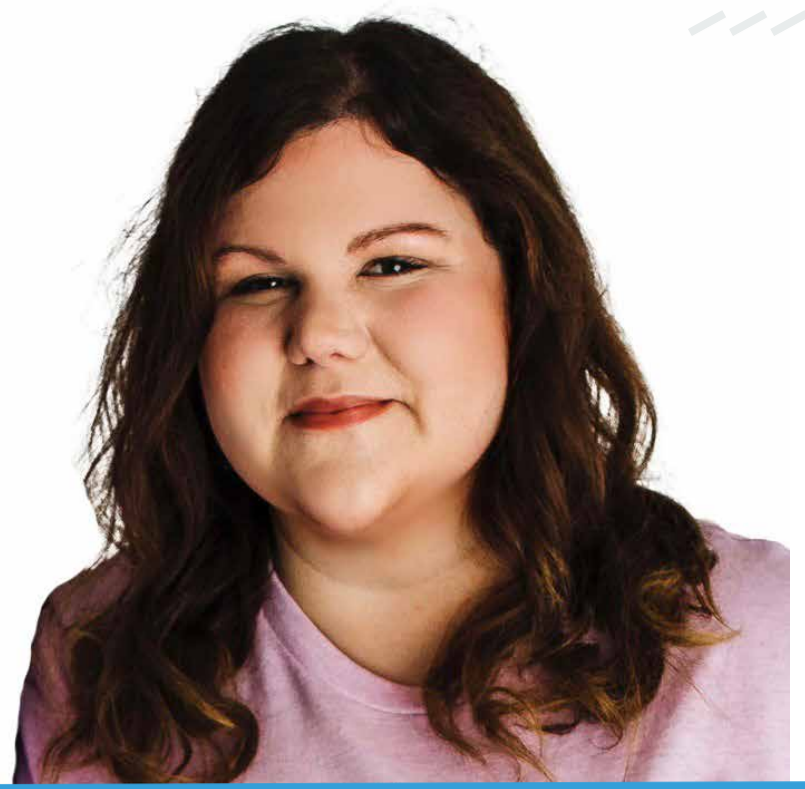


2023 Women's History Month



Shandi Berridge
Claims Administrator
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■ What is your role at Engle Martin?

I was initially hired by Engle Martin as a temporary team member assisting in the Transcription Department. It took me no time at all to realize that Engle Martin was the company I wished to retire from someday, and I made it very known. I was presented with the news of an opening for a role as one of the National Casualty Practice claims administrators. My love of learning, paired with the belief my manager and the company had in me, resulted in the opportunity to stay as a permanent team member. I began my temporary position on July 25, 2022, and began my administrative position on November 14, 2022.

■ Who is the most influential woman you know? How does she inspire you?

Although it may sound cliché, my mother, and fellow Engle Martin team member, is the most influential woman I know. From the time I was 13, we grew up in a household of women. However, even before it was just us girls, she was the "breadwinner." She excelled in her role as our mother as well as with her career goals. She, and she alone, was enough. She made me feel as though women were, in many ways, invincible, and at the very least, resilient.

With her shared love of learning, and lots of charisma, she took on some professional roles that began with little experience, but with the necessary confidence and the expectation to never settle. Being the eldest daughter, I saw the climb over the years. It was not absent of struggle, but it was evidence of how far you can go as long as you persevere.

■ This year, the theme of Women's History Month is "Celebrating Women Who Tell Our Stories". How does that resonate with you?

It has not been that many years since women were integrated into the workforce. Although substantial progress has been made, there has been an ongoing process of breaking stigmas that suggest the types of careers women are "fit" for. I feel that for many women, myself included, hearing the stories of women who have taken initiative and who have made strides are stories that act not only as motivation, but as examples. Success becomes perceivable and, in turn, an attainable outcome.

■ Have you faced any barriers in your career?

In my experience to this point, I have witnessed wage gap. This was during my time in retail, and I was making less than some of my male coworkers with similar experience, time within the company, and job position(s). In this instance, it seemed that deciding to work elsewhere would provide the best solution. I would rather be seen as able than "accommodated." There is more value in personal worth.

■ What is the most important piece of advice you have been given?

Music speaks to me. Although the entirety of the songs' lyrics may not hold relevance, I cannot begin to express the amount of encouraging lyrical lines that come to mind with this question. "When the going gets tough, the tough get going," and, "If at first you don't succeed, then dust yourself off and try again," were the first among many. The message from both provides like advice. In the simplest of terms, never give up. All that we wish to achieve in life rarely comes easily, but there is reward in the process of trial and error, taking form as our accomplishments.



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■ What is the most important message you want to send out to young women thinking about a career in the insurance industry?

You were not meant to conform to expired social ideals and gender-based constraints. That corporate ladder does not stop in a secretarial position. You can be a leader. At Engle Martin, there is not a single role fulfilled solely by men. Women are adjusters, admins, supervisors, managers, and vice presidents overseeing all of the aforementioned roles.