



# IAN J. WILLIAMS

AGMT CERTIFIED GLAZIER

## SPOTLIGHT

### On Ian Williams:

**Title** Glazier with GMI Contractors, Inc. (Bristol, Pa.)

**Hometown** Pilesgrove, N.J.

**Family** Wife Nicole; sons Antonio (22), Justin (19), and Trystin (15),  
and daughter Alivia (13)

**Favorite Sports Team** Tennessee Titans



### ABOUT IAN

Ian Williams' story proves that glazing can often smooth a rough career start. He grew up dividing his time between his mother's home in Georgia and his father's in Paulsboro, N.J. He never felt like school was a good fit. Instead of graduating high school, Ian earned a GED. Then, he worked with his dad as a subcontractor installing cable for Comcast. When he had his first child at 19, Ian realized that he needed more direction.

"I was a young kid, but I knew I wanted a career, something to look forward to," he recalls. Luckily, his father-in-law, retired

Local Union 252 glazier Bill Laag, offered career direction, encouraging Ian to pursue glazing. Bill, foreman Tim McCarthy, and Terry Graboyes wrote letters of recommendation, and after working for two years in the Graboyes shop, Ian began his apprenticeship in September 2006 at age 26.

"My father-in-law put me on the right path but said everything else was up to me," Ian describes. Ian has lived up to the endorsement and risen to become a leading glazier with GMI Contractors, Inc.

### LEADERSHIP ROLE

"I'm the #2 guy to the foreman," Ian explains. In this role, Ian ensures jobs are set up correctly in the field, confirms everyone on the crew is doing well, and performs glazing work. Butt-glazed all-glass systems are his favorite to install. "I just like working with my hands," he adds. "I could never see myself in any kind of office job. I've got to be outside." Ian jokes that although he's not a fan of winter, he'd much rather be out working in the cold than sitting in a chair all day.



*Ian on the job at the Rittenhouse Hotel in Philadelphia, Pa.*



*Left to right: Ian and Nicole; Trystin, Justin, Ian, and Antonio having fun at the movies; Alivia, Winter, and Ian; Ian displaying his catch of the day*

## LEARNING BY DOING

As a third-year apprentice, Ian had the opportunity to work on the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia. The project involved an expansive glazing scope of work – everything from skylights and vestibules to curtainwall and storefront to bathroom mirrors. Ian gained exposure to nearly all the systems in a glazier’s purview. He credits this memorable learning experience for shaping his abilities to this day.

## AMASSING CREDENTIALS

Ian recently proved his glazing skills by earning the Architectural Glass & Metal Technician (AGMT) certification. Through a rigorous combination of written and hands-on testing, Ian joined the ranks of 133 other LU252 certified glaziers – the largest concentration of AGMT certified craftworkers in North America. Ian admits that every time the union offers a certification class, he takes it – amassing credentials for welding, first aid, CPR, and high reach operation, among others. In fact, he even earned a college diploma. “I never in my life dreamed I would get anything from college, but when the union offered it, I got my associate degree,” Ian states.

## FAMILY PRIDE

Family motivated Ian to seek a career in glazing and supporting them is a driving force. Ian has been with his wife Nicole for 19 years and recently marked his 14th wedding anniversary. His oldest son Antonio is a 22-year-old engineering student at Rowan University. His 19-year-old son Justin welcomed baby daughter Winter – the family’s first grandchild – earlier this year. Son Trystin is a 15-year-old high school student who enjoys video games. The youngest child is daughter Alivia, aged 13.

## TIME FOR FUN

Whenever he’s not at work or with his family, Ian takes his kayak and goes freshwater fishing. He lives within 15 minutes of seven different lakes and has explored them all. His bucket list includes fishing someplace exotic, but he enjoys any time he can get out on the water. Ian’s also a fan of Japanese anime (Naruto is his favorite), and has followed the Tennessee Titans from the time they were the Houston Oilers. The team might seem an odd choice for someone who grew up mostly in the Philadelphia area, but Ian explained that when he played midget football in Paulsboro, his team was also the Oilers. Rooting for the NFL Oilers seemed natural, and he has “stuck with them through thick or thin” as they moved and rebranded in Tennessee.

## INSPIRATION & MOTIVATION

Ian speaks with pride about the LU252 glaziers who have shaped his career. He says Northeast & Central PA Glazing Coordinator Mike Metz inspired him to come to class and learn. “If I had teachers like him in high school, I would have done better.” He calls Greenwich Glass President Burt Dameika one of the best bosses he’s ever had, for Burt’s willingness to do anything he can to make his crew’s day better. “He runs a good job and always looked out for us.” Ian also speaks with pride about his fellow apprentices who have advanced in their careers to roles with the Finishing Trades Institute and the IUPAT.

“There are so many opportunities in glazing that can move you further,” Ian says. “If you’re ready for a career that you can make a great living at, if you like working with your hands and being outside, it’s a career that can take you places.”