

## Skills Ontario and partners build momentum for young women in trades and tech

Skills Ontario Young Women's Initiatives connect education, hands-on experience, and mentorship for female students in grades 7 to 12

**March 8, 2018 Ontario** – Today marks International Women's Day, and Skills Ontario is proud to be a part of the movement for increased labour force participation, skill development, and equality for women both inside and outside of the workplace.

Throughout the year, Skills Ontario and its partners host [Young Women's Career Exploration Events](#) at locations across Ontario that bring education, hands-on experience, and mentorship together, ultimately making the connection to successful career opportunities in the skilled trades and technology sectors. This event series culminates in the Young Women's Conferences at the Skills Ontario Conference, May 7-8, 2018 at the Toronto Congress Centre. The Skills Ontario Young Women's Conferences are the largest young women's conferences in Canada, attracting over 2,000 young women from across Ontario to attend.

The underrepresentation of women in skilled trade and technology 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 dirty, low-paying, and generally unsuitable to female workers. The education and mentorship piece of the Career Exploration Events and Young Women's Conferences helps make it easier for young women to see themselves in a similarly rewarding career.

"Young women need to know that the trades and technologies offer many opportunities that can lead to bright, stable and successful futures," says Ian Howcroft, CEO of Skills Ontario. "Skills Ontario looks forward to continuing to work with our partners from government, industry, and education to increase the momentum for gender equality, and a strong and diverse workforce."

Skills Ontario Career Exploration Events and Young Women's Conferences engage industry and college partners, small businesses, school boards, and students to connect education, experience, and employment. The Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development, Hydro One, and Magna International provide significant contributions to Skills Ontario Young Women's Initiatives throughout the year. Regional sponsors also support the events with financial and in-kind support.

### About Skills Ontario

Skills Ontario is building Ontario's skilled trades and technologies workforce. We enable and empower all youth, including women and Aboriginal youth, to consider a career in the skilled trades and technologies. Engagement with students, teachers, parents, volunteers, employers and mentors ensure our programs connect education, experience, and employment. We deliver in-school presentations across Ontario, host Canada's largest skills competition, run summer camps for skills development and connect students to employers. We are focused on growth sectors such as construction and infrastructure, technology innovation, and hospitality services.

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#### Associated Links

[VIDEO: Skills Ontario Young Women's Initiatives](#)  
[Skills Ontario Online Media Kit](#)  
[Skills Ontario Recent Media Highlights](#)

#### Media contact

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