

Union Gas helps young women in Ontario explore skilled careers

WATERLOO, ON, May 1, 2012, for immediate release - Union Gas is helping more than 300 young women explore careers in skilled trades and technology through a \$7,000 grant to a Skills Canada-Ontario program that allows girls to interact with female mentors in those fields.

The annual Skills Canada-Ontario Young Women's Conferences are held in conjunction with the Ontario Technological Skills Competition. Both are part of the not-for-profit's lineup of programming to encourage Ontario youth to consider careers in the skilled trades and technologies industries, which suffer from skilled worker shortages. The conferences are geared specifically to female senior elementary and secondary students, because girls don't regularly consider pursuing careers in the motive power, technology, industrial, and construction sectors.

Gail Smyth, executive director of Skills Canada-Ontario, says that without the support of partners like Union Gas, it would be difficult for her organization to provide popular programs like the Young Women's Conferences. "Industries recognize the need to promote these rewarding careers to all segments of our population, to ensure a stable economy and their own future as well," says Smyth. "Working with Union Gas is a great fit for us and we're thrilled to be able to parlay their support into continued quality programming that truly makes a difference."

Started in 2002, the Young Women's Conferences feature female tradespeople, who share their career experiences with the more than 300 girls in attendance. The day also includes hands-on activities, networking opportunities, and a tour of the Ontario Technological Skills Competition and its Career Exploration Showcase.

"The statistics tell us that many young women are not considering careers in the skilled trades and technology," said Murray Costello, Union Gas' district manager for Waterloo/Brantford. "We believe that supporting the Skills Canada-Ontario's Young Women's Conferences will help change that, by giving girls the opportunity to be inspired by women already working in these exciting fields. It's one way we are investing today to ensure a brighter tomorrow, for our sector, for the communities we serve, and for the entire province."

Skills Canada – Ontario is a not-for-profit organization that promotes careers in the skilled trades and technologies to young people in Ontario through a variety of competitions, programs and events. .
www.skillsontario.com