

Kim Spicer interviewed by Jaime Lopez and Setare Arashloo

Jamie Lopez: Okay, so just a little note. This was an idea that was based out of the stories that we share on the job. You get to know journeymen and women. Share stories about each other and create these relationships, but when you leave the job or you separate these stories get lost. This is almost honoring those conversations as well. [00:00:30] If you would like to start by telling us your name and your job title.

Kim Spicer: Kim Spicer, A journey wire woman.

Jamie Lopez: Okay. Can you tell us your background? Where you were born, where your parents are from.

Kim Spicer: Okay, I was born in Brooklyn New York. My mom was born in Staten Island New York and my dad was born in South Carolina. I was going to say New York.

Jamie Lopez: [00:01:00] What neighborhood do you live in now?

Kim Spicer: Right now I live at the Flushing Fresh Meadows, whatever it goes by. In the Electchester.

Jamie Lopez: What is some of your hobbies?

Kim Spicer: I'm really into art. I like to draw, paint, cooking, knit crochet, anything with sports, just about. I think except football. [00:01:30] I'm not into football or anything like that.

Jamie Lopez: What is your division? What division are you working in and what types of work are you-

Kim Spicer: I'm in the A-division. Right now I'm on a residential job. I've done data. I think I've done just about everything except for I think fiber. Yeah, right now I'm doing a residential high rise and it's challenging.

Jamie Lopez: Where is it?

Kim Spicer: It's [00:02:00] in Tribeca on Leonard Street, 42 Leonard Street.

Setare Arashloo : How do you explain A division?

Kim Spicer: A-division is anyone I believe that's been through the apprenticeship, that did their five and a half years' time as an apprentice at MIJ and then went to journey person status.

Jamie Lopez: Could you describe this job sight that you're on?

Kim Spicer: Okay, a disaster. It's been [00:02:30] going on I think ... I'm hearing different stories between six and eight years. I told a few people and two of them were shop stewards and they were like oh God, I feel sorry for you. Then when I get there I'm like I can see why. It's so many hands that have touched things in the building that you don't know. Nothing's consistent and you know the building, it's a building so you know apartments so there's usually consistency like we do a hotel, but it's not that way. If I have to do a three way I [00:03:00] can't find where the feed is. I got to troubleshoot, figure out what's going where before I can do anything. I've put on plate covers and it blew up. It's just you don't know what's going on there. It's a real challenge.

Setare Arashloo: Is it a renovation or is it being built?

Kim Spicer: No, it's new construction. Yeah, that's what's terrifying about it, its new construction.

Jamie Lopez: So you're at this point the hotel is up. Can you describe what the state of the hotel is and [crosstalk 00:03:25]

Kim Spicer: It's up, no it's actually a million dollar high rise and [00:03:30] there are residents living in the building while the construction is going on and I can't comprehend how that's happening. It's filthy, it's dusty. You know if it's construction that dust that's on everything it's everywhere. There's people living there and they're getting on elevators with us and I'm like this is insane.

Jamie Lopez: So you're among the tenants, you're working among the tenants.

Kim Spicer: Yes, mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jamie Lopez: How does that work? Or how doesn't it work?

Kim Spicer: All right it doesn't work when [00:04:00] you need to get on an elevator and you really need to get on it, but you're not supposed to be on it, but you get on it anyway because you need to get to your job sight instead of sitting around waiting for the one freight elevator where you have that engineer picking and choosing where he wants to go and you're sitting downstairs for an hour and 40 minutes sometimes on a bucket just waiting to get on an elevator. And then the residents are there asking you questions. "How long is this going to take?" I'm like, "I don't know, I'm just here to do the electrical work and that's it."

You're also trying to make sure that they don't get impaled or cut by any of the material [00:04:30] that you're carrying. Just in passing because a lot of times I usually have a big knife hanging off my belt and I figured that it's open sometimes because it's handy and it's like the sickle knife and I have to make sure it's closed because I've seen people get

cut by accident. If it's not one of us, we know what to look for and they don't get injured.

Setare Arashloo: How many years have you been an electrician?

Kim Spicer: This is going to be my 10th year. I came in 2007, but I got initiated [00:05:00] 2008.

Setare Arashloo: Do you remember your first day?

Kim Spicer: Yes, yes I do. They had me on; I think it was a six foot ladder with the huge chopping gun, with the huge bit chopping through a wall.

Jamie Lopez: Your first day.

Kim Spicer: Yes.

Jamie Lopez: That's interesting.

Kim Spicer: Yes.

Jamie Lopez: How did you feel about that? What was going through your mind?

Kim Spicer: I'm like okay, I'm going to get this done and I blew right through [00:05:30] that wall and that was it. He was like, "Wow, that's a big hole." I'm like, "You told me to do this and that's what I did." Yeah, that job was yeah, that was a fun job.

Jamie Lopez: Can we backtrack a little bit? Can you tell me about any jobs that you had before you became an electrician?

Kim Spicer: Oh wow, I had so many jobs before I became an electrician because I didn't like anything that I did, except for when I was in human resources [00:06:00] at Baruch College. I was a dental assistant before I came in because I was in school for electric mechanical engineering so I did that for about three years and I was trying to pay for school so then I found out that you could go to NYU to be a dental assistant, you know and make money. I'm like okay I'll pay for college that way. I did it and as soon as I got into clinical rotation I knew it wasn't for me because I could not deal with working with people [00:06:30] and listen to them complain about something that if they had taken care of their teeth they wouldn't have these issues.

It just drove me insane. The only thing that I liked doing was fabricating things and working with my hands and staying in the lab away from everybody else. I did not want to do a patient whatsoever.

Jamie Lopez: That's hard to believe because I know you used to be a very personable young lady.

Kim Spicer: Yeah, but when you're a patient and it's just like ... Then it's like so many horrifying things that I've seen [00:07:00] and it's just like oh my gosh I can't, I can't do this. I can't

listen. It's crazy because I say I can't listen, but when I'm on a construction site I deal with people that whine, but it's like you can tell them, "Shut the hell up." I don't want to hear this, or you just walk away. You can say whatever you want, but with a patient you can't show the horror in your face when you see certain things. You'll have the mask on, but your eyes can give you away sometimes too. That was a challenge, [00:07:30] yeah it was. I almost didn't graduate, but I was like you know what I'm here, I'm committed I'm going to get through and then I'm out of here.

Setare Arashloo: How did you start the apprentice program?

Kim Spicer: I forgot what I was doing. I would see these signs about N.E.W nontraditional employment for women everywhere and I was still in tech for the engineering and I saw it on a bus stop and I was like I'm going to call it one day because [00:08:00] even though we were in school for engineering everyone knew that you probably wouldn't get a job doing electric mechanical engineering, then they were changing it to computer engineering and it was kind of changing the curriculum because I really wanted to do robotics. I was like I'm probably not going to get a job. Let me try this, see if I can get something else that fits into it, when I saw you could do construction I'm like okay electrician I can do that because I've had wiring blueprints and everything in college.

When I called up they were like, "Yeah, come in." Came in, took the test, [00:08:30] I got into a class and they tried to make me become a carpenter because I was really good and I'm like, "I didn't come here for that, I don't want to be a carpenter. That's easy, I want to do something challenging. What I went to school for, in that same realm." They were like, "Oh what are you going to do in the meantime? Local three they're not recruiting for another eight months." I was like I guess I will wait. I'll wait. So I went and got a job at ... I forgot about that job, at Roosevelt Investment Group and I was there as a temp and they wanted to hire me. I'm like yeah, [00:09:00] I'll take the job. I'm going to take this as long as it takes until Local Three calls in. With N.E.W they speed up the process.

I think I took the test in June and I was having my physical in August and I was in school by September. It was really fast. I got in at a good time. That was also the time when the bubble and people were you know that whole wait and everything and work reduction and the whole Enron thing. What is it? The housing market. [00:09:30] Something happened, and yeah when I came in I was like oh wow this is different. It was like yeah we're going to be out of work 12 months. I'm like what? I was an apprentice so I was just like okay. I'm just listening taking in everything, but I'm glad I stayed with it.

Jamie Lopez: How many years did you say you're in the business now?

Kim Spicer: This would have been my 10th year.

Jamie Lopez: This is [00:10:00] your 10th year. Did you have any family members in the business?

Kim Spicer: My sister is a carpenter. Oh you mean Local three? No, no.

Jamie Lopez: Your sister's a carpenter?

Kim Spicer: Yes.

Jamie Lopez: How do you feel about that, your sister being a carpenter?

Kim Spicer: I told her no.

Jamie Lopez: Why?

Kim Spicer: Because, I told her I said all you're going to be doing is sheet rocking. You're not going to be like Norm Abrams tongue and groove and making all nice fancy nice wood things. That's not going to happen. You're going to [00:10:30] either be fire stopping, humping Sheetrock, and that's it. It's going to be boring. She's dyslexic, so she assumed oh you're an electrician, I'm like no, you're not going to do the math that you think we're going to do. I was like it's different, you're going to do more math as a carpenter. There's fractions and everything. Now she's like oh yeah, you're right. I'm like yeah I told you when Local three comes knocking you better take that test.

Jamie Lopez: Is she your younger sister?

Kim Spicer: Yes.

Jamie Lopez: Oh so that's why you have that schooling her a little bit.

Kim Spicer: Yeah, I have to.

Setare Arashloo: Can you [00:11:00] explain the learning process of becoming an electrician

How did you learn?

Kim Spicer: Well you know what, I was always handy. Someone posted on Facebook their first tool was they showed a butter knife to take things out and I'm like, "No, we had tools at my house like screwdrivers, pliers, and everything." I did all this stuff before I got in. I was always comfortable with tools and using tools even when I got into college I was bending my boxes forming the metal and everything on [00:11:30] my own. I was always comfortable. When you get in there they just throw you right ... They put me on a ladder with a chopping gun. It's like this is something I never used before. It's like a little mini jack hammer and it's banging against the wall and if didn't prop myself up right I could have pushed myself off the ladder, but I knew how to hold the gun and I just jumped right in.

Speaker 3: Did you go to school at the same time?

Kim Spicer: Yes, the same day. They started me on a Monday. I had school Monday and Wednesday. [00:12:00] So that Monday I went to work and then I went to school. That was hard. You're so beaten up and you have to go to school and they're like stay awake. And I'm

like what? Stay awake? Okay. Then you fade, then you snap out of it, then you fade, yeah, it's hard.

Speaker 1: Did your other jobs transition into this job? Did things carry over from your other jobs?

Kim Spicer: I'm sure, yes. Yeah. [00:12:30] I'm thinking when I went to Baruch, for human resources and you had to deal with people and their payroll and just knowing stuff about payroll and money and when I get to a job site and they're telling me things about payroll and I'm like unacceptable. They're like oh this shop has a lot of people. I'm like "Well Baruch college I'm sure has a lot more people than that and I did the direct deposit for the students and the faculty so you can't tell me that you can't punch in a few numbers and have my direct deposit." I would just go off. They're like [00:13:00] oh okay. I'm like yeah. Little things here and there helped me out a lot.

Setare Arashloo: Can you explain a typical day at your job?

Kim Spicer: Okay, a typical day is waiting forever for the elevator, which works perfectly fine, you don't need an engineer to press the button for you. We're just mostly going around like this building should have been done by now, so it's almost like punch list things. Like [00:13:30] there's things that are missing that should have been there. Like we were troubleshooting this wire for a day, couldn't find it, so of course the foreman he finally comes around he was like, "Try that box right there." I climb up a 12 foot ladder, open it up and I'm like, why didn't he come here yesterday and say try this box while we're going upstairs opening up panels, trying to tug on these wires and everything, no one has a toner. It was just madness. It's a lot of troubleshooting trying to figure out where things are. If they're buried [00:14:00] in a deck do we have to chop to get to a box that's in the floor, but no one knows because this isn't the foreman that was there when it started. It's just chaos.

Jamie Lopez: When you say troubleshooting, I know you mentioned a three way switch earlier. In residential we use multiple switches to control the single lights. Can you explain a little bit about what a three way switch is, how it works and what you're troubleshooting?

Kim Spicer: Oh, okay. Well three way switch is when you have two switches in two different [00:14:30] locations and they control the same light. If you hit one on or off, if it's on and you go to the other switch you can turn it off and vice versa the other side. I forgot, what was the question again?

Jamie Lopez: How does it work and how do you troubleshoot this thing?

Kim Spicer: Okay well when they're supposed to turn on and off so I brought in my two little light bulb holders and you plug them in, so I brought in two so I could make sure [00:15:00] that they worked properly. We had one on one circuit at the top and the other was a different circuit. So I put them in the top so I could make sure that they work. They weren't working. What I had to do was, I put a device on it to see where the current is going through to make sure that it turns on. The current was there, but it just wasn't turning on. Then I would try the other one to see what was going on and the other

receptacle wasn't working and then the light wasn't working. [00:15:30] I found out that the power was going to a receptacle somewhere else that had nothing to do with this and then it jumped out. The power was going back to another receptacle I'm saying this words-

Jamie Lopez: It's Good, It's Good [inaudible 00:15:48].

Kim Spicer: The electricity was going to the wrong spot and it was supposed to go in between these two lights and they weren't, so I had to turn the power off and isolate [00:16:00] where the electricity was going and figure out which way to send it so that involved tracing it was finding the travelers, which are the two wires that go in between the two lights to make sure the power goes back and forth and that wasn't happening. I would have to put my ... I have a tester. I would ground it and then go to the other side to try to get some continuity. Okay that's right, find the other one, that's right. Then [00:16:30] I would find the hot. Then I would turn the power off and it's still hot and I'm like okay this isn't it, something's wrong. Back and forth I had to just keep going back and forth until I had 16 wires here and there and everything had little pieces of tape because there's no tags there. Nothings labeled, there was so many hands in everything that it's chaos.

Once I got everything together, spliced everything out right, everything worked properly. I think that was one I was able to walk away from the rest, [00:17:00] yeah, all day.

Jamie Lopez: Through that frustration that you're going through isolating and deciding which wire and identifying, how do you feel when you walk away and it works?

Kim Spicer: I feel very accomplished, but annoyed at the same time because it should have been done the right way. The feed should have been brought to where it was supposed to be. Here I am I'm drilling a three way like okay I see this, I know what it is, but I have to look at this so I can make sure I'm doing [00:17:30] everything right. I'm glad that I did that, because if I didn't I would just be confused by looking at all these wires that are the same color, some aren't and it's just madness in your head. You know, you know this, but you're getting frustrated. This was my second day on the job and I'm like oh my gosh what did I get thrown into.

It's like I have an appreciation for pipe more than circuitry. It's just like if I do it myself I'm fine, but if someone else, no.

Jamie Lopez: This is [00:18:00] perfect that you said that, because there's a variety of works in our industry and I know for a fact because I have you as a Facebook friend, I usually see you in photos and you're hanging off a ladder and you have pipe or wire in your hands with a big smile. Can you explain a little bit about how this happens and where these pictures come from and why?

Kim Spicer: You know because I see that it's a terrible situation. There's one where I'm in mud [00:18:30] and it's this PVC and I had to climb down into a hole and hopefully not cause

all the dirt to come down upon me, like an avalanche situation because I slid down and I'm in these booths that I have to probably cut off later because they were forced on and I'm standing there and I'm wet and I'm on a dead job and it's cold and I'm like oh my gosh and I'm like, "Frank, take a picture of me, I need this." I'm trying to get this guy to take a picture. Everything, I just try to smile through it. It's kind of like when we did the Spartan race [00:19:00] and I was trying to get other people to join. I told them when they come up the steps I'm like, "Smile, smile for the picture." And they're like this. It's like, "Smile." They're like, then they'll roll their eyes at me, I was like, "I don't care, go get up there, smile. Smile everybody, smile." You know, so it doesn't look that bad.

Jamie Lopez: Okay. You mentioned the Spartan race and I asked you earlier about the wellness club, that you're involved with. Can you explain a little about that club?

Kim Spicer: The wellness club was formed [00:19:30] by Michele Maldonado it's to get people healthy. When you're on the job site, I'm not a fan of eggs or cheese so I never ate bacon egg and cheese, but that's a common sandwich. I've had sandwiches that are like bacon egg and cheese with sausage and put jelly on it or a cream cheese bagel with bacon. I'm like oh you want the heart attack, okay I'm going to write down heart attack. Or you know cream cheese with sausage. Just these insane sandwiches and these guys are putting them away every day. With [00:20:00] a big soda or a big juice and it's out of control. A lot of people they have a lot of issues. I have worked with a lot of great guys that have passed away from heart attacks. A lot of them, heart attacks, young, in their 40's. Just dropping from heart attacks because they're eating this bad food and not taking care of themselves.

So she started the club and she saw me on Facebook doing all these crazy races and I used to do a lot of running, then I found out about the obstacle course when I got my sneakers [00:20:30] fitted for me because they're like you're wearing the wrong sneakers so I got the right sneakers. Then I saw a race and I'm like oh I would like to do that, I want to climb and do things. That's how I got in. She saw me do all these different things. She was like I want you to become the activities coordinator to get people to do races and that's how I got into the wellness club.

Jamie Lopez: She's a fellow electrician?

Kim Spicer: Yes she is.

Jamie Lopez: She's a journeyman?

Kim Spicer: Yes she's a journey woman.

Jamie Lopez: How did you meet her?

Kim Spicer: I don't know. I think maybe through Amber [00:21:00] Light. Just in passing we kept running into each other, different things. Then we became Facebook friends so then she started seeing things. Then I went out to Santorini with I believe Amber Light, or it might have been the Asian club, because I was a part of the Asian club first because I lived

downtown. I moved downtown Manhattan. I was close to China Town and their club meetings were across the street. Who was it Mary R, she was like "Come down club, you can come down, we're walking." I'm like, "But it's the Asian club." She was like, "Yeah, come [00:21:30] on down." I'm like, "Okay." They welcomed me and I ended up doing the dragon boat race with them. It was insane. Two years ago we won the silver medal, you couldn't tell us anything. When electricians win, we win big. Even if it's a silver medal, oh my gosh we were, yes.

Jamie Lopez: You were excited.

Kim Spicer: Oh we were over the top. We could have done a cartwheel on the boat it would have been, but we were trying to stay afloat.

Jamie Lopez: For the people that are listening maybe in the future may not understand what kind of clubs these [00:22:00] are. These are workers, electricians, fellow electricians.

Kim Spicer: Yes.

Jamie Lopez: All different types of cultures and ways and walks of life.

Kim Spicer: Yes, mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jamie Lopez: So yeah I'm happy that they welcomed you.

Kim Spicer: Yes.

Speaker 1: Even though I'm like Latino descent, I've been welcomed into the Latimer's Club, which is the African American ... So I know how you feel. It's a good feeling to be accepted.

Kim Spicer: Yeah.

Jamie Lopez: Yeah very good.

Setare Arashloo: [00:22:30] Can you tell us a little about your co-worker and the relationships on the job sites, in any job sites it doesn't have to be the current one, but-

Kim Spicer: Well, my current co-worker's awesome, Ines. I've been lucky in this industry so far where I've been with a lot of women. As a first year I was with Dell Electric and I ended up on a deck job, which was another nightmare, but I learned a lot. I met a good friend, who I'm still friends with now. [00:23:00] We don't talk often, but when we talk it's like we picked up where we left off. There were two female electricians, it was Luz and Stella. Anybody know Stella? I was with those two. We had two female fitters, two female carpenters, plumbers, surveyors. Every trade had at least two or three females, so I'm like I'm on a job with a bunch of women. We had bathrooms everywhere. The bathrooms situations a whole other thing.

My current co-worker, Ines she's awesome. She's there, I'm like, "Ines, I'm about to lose it. Somethings going on." She's [00:23:30] there, we talk through it, we work great together. We talk about everything, who's whiny, who's not. We got the new RERW's on the job. They work like they're still nonunion so we're just like "You need to calm down before someone gets hurt and just relax." They're like, "No, I need everything." I'm like, "Okay you keep working that way, you'll catch on soon enough." They're only 18 months in since we started that RERW thing.

Jamie Lopez: RERW is Residential Wireman or helpers I think [00:24:00] right?

Kim Spicer: Yes.

Jamie Lopez: They recently been organized into our industry similar to M [crosstalk 00:24:09] journey men, and M Women and M helpers. To clarification.

Kim Spicer: Oh yea h I forgot.

Jamie Lopez: I think you're doing great. Don't be afraid to use the language that we use. We can always explain it later. It will work. It will work out.

Setare Arashloo: Have you ever felt unsafe at a job site?

Kim Spicer: [00:24:30] Yes. Yes, because it's electrical so it's either you feel unsafe depending on who you're working with, because you could have a dangerous partner. There are a lot of reckless people out there. There are a lot of old timers who do reckless things, there's a lot of young people that do reckless things, there's a lot of people that aren't healthy that do reckless things.

Setare Arashloo: Like what sort of-

Kim Spicer: Just like, I had a friend once tell me how we're electricians we don't climb down off [00:25:00] of ladders, we jump. And he jumped on a screw, and that screw had to be unscrewed out of his foot with a piece of wood because he jumped off of a ladder. I don't know anyone that's an electrician that jumps off of a ladder unless their life is in danger. He jumped off of a ladder onto a screw. That's reckless behavior. Not testing things. There's a certain way you carry tubing or conduit pipe. You're supposed to carry when you're walking up so this way you don't poke somebody in the eye or hit [00:25:30] them a certain way you got to watch where you're swinging. You got to know your swing radius and everything and make sure you don't hurt anyone with your tools. The people, they just don't have any consideration for others and that's with other trades too. You got to watch out for everybody.

When you walk in, you got to look, see what's going on up above you. Certain noises that you hear you know something's coming or something may be coming. There's danger ahead. There's certain things that you hear. You know what to look for.

Jamie Lopez: Did you always have that sensitivity to [00:26:00] danger, or was it something that you developed?

Kim Spicer: I don't know I probably had a sensitivity because I grew up in Brownsville and there was always danger. From I guess when I was a teenager when the neighborhood really started to get bad. It was always danger. You knew what to look for. When they say you see one person running, you run. Yeah, that type of thing.

Jamie Lopez: A colleague of mine always recognized electricians or construction workers as being really quick with their reflexes. [00:26:30] Do you feel that you've developed that or you've always had reflexes?

Kim Spicer: I've always had reflexes, but yeah even more so I've noticed that its been heightened. I catch a lot of things. I don't know my dad thinks he's an electrician, but he does everything. He'll be like yeah you know the thing on the wall. I'm like, "The box, the panel?" He's like, "Yeah, yeah, you know you stick the wires in." I'm like, "Yeah okay dad. You just keep doing what you're doing I'll do what I do. You [00:27:00] can't show me anything, I'm not messing with you." He thinks he knows everything. I don't know, it might be something that I got from my dad because I'm handy and comfortable with certain things, except for confined spaces and insects. That's not my, yeah.

Jamie Lopez: Yes, I do recall something like that. You didn't like the bugs somewhere.

Kim Spicer: Yeah, I was in the projects and I was working in the projects. My skin right now there's all these things on there, I got really sensitive skin, and I was exposed to some stuff that gave me headaches [00:27:30] the entire time I was there and I didn't realize it was from the job and when I left the headaches stop. I let the foreman have it and I called up, I forgot his name, McCormick and I let him know. He was like, "Yeah, fill out a report, this way you don't have to go back." It was serious. That place was terrible. I tell my foreman, "Do you see my face. It wasn't like this when we were at the trade center and now it's like this and I have headaches." I ended up getting off that job and then a week or two after the plumbers [00:28:00] coming in like, "Oh yeah we can't work here." Now they're doing all this. I'm like, "Are you kidding me?"

Jamie Lopez: It's frustrating.

Kim Spicer: Yeah, I was just like, "Are you kidding me?" Then the foreman he ends up coming on the job and I'm like, "Yeah so about that job again, I'm so sorry." I was like, "You're saying you're sorry, but every day ..." I told him every day, every meeting I'm like, "You better get some fresh air in here you got us in this confined space." Me and my partner would blitz and blow and get it done and he was like, "Oh yeah we're going to bring in some air."

So he brings in that, [00:28:30] I forgot what the little box is that brings the air in and the tube. The intake box, I forgot what that thing was called, he brings it into the compactor room, we're in the projects in a basement. The compactor room has things crawling in there, I'm already starting to itch, roaches, spiders, and flies, so you're giving

me air that has these things ... I took that tube and I threw it out. Also me I'm like I told Robinson I was like, "Robinson, we're going to get this [00:29:00] done." I even have a video of us at one point, where there's spiders in the corner and I'm freaking out and I'm telling him to go in there. The only two people that were confined space certified were the two people that were most afraid.

There was one point where we saw a roach and we ran into each other. If we would have ran any faster we would have bounced off each other and hit the floor. The apprentice was just sitting there laughing at us. I was like I can't believe I got these two mechanics here running away from anything that moved. It was real, we were both serious. We were jumping all the time. It [00:29:30] was madness.

Speaker 1: Not to tear into it or bring it up again, but you said blitz and blow, it's one of those terminologies that we use. Sometimes frowned upon, but can you explain what it is?

Kim Spicer: It's when you get in there if it's a job and you want to get it done you get it done fast and then you can leave. We were going to go in there, we're going to get the job done and then we're out of there. Because that was the deal that we made because it was [00:30:00] such horrible conditions. Like I said, with the air and everything between the bugs. It was hot, it was the summer time. I already had on a Tyvek suit and I'm not a big sweater. I can run, I won't have any sweat stains or anything on me, just from my head or something. Everything was wet on me. Everything, I mean everything.

I'm like okay this is not for me. I can't be sweating like this, I'm going to die. I drink a lot of water. That's still not enough. I'm like if I'm drinking a lot of water as it is and I need to drink more there's a problem. [00:30:30] We would get the job done really fast and then we were done and that was our deal. If we get this certain amount of feet of pipe done then we were out of there. We were taking the apprentice with us. We were like, "He gets to leave too." Because the apprentice, first of all he's not supposed to be in there. He was passing us all the tools. We were like, "He's with us, he gets a part of this too." That was the deal, us and the apprentice so we would get it done and then we would get out of there. Whatever we had, whatever it took to get it done we got it done.

Jamie Lopez: Can you explain a little bit about [00:31:00] you like pipework and conduit ducting and putting wire I suppose? Can you explain how that came about and your experience with that type of work?

Kim Spicer: I don't know, for some reason ever since I was a first year apprentice they like putting me on the bull gang, which is the people that pull the wire or set up these big wire pulls like 600s, like big. I think I got a picture of it. Big wires and for some reason, that's why [00:31:30] there's a picture of me on a ladder, they had me pulling this wire. I think I was pulling through a feed, I'm not sure, but it's like I'm the girl, why am I doing this? But I got it done, so I guess they saw that I had some sort of strength and they kept putting me on it. I'm like okay these people, why? Why do I have to do this? I would end up on four inch pipe, and we would get it done. Eventually we get done.

For some reason, I don't know my partners like me, I guess we work well together so it was always good. I [00:32:00] rarely had any partners that I ... Just one that I could think though, now I'm starting to think. There were a few that I was like I can't, I can't do this anymore.

Jamie Lopez: Kim, could you characterize a typical, not to stereotype, but a typical bull gang worker?

Kim Spicer: Oh man, it's always usually an old timer, yeah usually an old timer big guy. It's always the big guys, [00:32:30] that's why I'm like not a big guy. It's a big guy with big beefy hands and he just wants to take stuff and throw it around and tape everything up. He got to be the man and everything is like yeah, and I'm sitting there I'm like it's not that serious. That's how people get hurt. It's always those hyped up guys. Usually, usually you get the gentleman. Those are the guys I like to work with, where they're clean and they stay clean. Then we're going to do it like this and we're going to take our time. [00:33:00] That's it.

Jamie Lopez: They broke the mold with you?

Kim Spicer: Yeah, I'm not that guy.

Setare Arashloo: Has your job ever felt creative to you?

Kim Spicer: Yes. Yes. Yes, especially when I was in the Oculus and we had a ceiling that was a geometrical thing, like these carpenters were fantastic, but we had to get into that ceiling. [00:33:30] It kind of looked like where Superman was in the crystal and the crystal started shooting up and everything, that's how it was. I'm like, okay, now I got to bend pipe and make this work. I'm bending the pipe and I'm doing racks, but nothing is square. You're trying to measure, but it's hard to measure, but then it's like you got to go by sight because I was an apprentice I learned everything has to be straight, even, level, beautiful. Here it's not coming out that way. I'm taking more time, my foreman's like, [00:34:00] "No." And I'm like, "It has to look right." Because if it's not right when you pull the wire it's going to be a problem if it's not right and you have too many bends. He's like, "Oh just ..." I'm like, "No, because I'm going to have to pull this wire, somebody and they're going to be cussing me out."

Yeah, there was some funky bends that I had to make. Kind of almost like a question mark because I had to come out of a box and down to a light. I saw it today at work and I'm like I remember I had to do that once. And to see it again I was like okay. Then [00:34:30] shaping in a panel, or the data racks. That can be yeah.

Jamie Lopez: Oh tell me about the data racks.

Kim Spicer: Yeah the data racks for the computers and telephone and you have a lot of blue cable and you want it to look nice and streamline. Just nice and neat and in order. You can follow it sometimes, depending on who does it. It can be beautiful and it can be a disaster.

Jamie Lopez: So have you worked personally [00:35:00] on terminating those data racks?

Kim Spicer: Yeah, a couple of times, but not too much. Not where I can actually I punched down a whole rack and made it look nice. When I was at the Oculus I did the data there because the foreman was completely lost. He didn't know what was going on. He was like, "Oh yeah I got this tool." I'm like, "So where are the jacks?" He gives me the ...I think the RJ, the one that looks like a telephone that goes into a phone and not that looks like an Ethernet. It's supposed you know it was-

Jamie Lopez: He gave [00:35:30] you the male part instead of the-

Kim Spicer: Yes, and he was like, "Here." And I'm like, "No." So I had to go on Google, show it to him and the project manager what I needed and the tool that I needed in order to get the job done. I was just like okay. When it came to the end and nothing was working I was like, "But the racks are working, right?" He was like, "Yeah." I was like, "Okay."

What I did all by myself is done. I landed everything, the cameras all work and everything's working and my racks [00:36:00] are good okay.

Jamie Lopez: And they look good.

Kim Spicer: Yes, yes it did. Yes. I should have taken a picture of that now that I'm thinking about it.

Setare Arashloo: Have you ever passed a tool to someone or have a tool passed onto you as a gift?

Kim Spicer: Yes, I've had tools given to me, yes. A few. A few cool tools and I've passed along some tools [00:36:30] to apprentices that you could see potential in them. Not some that were knucklehead that you didn't know what was goin to happen at some point. I had a good apprentice, Kevin, the one that was laughing at us with the roaches and everything. I would tell, "Order this, when you go to Home Depot with the card." I would give him tools and then I also bought him the app for iBend just in case. I'm like, "When you can't figure something out, you can refer to this everybody uses it. Don't feel bad, don't let them guilt you into it because if you want to get something done and something needs to get [00:37:00] done this will help you. It's a tool, use it." It was free when I got it, but not with Apple I guess it become popular they started charging for it, so I'm like, "Here, use this app."

Jamie Lopez: Can you explain that transition or that gesture? How it feels or how it felt when you received something. What does it mean to hand tools or transfer tools in that manner?

Kim Spicer: I don't know, it's kind of like a passing the baton type of thing like in a race. They always say that you need to teach your apprentice because [00:37:30] they need to come up behind you to keep the flow going for your benefits and everything, you need to keep the business strong and everyone knowledgeable. A lot of people try to hide their knowledge. People would pass things along to me and then I would pass it along to any apprentices that I had. At least try. Some that I saw I would try to give it to them and I

saw what they was using, I'm like okay I'm wasting my time, but I'm going to keep trying with this one to see what happens. All you can do is try.

Yeah, it was just like what is it the [00:38:00] no dog. I would get it engraved for them. "Here use this; you're going to need one of these."

Jamie Lopez: What is a no dog?

Kim Spicer: It's a level, kind of like a level so when you're a bending a pipe one way and you want it to be level the other way so that it's not dogged, or twisted you want it straight, you put the no dog on it the first time so this way you have it the way you need it straight and then when you flip it over and you level it, you know which way it is so that it stays straight. You get your pipe bent the right way. So yeah I got a lot of no dogs and little [00:38:30] six inch levels for apprentices.

Jamie Lopez: Those are your favorite tools?

Kim Spicer: Yeah, I have a couple of levels in my bag and channels.

Jamie Lopez: Keep in line with the essence of tradition, do you happen to have a favorite Local Three tradition or can you think of some other Local Three traditions that you admire or respect?

Kim Spicer: Traditions. I don't know there's so many. [00:39:00] Oh my gosh.

Jamie Lopez: You know just to throw one in there. I like the idea of journeymen when they retire getting limousines home like the workers gathering together and sending the journeyman or woman off in a limousine. I think that's a classy touch.

Kim Spicer: I like that too.

Jamie Lopez: Can you think of any others?

Kim Spicer: I like when there's someone that they've mentored or someone that someone brought in when they hand them [00:39:30] their card. When they get initiated or when they get their A card, whatever it is. Whatever promotion it is, whoever got them in or brought them or if it's a family member. I like seeing that. Like Candy, when his sister came in he was giving his sister her card and everything. I really like that.

Jamie Lopez: Yeah, so what about that though, what is it about it that makes you feel good?

Kim Spicer: I don't know, it just seems like I'm bringing you into another family. Because it's a family situation as far as I'm concerned, other people [00:40:00] you know. I see it as that. It's like okay you're going to become one of us. You know he's just welcome her into the gates of local three you know.

Jamie Lopez: Welcome to the gates, that's beautiful.

Setare Arashloo: If you can change one thing about your job, what would you change?

Kim Spicer: Bathrooms.

Jamie Lopez: You know this is the second time that you mentioned the bathrooms. Can you tell us about the bathrooms?

Kim Spicer: Okay, well the bathrooms are gross. For the most part, [00:40:30] if you have one we have to have a lock on it to keep the guys out because for some reason they use the bathroom everywhere. Not all, but some because like I said you have the gentlemen and then you have the ones that just ... And I mean everything everywhere. We have to keep our bathrooms locked. If we got to pour the sandwich, I loathe. You got to keep it locked. We always keep our nice and I remember when we were in the college class and the guys were like, "How come the girls always have the nice bathroom." I'm like, [00:41:00] okay I got to refrain from language, we try not to put everything everywhere like you guys do. So that's why our bathroom stays so clean, because we keep it clean. You got to talk to your fellow construction workers and try to keep it tidy. It's terrible. It's either that or no running water. I need this. I need to wash my hands with soap not sanitizer.

Jamie Lopez: What's your current situation at the hotel?

Kim Spicer: [00:41:30] No, it's an apartment building so there's bathrooms and being that it's a multi-million dollar there's bathrooms in every bedroom, so that's good and there's a bathroom downstairs on the first floor that we can use or one of the various apartments. The doors already have locks on them so that's good. We're able to ... And then there's hot water so you get all the dirt off. You know, at least most of it off until you get home and take a real shower. I like that situation.

Setare Arashloo: Interesting.

Kim Spicer: We also had a heated bathroom once, that was [00:42:00] nice. A heated porta stand. They hated us because we had a heated porta stand, but the foreman said you guys mess everything up so we had a heater porta stand it was awesome. I didn't know they made those. I did not know. I'm like oh my gosh, yes and it flushed and it had water. I'm like oh my gosh.

Jamie Lopez: Not to get too specific, but what is it like to use a porta stand in the middle of the winter?

Kim Spicer: Oh it's so much fun. I wear a full arctic Carhartt suit, that's [00:42:30] kind of like a mechanics suit, but it's really layered for the winter. I'm a nemic, so I'm always cold. I would have to take the suit down while I'm facing the porta stand, twist, keep the suit where it's at and twist it in front of me and tuck the sleeves in because you don't want it to touch anything and use the bathroom. That's it, yeah.

Jamie Lopez: I think it's a tough deal.

Kim Spicer: Yeah, it is.

Jamie Lopez: I think somehow when I used to have to do it, because I'm not at [00:43:00] the moment, we made it work though right.

Kim Spicer: Well, yeah because you're a guy. We have to hover. No one's sitting on any seats so you got to hope that something's clean. That's the thing because you don't want to touch anything in there, but if it's the ladies you have no problem putting an elbow on a pipe and holding yourself up so you don't slip or anything like that because it's gross.

Jamie Lopez: What does it mean to be a union electrician or union member?

Kim Spicer: [00:43:30] What does it mean? It means that a lot of people are going to ask you how can I get in. Anytime they see you with the Local Three symbol or anything, well the IBW symbol, I don't know what does it mean? It's prideful because it shows that if you're A, that you went through everything. You went through that five and a half year hazing. Of getting coffee, [00:44:00] and deliveries and all the craziness. You just feel really accomplished. It's like a brotherhood, sisterhood where you go out of state and you see someone. I was in Pennsylvania and I saw someone. I introduced myself and I told him I'm in Local Three and they're like, "Oh New York City." I'm like, "Yeah." I'm asking them what are they doing. I was in New Jersey, not New Jersey, Amtrak. An Amtrak train station and they were doing work. You just start noticing [00:44:30] things, like you're in Whole Foods and you're like, "Wow, they did the fire alarm really well." You see everything. You notice the littlest things now.

When I'm at home and I got the level on my painting and I'm like yeah okay just stop touching the painting, I'm tired of leveling it. My OCD kicks in.

Setare Arashloo: I have a video from Jamie that his OCD kicks in.

Kim Spicer: Yeah, okay, yeah.

Jamie Lopez: My OCD kicks in all the time.

Kim Spicer: Yes, is your car-

Jamie Lopez: [00:45:00] My car is all spotless.

Kim Spicer: Yeah, I take the flat, you know the five inch box, and I scrape everything out, wipe it down and I have everything all nice. They're like, "What?" I'm like, "Look, don't mess with my car. Take what you want just do not set your coffee there because I don't want to smell it because I don't drink coffee. I don't want to smell your coffee, your tea. Leave myself alone."

Jamie Lopez: We were planning to give you a card [00:45:30] for coffee, you don't drink any coffee?

Kim Spicer: No.

Jamie Lopez: All right we're going to have to think of something.

Kim Spicer: My sister works for Starbucks, she doesn't drink coffee either. The carpenter, when she's out of work, she goes to Starbucks. She doesn't drink coffee either. Yeah, none of my sisters do.

Jamie Lopez: I see that when you go out there that your job touches your life, but when does your job ever merge with [00:46:00] your home life or your personal life?

Kim Spicer: Hmm.

Jamie Lopez: Or does it, or does not?

Kim Spicer: No, the only time is if I want to do overtime and I can't because I got to make sure that my daughter is where she needs to be. That's kind of tough. I can't see it interfering. Well it did, when I had a dog. I was at the trade center and I was living downtown so at lunch time I would leave and walk my dog. They're like, "Why do you do that?" I'm like, "How many times a day do you use the bathroom? I'm not going to let her hold it. I'm going to let [00:46:30] her go, eat my apple along the way and then walk back. It's not a big deal; I'm a walker so I have no problem with that."

Jamie Lopez: What about relationship wise? People that you know. Does it ever go over to your home life and personal life?

Kim Spicer: Sometimes because people think I can come over and do things for them. And it's like, no I'm not your handyman. [00:47:00] because no one would take ... Oh I'm sorry.

Jamie Lopez: No, it's good let me get you one.

Kim Spicer: Like I said, I was always handy so when I was younger I would tell them things to do, whatever I would try to help them like I can do it and they're like, "Oh no." I'm going to feed this one story, they were like, "Oh no let Keith do it." I'm like, "Okay." So the guy comes over, he puts in a deadbolt lock that turns, and he put it in the wrong way. He's trying to shut the door and it's not shutting. Before [00:47:30] I could stop him, because I saw what he was doing, he took his foot and he kicked the door and I was like, "No, you idiot, what are you doing? We're stuck in here now!" "What do you mean?" I'm like, "These are the projects, this is a steel door, you just shoved another piece of metal in between it, we can't get out." We couldn't get out.

So think of this, my friend was on the second floor. Call somebody up, they had to kick the door in. Before that I convinced him to wrap a sheet around himself to lower himself down to the first floor and I almost, [00:48:00] he had his head out the window and one leg and these guys came by and they were like, "What are you doing?" I was like, "Damn." I wanted him to go out that window so bad for getting us stuck in there, I was so mad. I always wanted to tie bedsheets together and go out of a window, but not personally because I know you'll die, but I was going to send this fool out there because he got us stuck in that apartment.

I looked, and I was like see this is what happens when you let someone, you didn't want to trust me. Now, they want to call on me. Oh what do I do? My friend almost burned her apartment down because she put a regular [00:48:30] I guess male part of an extension cord onto her washing machine. Oh no her dryer.

Jamie Lopez: She did it herself.

Kim Spicer: Yeah. She was like, "I almost burned my apartment down." I'm like, "Yeah, first of all you're supposed to have an electrician do that and you had the wrong cord, it was the wrong one." She was like, "What am I supposed to do?" I was like, "Ask an electrician because I'm not going to have you do it yourself and then you kill yourself and your son." So yeah, yeah little things like that. Tell mom to stop, I'm putting in a ceiling an, don't [00:49:00] touch anything mom. Okay, let me turn off the breakers and mom is tinkering. I'm like, "Mom, I told you not to touch anything." She's handy too, but she figured I'm just gonna ... "No mom, please just let me do it please."

Setare Arashloo: Can you tell us a little about Electchester? How do you like living there, when did you move there? Tell us a little about [crosstalk 00:49:21].

Kim Spicer: I actually like Electchester. I guess I got lucky to live in fourth housing. I'm in the back by the tower source, really quiet. [00:49:30] The birds and everything. I'm in a ... No one plays loud music, it's just I don't know I'm in the perfect building, I'm in a lovely building I love it. I really do. You hear stories. When I was a first year apprentice, I put in, I heard about Electchester I put in. They actually offered me an apartment, but I got offered an apartment in Manhattan so I'm like I going to take this and live there, but once I had my daughter I'm like I can't live in a studio with a child. Me and her and her dad, I was like I'm going to move to Electchester and I'm glad that I did. [00:50:00] It's convenient, the hall is there, I can make meetings or club meetings. I was never able to, I hated going to the hall. I knew nothing about Queens, I disliked Queens. Nothing adds up, the streets, court, lane, road, ave it's like the same number you get confused.

Jamie Lopez: I can get confused; I think Queens is an amazing place.

Kim Spicer: Oh no, I'm from Brooklyn, no. Manhattan the numbers go up and they go across. It's like Queens I'm like everything is like I'm on Google like GPS everything. [00:50:30] Even if I know where I'm going I GPS it because I can't. Now I appreciate it because there's wildlife. I see snails, you don't see snails in Brooklyn, you don't see blue jays. I saw a cardinal, I was out of my mind when I saw the cardinal. I'm like, "It really looks like the bird on the team." Oh my gosh. The snail really blew my mind because it was really tiny and it was dark out. I was taking my daughter to the babysitter and it was like this is the step, it was on the side of the step. How did I see that? [00:51:00] I don't know, but when I came back out I was taking all these pictures of it so I could put it online. I saw the tiniest snail, it was so bizarre.

Jamie Lopez: Was it you that posted a picture of a hawk?

Kim Spicer: Yes, it was on my fire escape last week. Insane and it stayed there for about three or four hours. I'm like is this thing going to leave. I'm like I hope it's there when my daughter gets back. I didn't even take her outside, I was like, "Come upstairs, look, look, look." I showed it to her. I put her in the kitchen window and she's looking at it and she was like, "Why does it ..." I was like, "It's looking for food. Do you hear any birds, do you see any squirrels?" She's like, "No." I'm like, "Because they know, [00:51:30] they put out the word." I saw squirrels do that before when the cat was outside and you hear the squirrels talk to each other and they stay up in the trees. I did not hear anything the whole time the bird was there, nothing it was just there looking for food. It was wild. I appreciate it now.

Jamie Lopez: Yeah, now it's a beautiful thing for you.

Kim Spicer: Yes.

Jamie Lopez: In the future do you think your children or members of your community will do the same kind of [00:52:00] work that you're doing?

Kim Spicer: My daughter, yes. I show her everything that I do and she's pretty handy too, she wants to get in there and do everything. There's certain things I'll do with her and certain things I won't. Anything that's a power tool, unless it's a drill I'll do that around her, but a bandsaw, saws or any of the articulating blades or anything that spins around and chops through anything, no. She will try to use it.

I can see her, we do [00:52:30] a lot of I think it was the wellness club. We planted bulbs for tulips and flowers for a school in Brooklyn and her and my niece and nephew they got in there and I just showed them in there. Everyone thinks that I have three kids, I only have one, but they're always there so I just show them everything. If there's something that's Local Three and the kids can come I take them there to show them what's going on, what's happening. I got my niece and nephew in Little League with my daughter. [00:53:00] That's another thing about Electchester, she's in Little League. They have karate there and it's all free. The karate there, the dojo is free. She's going to be six soon. Yeah I'll send it in because I used to have her go into one that I was paying for because I wanted to do MMA, but yeah, I do.

Jamie Lopez: You still do.

Kim Spicer: Yes.

Jamie Lopez: We have a few more minutes. I want to know some of those pictures, you have some pictures there and I wanted [00:53:30] to know what you thought about some of those pictures, if you could reflect off of some of those pictures. And if you have anything to ask that's burning.

Kim Spicer: Oh wow, the time went fast too, I talk too much.

Jamie Lopez: No it's good.

Setare Arashloo: What advice would you give someone to start to become an electrician?

Kim Spicer: Well, I would tell them [00:54:00] definitely go to school. Try not to miss too many days because it's important. It really looks bad on you. Be careful. Watch your environment. Try not to spend beyond your means. That was one good thing that I learned at New, when they had an MIJ come in and speak, she said, "Don't live beyond your paycheck." When you get there and you see the guys that they'll do anything to stay employed even if it's dangerous, [00:54:30] don't risk your life for the foreman or for the shop because when you get hurt there will be another person right behind, you're just another number. You get hurt someone else is going to be right there and they're going to forget about you while you're laid up in the hospital or dead.

Just be careful, be safe. That was one thing, pay attention look where you're going until you get the hang of it. Don't put your hands in your pockets, but now I'm like if it's cold my hands are in my pocket, but I know when to put [00:55:00] my hands in my pocket and when not to. If you got to catch yourself if you fall.

Jamie Lopez: So you have this picture up on your computer. Could you describe the photo and tell us what's going on?

Kim Spicer: Yeah, these are 350's, the wire gauge. I thought it was bigger, but I see it's only 350. I was pulling, yes I believe I was pulling, yeah because it's bent. I was pulling the wire and I [00:55:30] think this was the year the upstairs pull and they kept telling me you're not supposed to straddle a ladder, but it's comfortable for me and I can really balance myself and hold on better than leaning against it, so I always straddle a ladder and I'm like take a picture of me. I was like this is pretty cool. I take the picture and then I got back to pulling. They were just like, "Kim pull." I'm like what the hell, I'm down here by myself and you guys are up there and I'm pulling this wire, but it was fun. That was a good job. [00:56:00] I really like that job. I pulled that wire.

As you can tell I was brand new because I had on the wrong gloves. Those gloves were completely useless. I had on a pink hard hat. Never again, they can spot you anywhere with that thing so now I just try to blend in. I wear nice like a vintage rose, that's what they call it or a plum Carhartt to work, but if I'm at work, I'm blending in with the guys. I have on either a black or the regular Carhartt color. I need to blend in, I don't want them to spot me.

Jamie Lopez: [00:56:30] Low key undercover.

Kim Spicer: Yes. Yes. Yes.

Setare Arashloo: Do you ever customize your tool?

Kim Spicer: Yes, two Christmases ago, because they never know what to buy me, I told my sister to buy me an engraver. I engrave all my Klein tools, because we for the most part all use Klein tools so I engrave all my tools. I got lucky and went into an Ace Hardware and saw a pink hammer and it was a real hammer. Bought that. This way because people like to

walk off with your tools. So I [00:57:00] have strippers, there was a lock on it, but constantly I customize that by cutting that off. There's just certain things you have to make work for you.

Jamie Lopez: Do you have any other images that you really like?

Kim Spicer: Oh gosh, this one was fun because I was second year and I was able to work by myself and put the sconces in, but I ended up blowing up my strippers because I was distracted by a shop steward [00:57:30] that was telling me about his divorce and what his wife was doing to him. And then when I blew it up he was like, "How did you do that?" I was like, "If you would shut up and let me pay attention to what I'm doing and work I wouldn't have blown this up." He's become a great friend of mine. I love this guy to death, he's a good shop steward.

This was a nightmare. I was working with Wellsback and I had to crawl. It was tall at first, but then it got small.

Jamie Lopez: Who took that picture of you?

Kim Spicer: This other guy John my partner. I was like you got to get a picture of this. I came home looking like a miner. [00:58:00] I was covered. Like this dirt is unnecessary.

Jamie Lopez: Do you say that often? You got to get a picture of this, you say that often?

Kim Spicer: Yes, I need a picture of this. It was an ab workout. When I was done from top to bottom it hurt. I was just like oh my gosh because you were practically doing the warm to get underneath there and inch your body under there and I'm like I'm going to die. This is at Moynihan station. I'm like there's going to [00:58:30] be somebody down here living. They're like, "Oh no one's down here." Then I saw a Jordan and I'm like okay there's a Jordan sneaker down here, somebody's living down here.

That was a trip. They said, "Oh it's only 100 feet." It was more than 100 feet. It might have been a thousand. I couldn't believe how far that thing went and then when the foreman came he was like, "Oh yeah it's pretty long." I'm like, "Jose, are you kidding me? Are [00:59:00] you serious right now bro?" Then he's like, but you got it done right. I was like I will never ever listen to you again for anything.

Jamie Lopez: That was an apprentice, right?

Kim Spicer: No I was a journey woman. That's why I did it because if I was an apprentice I would have been like no, I don't feel safe. Yeah, no I did this as a journey person. Where was I at here? Oh yeah, when I started wearing these I was with ... This is that ceiling I was talking about. This is nothing I should have took a better picture. You can't [00:59:30] even see this, but the bends are insane. I had to climb up there. I'm not a lightweight. And I'm up there on a Chicago bar and everything like a trapeze artist and I never bled so much on a job in my life. I was getting cut. They finally held up, but just slices

everywhere. We were walking around with bandaids. The good thing was that my apprentice was an EMT.

Jamie Lopez: He would stitch [01:00:00] you up.

Kim Spicer: If I needed stitches he would have been there. He was pretty good. That job, that was at the Oculus.

Jamie Lopez: It's nice that you have been able to document your photos and yourself in them as well.

Kim Spicer: Yeah, it's a nightmare.

Jamie Lopez: I'm going to ask you to share some of these.

Kim Spicer: That's when I was pregnant.

Jamie Lopez: Oh my goodness.

Kim Spicer: Some of these I was supposed to take out, I was supposed to take some out for you. I was eating a cannoli. That's another thing you end up on these jobs, these Italian [01:00:30] foreman they're like try this, and I'm like I don't like cheese and I try one I was like wow this is good so now I'm putting them away.

Jamie Lopez: Tell us about this shirt.

Kim Spicer: All right, these shirts I had an old timer. He was like you got to wear Hawaiian shirt. I was like, "why?" Because I've heard about Hawaiian Fridays. I'm not wearing a Hawaiian shirt, but then when I realized how hot it was I'm like okay on Fridays I'm wearing the Hawaiian shirt because Fridays are for the men and everyone wears their Hawaiian shirt. So I went on [01:01:00] Amazon and got me a bunch of Hawaiian shirts and thank goodness because as you can see I'm glistening here. It was very hot and I wasn't even in that crawl space and I'm sweating right there. All I was doing was using a magnetic drill to drill through steel and it takes forever and you're putting this little tube of oil on it and I'm just sitting there sweating. There's no exertion whatsoever, but I'm sweating just doing that and all I'm doing is turning something. That's the tube of whatever that stuff is.

Jamie Lopez: Hawaiian shirt Fridays has been a-

Kim Spicer: That's a tradition. [01:01:30] Yeah I forgot about that, yeah.

Jamie Lopez: That's a tradition of Local Three. I guess it depends on who you're with. It could be something really engaging together unifying or it could be very distracting as well sometimes. Like sometimes people will be like oh look he's wearing Hawaiian shirt or she's wearing Hawaiian shirt they're probably not going to do too much work today.

Kim Spicer: That too, yeah.

Jamie Lopez: I think it's you know that it has-

Kim Spicer: But they think you're going, yeah.

Jamie Lopez: Or it depends really on the crew on how unifying, how beautiful that moment can be from my experience.

Kim Spicer: [01:02:00] Yes. It is. There's one, I wish I knew where the picture was. I have on a shirt, I have a bunch of them and I had on a red and white one and when I left the Oculus and they sent me to the projects, my friend Luz who I knew from when I was a first year, she said, "We're in this [inaudible 01:02:14]." Everybody that was there had on the same color shirt. She sends it to me and I was like, "I got it on too." It was so funny and a weird coincidence that they had on the same shirt that I had on and they had it because I used to wear them. Yeah because I was there.

Jamie Lopez: And [01:02:30] they missed you.

Kim Spicer: Yeah, it was really cool. Really cool moment.

Jamie Lopez: Please share these photos with us and share them with the archives.

Kim Spicer: I will, I'll send you ... Not the multiples.

Jamie Lopez: Share us your favorites.

Kim Spicer: Yes, because yeah.

Jamie Lopez: Make a really thing. Is there anything else that you want to add to this or anything you want to ask us? While you're thinking about it, actually one more question.

Kim Spicer: Okay.

Jamie Lopez: What inspires you?

Kim Spicer: [01:03:00] Inspires me, I don't know. I like to build and create things so I get inspired like maybe one of these days I'm going to do something really cool like today make something work. I love a challenge. Even though the three-way was a pain I like puzzles. I'm a puzzle person, video games everything. I love a challenge, so even though it was a pain because it should have been where it was at, the challenge would have been just getting it to work, but [01:03:30] now you got to trouble shoot. Just doing that sort of work. Just coming in, getting it done and you know just feeling proud in what you do. Sorry. Oh it's Barry.

Jamie Lopez: Hello Ms. Barrie Cline how are you?

Kim Spicer: Hi.

Speaker 4: [inaudible 01:03:50]

Jamie Lopez: Yeah, actually we're just finishing up. She was just expressing her inspirations.

Kim Spicer: Hi. Good.

Speaker 4: That's good. Good to see you.

Kim Spicer: You [01:04:00] too.

Jamie Lopez: Before we shut this of, do you have anything else?

Kim Spicer: Nothing that I can think of.

Jamie Lopez: Good, that's good. Thank you so much.

Kim Spicer: Thank you. I didn't realize we talked that long oh my gosh.

How did we do?



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