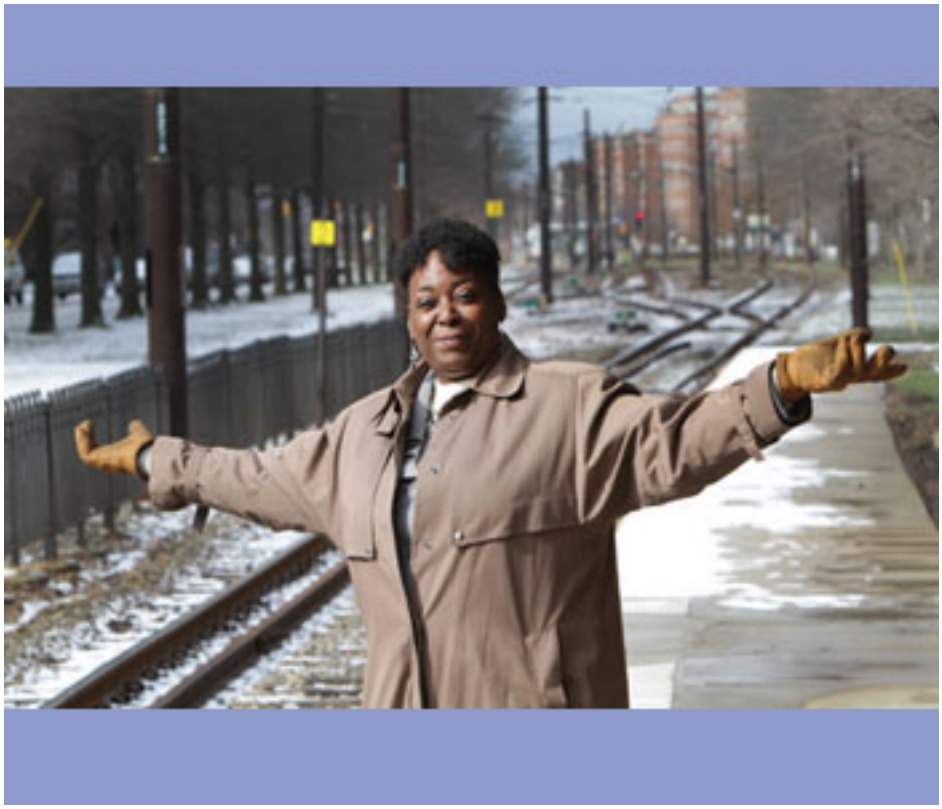

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People making history

By RHONDA CROWDER
Staff Reporter

Last month, just past the turn of the New Year, Angela Summers fulfilled her dream becoming a line maintainer for Regional Transit Authority (RTA) – a position she sought since signing on

with the company a little over three years ago.

But, little did she know, she also made history as organization's first female electrician.

"I knew [RTA] promote quicker from within," said Summers, who started working with them as a part-time Paratransit driver in May 2009. She went on to say, she's always been interested in mechanics and wanted to go into robotics as a child. "I used Paratransit as a stepping stone."

Prior to coming to RTA, Summers served in the U.S. Military where she received a diesel mechanic certification and worked in the transportation industry, owning and operating her own trucking company. However, the Sept. 11, 2001 tragedy put her on another path.

Then, after being laid off from DHL, she decided to go back to school. She attended Vatterott College and was the only female in the class. With her eyes set on becoming an electrician, she made the Dean's List seven times.

She also was the first female maintenance worker for Cuyahoga National Park.

"When you tell me I can't do something cause I'm a woman, that's the wrong thing to do. I'm on it," said Summers. Her presence and the responsibility that comes along with handling overhead power, along the Shaker Rapid line, prove her point.

"I see this as a job I'll work until I retire. Of course, I'll look for other opportunities to excel but I'm not leaving this department," said Summers. "I'm just happy, very, very happy. I went for it with all adversity and I got it!"

She encourages young woman to consider careers in electrical work and advises them to get certified and learn everything. She warns against arrogance. "You have to pay attention and don't be too familiar. It could cost you your life," she said.