

## MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Distribution



# Skills Ontario celebrates International Women's Day, continues to empower young women to pursue skilled trade and tech careers

**Ontario (March 6, 2020)** – This Sunday marks International Women's Day, and Skills Ontario is proud to continue to support the movement for equality for women both inside and outside of the workplace. As an organization that promotes the pursuit of careers in skilled trades and technologies to youth, Skills Ontario recognizes the importance of diversity in these fields and is thrilled to continue inspiring and encouraging young women to explore the rewarding opportunities in the skilled professions.

Through its Young Women's Initiatives, Skills Ontario and its partners host Young Women's Career Exploration Events across the province that bring education, experiential learning, and mentorship together, making the connection to successful career opportunities in the skilled trades and technology sectors. This event series culminates in the Young Women's Conferences on May 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> 2020 at the Skills Ontario Competition 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.

"Throughout the year, Skills Ontario shares the key message that the skilled trades and technologies are suitable for all," says Ian Howcroft, CEO of Skills Ontario. "By redefining gender roles and connecting young women to inspiring female skilled professionals, we work towards debunking misconceptions about the skilled professions being unsuitable to women. With our Young Women's Initiatives, Skills Ontario empowers young women to explore their career paths, as an inclusive workforce is a strong workforce."

In the last five years, Skills Ontario's Young Women's Initiatives have engaged over 15,600 female students, and 93% of young women surveyed have said that they are more likely to investigate a career in the skilled trades and technologies after attending a Career Exploration Event.

Skills Ontario's Young Women's Initiatives engage industry and college partners, small businesses, school boards, and students to support young women pursuing careers in the skilled trades and technologies. The Government of Ontario, Hydro One, and Magna International provide significant contributions to Skills Ontario's Young Women's Initiatives throughout the year. Regional sponsors also support the events with financial and in-kind support.

Skills Ontario looks forward to continuing to work with partners to increase the momentum for gender equality, and a strong and diverse workforce. For more information on Skills Ontario's Young Women's Initiatives, visit [skillsontario.com/young-womens-initiatives](https://skillsontario.com/young-womens-initiatives).

## 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 annually hosting Canada's largest skills competition which attracts 37,000+ spectators who cheerlead the 2,400+ competitors in 68+ trades and tech categories. To see how you can partner with Skills Ontario and help make a difference in the lives of Ontario's youth, visit [skillsontario.com/get-involved](https://skillsontario.com/get-involved).

### Media Contacts:

**Emina Jakupović**  
Manager of Communications  
519 749 9899 x 221  
[ejakupovic@skillsontario.com](mailto:ejakupovic@skillsontario.com)

**Ian Howcroft**  
Chief Executive Officer  
519 749 9899 x 229  
[ihowcroft@skillsontario.com](mailto:ihowcroft@skillsontario.com)