is to make sure every employee goes home safely to their families each day. Workplace injuries not only affect the injured worker, but affects their love ones.

The TDOT EPIC initiative was launched recently, how do you see your role as empowering people and influencing the culture?

As a Safety Manager, I am constantly in an “influencer” type of position. To be successful I have to understand what motivates our fellow TDOT members to work safely. Being a good listener first, as well as sharing my technical knowledge about safety and my customer focus will help empower our fellow employees be the best and the safest they can be.

How do you suggest we create a workforce that supports diversity, equity, and inclusion?

The HQ OHS Division most recently read a book by Brene Brown called “Daring to Lead”. Ms. Brown states, “We must learn how to lean into our vulnerability, stay curious, and practice courage.” If we all embraced these elements with one another at work, we could build, support and sustain a diverse and inclusive workforce here at TDOT.



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Employee Spotlight: Shawna B. Smith



TDOT Operations District Supervisor
Region 4, District 47 McKenzie, TN

She is an avid runner, loves spending time with family, watching basketball and soccer.

Joined TDOT Family May 2002

What does Women’s History Month mean to you and why?

Women’s History Month is a celebration of the many women who have been pioneers in their fields, role models that paved the way for their future families, communities and the world at large.

What had the biggest influence on your career?

In college I had an opportunity to intern with TDOT. My supervisor was Amy Griffin in the Memphis Construction Office. Seeing her excel in her role gave me the confidence that I could make it in the Civil Engineering field.

The TDOT EPIC initiative was launched recently. How do you see your role as empowering people and influencing the culture?

I take pride in my work and in our office. We try to create a positive atmosphere and appreciate the opportunities we are given leading by example and supporting others when needed.

How do you suggest we create a workforce that supports diversity, equity, and inclusion?

Continue to give everyone the opportunity to attend all training and classes that are available. Utilize everyone’s strengths and encourage mentoring new employees.



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In Memory of Angie Martin

*Who was a faithful and dedicated employee to our
TDOT family.*

Thank you for your dedication and commitment.

You will be dearly missed.