

WOMAN of Towing

Angie Haines

Haines Towing Inc. • Bordentown, New Jersey

By Jackie Gibson

In 1946, Angie Haines' grandfather opened a towing company in Bordentown, New Jersey. Her parents took over the business 30 years later, and today Haines Towing Inc. still sits in its original location. "I grew up in the industry," says Angie, "and spent my time hanging out at the shop, climbing on trucks, checking out wrecks, shoveling snow off flatbeds and best of all, going out on jobs with my dad."

Currently vice president of Haines Towing, Angie's day is spent in the office maintaining driver training/certifications, equipment maintenance records, licenses and registrations and roadway contracts. She also supervises dispatcher training, scheduling and daily procedures, but is quick to point out that "this is a family business, so of course I do whatever, whenever."

Angie always enjoyed working wrecks with her dad. She still laughs at an old memory involving a Holmes 750 winch-out when she was just a kid. "My dad told me to get in the truck and hold my foot on the brake," she recalls, "and not let up until he said so." Too short to reach the pedal from the seat, Angie had to wedge her body between the seat and the brake.

"After what seemed like hours, my legs started quivering," she smiles, "but I was not about to let go of that brake."

These days Angie serves as "last man out" if another truck is needed on scene for a recovery already in progress. She also responds to all heavy-duty wrecks as on-scene safety supervisor.

With a full fleet of recovery equipment and trailers, Haines Towing has about 20 employees, six of them female, including Angie and her mom. The company services all local municipalities; Interstates 95, 195 and 295; New Jersey State Police; and the New Jersey Turnpike. "We specialize in heavy-duty recovery," Angie says, "and service over 700 commercial accounts. We also provide transport for specialized equipment, classic cars and anything else that needs to be moved."

In the community, Haines Towing participates in local career days and Touch-a-Truck events, and every year since Angie's grandfather started the tradition, they put up the town's Christmas tree.

The Haines family also owns a 30-acre horse farm. "I've shown Appaloosa horses my whole life," she says, "and now my 10-year-old daughter Evelyn also shows." When at home, Angie loves to bake cakes, usually for family and friends but also for an organization that supports kids with cancer.

Haines Towing is a member of TRAA and is a founding member of the Garden State Towing Association, where Angie serves on the executive board, as did her father before her.

She also holds a Level One National Certification, is a New Jersey TIMS trainer and serves on the Incident Management Task Force for Burlington and Mercer counties.



"I am a huge advocate for safety, not just for our industry but for all emergency responders," Angie says. At task force meetings, she is usually the only female in the room. Her goal is to raise awareness that after fire and police leave an accident scene, tow operators still face dangerous situations. "Since this task force connection, we've seen improvements in blocking and lighting at recoveries, keeping our guys safe until the entire accident is cleared," Angie says.

Last fall, Haines Towing also participated in a training video of an accident scene re-enactment (available on NJTIM.org).

Angie's advice for other women in the industry: "Don't think you have to drag chains and get dirty to make your mark in this industry. I've tried to make a difference by using my strengths, which are not always physical. Whenever you get pushback, it's not necessarily because you're a woman. You're dealing with a lot of people who have been doing things the same way for a long time. You must be willing to try and, if you fail, learn from it and try again."

Woman of Towing is Sponsored by



920-648-6442 • www.wtraa.org

WTRAA recognizes and celebrates the vital role women play in today's towing and recovery industry by sponsoring Woman of Towing. Each Woman of Towing will receive a one-year membership to WTRAA.

Send your Woman of Towing suggestions to:

Tow Times • Woman of Towing • 203 West SR 434 • Winter Springs, FL 32708
or email news@towtimes.com