

Skills Ontario celebrates International Women's Day, emphasizes mission to encourage young women to explore skilled trade and tech careers

Young Women's Initiatives continue to bring information, mentorship, and opportunity together

March 8 2019, 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 Competition, May 6-8, 2019 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.

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 Government of Ontario, 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.

Quotes

"Opportunities for women in trades and tech are limitless. We need to learn more about all the career options and hear success stories from female tradespeople, raising awareness for all," says Jennifer Green, Director of Competitions and Young Women's Initiatives 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."

"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."

Associated Link

[VIDEO: Skills Ontario Young Women's Initiatives](#)

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.

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