



Skills Ontario builds comprehension, support, and opportunity in trades and tech for young women

For immediate release

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Ontario – Skills Ontario and its partners are hosting Young Women’s Career Exploration Events at locations across Ontario that bring information, mentorship, and opportunity together, ultimately making the connection to successful career opportunities in the skilled trades and technology sectors and debunking existing myths and stereotypes about who belongs in what trades.

The underrepresentation of women in the skilled trades and technologies professions continues, with under 14% of registered apprentices being female, according to a 2015 Statistics Canada survey. Skills Ontario seeks to change misconceptions about the skilled trades being gruelling, low-paying, and generally unsuitable to female workers. The education and mentorship piece of the Career Exploration Events helps make it easier for young women to see themselves in similarly rewarding career.

"Women are equally suited to working in trades as men. We need to learn about all the options in the trades and hear success stories from female tradespeople, raising awareness for all," says Jennifer Green, Manager of Youth Outreach at Skills Ontario. "Job openings in the trades are growing at a time where overall employment opportunities are scarce, so getting women thinking about themselves in the trades is important for the Canadian economy and for redefining gender roles." Over 12,500 female students have attended one of the Skills Ontario Career Exploration Events in the last decade, and 93% of students say they are more likely to investigate a career in the skilled trades and technologies after attending.

Skills Ontario Career Exploration Events engage industry and college partners, small businesses, school boards, and students to connect education, experience, and employment. Magna International and Hydro One provide significant contributions to Skills Ontario's Young Women’s Initiatives throughout the year. Skills Ontario is working toward building an economically vibrant Ontario, while encouraging the next generation of workers to discover empowerment through the skilled trades and technologies.

Regional sponsors also support the events with financial and in-kind support. Skills Ontario thanks the following Leading Sponsors for their support of their local Career Exploration Event: Northern College (Timmins); Niagara College (Welland); Local 1669 Carpenters Union (Thunder Bay); Rendezvous Hotel (Fort Frances); Unifor (Port Elgin); Linamar (Guelph); Loyalist College (Belleville); Algonquin College (Ottawa); Durham College (Whitby); Sault College (Sault Ste. Marie); Sheridan College (Brampton); Cambrian College (Sudbury); and Canadore College (North Bay).

About Skills Ontario – Promoting skilled trades and technologies in Ontario since 1989

Over the last 30 years, Skills Ontario has been growing a portfolio of programs including in-school presentations reaching 125,000 students across Ontario, career exploration summer camps, Young Women’s and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Career Exploration Conferences, and hosting Canada’s largest skills competition which annually attracts 35,000+ spectators who cheerlead the 2,400+ competitors in 68+ trades and tech categories.