AWS Educator Member Profile

In 2015, after watching the “Women in Welding” video featuring AWS Past President Nancy Cole, Aguayo felt compelled to attend an AWS Section meeting, which motivated her to enroll in a welding class.

Aguayo graduated from a welding program in 2017 and currently serves on the executive board of the AWS Atlanta Section.

“I knew I was going to love it, but my involvement in AWS cemented welding as a career,” she explained. “I felt connected to something larger in a way I hadn’t before.”

Aguayo is now the owner of Becoming a Welder Inc. in Atlanta, Ga. The nonprofit organization works to fill the gap in the welding industry by providing workshops, raising awareness of the opportunities welding offers, helping individuals with the welding education process, and connecting companies with job-ready welders.

Becoming a Welder mostly works out of makerspaces, where Aguayo teaches beginner welding classes to an array of professionals.

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Julio Martinez was 18 years old when he was first introduced to welding at a shop in Garfield Heights, Ohio. As a young adult, he enjoyed working with his hands, and that passion influenced his career choice.

“I like to be active. With welding, I didn’t have to worry about time moving slowly or being bored while working,” he said. “Day in and day out, I am able to get my hands dirty doing something I enjoy.”

Martinez earned a welding certificate from Polaris Career Center, Middleburg Heights, Ohio, in 2002, and has held several welding jobs. He was a welder at Flexible Material Handling for three years, as well as a welder, safety technician, and welding instructor at Lincoln Electric for 13 years. He is presently a welding instructor at Polaris Welding Center, where he has taught since 2016.

“I was first motivated to teach welding to others because it is an ever-changing career that will keep you busy each day. The job outlook for welders is promising,” he said. “I wanted to help others strive toward the trades, becoming a skilled welder and securing a job that can be lucrative and rewarding.”

Some of the topics Martinez teaches at Polaris include arc welding safety; oxyfuel welding; brazing and cutting; plasma cutting; shielded metal, gas metal, flux cored, and gas tungsten arc welding; joining various metal types, such as mild steel, stainless steel, aluminum, and cast iron; basic metallurgy; math; fabrication; and blueprint reading. He also teaches his students how to use hand tools and various shop equipment, such as shears, ironworkers, and press brakes.

Martinez uses purposeful, community-based projects to motivate his students and supplement his lessons. This includes helping the local fire station by welding aluminum shelves for their fire truck.

His favorite part of his job is getting students workforce ready and witnessing their prosperity.

“The most rewarding part about teaching welding to students is qualifying them to AWS Standards in each process and seeing them succeed in their career,” he said.

Martinez is an AWS Certified Welding Inspector and Educator, as well as a visual inspection ASNT level 1 and 2. He is also an active member of the AWS Cleveland Section, which selected him to represent District 10 at the AWS Instructor’s Institute held in 2017.