

THE VOICE

*OF WOMEN IN MECHANICAL CONSTRUCTION
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER*



ATTRACTING, RETAINING, AND MENTORING ARE ESSENTIAL FOR WOMEN IN THIS INDUSTRY!

In our Summer newsletter, we are highlighting the importance of attracting and retaining female talent as well as mentoring women in the construction industry. Diversity should be a priority for construction firms at all levels, not just during the hiring process.

Employers can do more to attract and retain women by partnering with women-oriented organizations, offering mentoring programs, and providing equal wages, flexible benefits, and professional development opportunities.

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WOMEN WHO ARE POSITIVELY IMPACTING THE INDUSTRY

Bringing attention to women in the industry who are making a positive contribution to the industry was our goal when brainstorming topics for 'The Voice of Women in Mechanical Construction' summer issue.

WiMC Committee Member, Jason Campbell (Aecon Industrial) brought to light, & connected us with Alanna Marklund, Special Representative for Youth, Diversity and Indigenous Relations – United Association - Canada. We spoke with Alanna about her journey into the industry and her accomplishments, and also asked her a few questions about the value of attracting, retaining, and mentoring women in the trades.

Alanna's role works to expand opportunities in the UA for underrepresented groups entering the trades. She collaborates with the UA Canada training department to develop curriculum designed to improve awareness and educate on the needs of a diverse and inclusive workforce.

Additionally, she works with various programs to encourage the retention of skilled trades workers and underrepresented groups, as well as initiatives that encourage youth of all backgrounds to enter the piping trades.



Alanna Marklund, Special Representative for Youth, Diversity and Indigenous Relations – United Association - Canada



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After receiving her Journeyperson status with Red-Seal endorsement and Alberta certified Grade-B Pressure Welding certification, Alanna Marklund started her career at Alberta Pipe Trades College as welding instructor where she delivered various welding curricula to apprenticeship students. Prior to this, Alanna began her career with the United Association in 2012 and Local 488 in Edmonton AB.



QUESTION:

What can we do to attract more women into the trades?

Alanna: Awareness is key. Skilled trades are not second choice careers, but ones that you can be incredibly proud of. For women, it's about bringing awareness to these incredible careers, and letting them know there is unlimited potential in this industry. Not only do we need to let women know this is an option, we must actively show it by giving women an opportunity to show their capability. These are great careers for women. They bring independence, great wages, health and welfare benefits, and honestly, working in the skilled trades is fun! We need to change the narrative that careers in the trades are dirty work, unskilled, and only for those who don't attend college or university.

The reality here, is that skilled trades require talent, knowledge, mechanical thinking, determination, and it isn't always about working outside in the elements. These are rewarding careers with the opportunity to be incredibly successful. In order to attract more women into the skilled trades - we need to show them how worthwhile it can be. With an apprenticeship you earn while you learn, receiving a good wage while obtaining an education.



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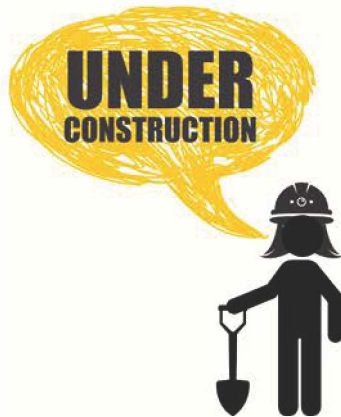
Not only is the apprenticeship system set up to earn while you learn, but there are also a large number of bursaries and grants available to women who enter a male-dominated Red-Seal trade.

The more women that know about the opportunity, the more we may see pursue this career path. As an industry, we have been making strides to create a workforce that is more inclusive than ever before, and we must keep that momentum going. We need to actively recruit outside of the status quo, because it's the differences we have that help us utilize our strengths. It's about hiring the right person for the right job, regardless of gender identity.

Not only do we need to make sure women are ready for this industry, but we also need to make sure our industry is ready to hire women.

UA Canada has diversity training available for all members, harnessing a culture where discrimination and harassment is not tolerated and it provides education surrounding diversity and respectful workplaces. In order to recruit successfully, we have to ensure there is equal focus on the retention of the women as well.





Question: How can the industry retain more women in the trades?

Alanna: To retain women in the skilled trades, we need to address the flexibility of our entire industry. We need to look at the barriers women face, and incorporate ways to better accommodate the upcoming workforce. Childcare is one of these barriers.

We recognize this isn't just a woman's or a mother's issue, however, women in the workforce are disproportionately affected by the duties of caring for children. When both parents enter the workforce, childcare can create a barrier for everyone. With many childcare centers unable to accommodate tradespersons hours, it can be difficult to secure work and accessible childcare at the same time.

As an industry, we have plenty of options to help alleviate some of these childcare issues. From collective agreement clauses that account for work/life balance, flex time hours, or job sharing, we can all do our part as industry to help accommodate more women coming into the skilled trades. For more information about the childcare barriers and solutions for skilled tradespeople and our industries, please visit: Supporting Working Parents www.supportingworkingparents.ca

Another retention and recruitment piece that's important for women, and parents of young children is having supports in place to help them when they are extending their family. For example, as women looking at career options, we sometimes think about how our careers might influence our choice to have children or not, and this may deter a woman from entering the skilled trades.



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To help change this, UA Canada has incorporated a National Wellness Program that is a first of its kind in the unionized construction industry in Canada. We offer pregnancy leave benefits to women who may have to work in an environment that is harmful to either her or the unborn child. As well, this plan includes parental and maternity leave top-up for parents (mother, father or adoptive) that are collecting Federal EI parental and maternity leave.

This demonstrates that UA Canada is supportive of parents who choose to take time to be with their children for the first formative year of their life. It creates a culture where it's accepted and encouraged to take leave to care for your infant. For more information on the UA Canada National Wellness program, please visit: www.uacanada.ca/wellness

THE TRADES ARE FULL OF WOMEN WHO DESERVE **RECOGNITION**

Alexa is a graduate of NBCC plumbing in June 2022. She came to us as a student for on-the-job training, and we all quickly realized what a great addition she would be to our team. She was willing to take on any task at hand with confidence. Not afraid to ask questions when needed. She won the Skills NB in plumbing 2022, also taking home the Student Excellence Award from NBCC.



In her previous life, she went to university in Texas on a softball scholarship, receiving a Bachelor of Kinesiology and Criminology but quickly realized this wasn't her passion and found her place in the trades.

~ Submitted by Dawn Ermen Cormier of Ermen Plumbing & Heating



WIMC WEBINAR PRESENTED BY AON



Jady Fitton



Rosemary Delicato



Akeem Robin

**LEARNING THE IMPORTANCE OF
INSURANCE FOR WOMEN IN MECHANICAL CONTRACTING
SEPTEMBER 14 @ 1.00 PM E.T**



This FREE 30 min. webinar is hosted by MCA Canada's WiMC Committee & Presented by AON on September 14th. AON representatives Jady Fitton, Rosemary Delicato & Akeem Robin will present an overview of what insurance can do for women working in the mechanical industry.

Their presentation will emphasize the importance of women working in this field & to provide women with information to guide them through the insurance process and ensure that their businesses are protected. These are few of the topics included:

- A breakdown of the insurance coverage options for Mechanical Contractors.
- Tips for saving on your business insurance cost.
- Common claims scenarios that affect mechanical contractors.





INFLUENCING THE **NEXT** **GENERATION** OF WOMEN

WiMC Chair, Julie Zulich and her daughter Andrea Zulich attended the Canadian Mining Expo representing TESC Contracting Company Ltd. Julie has always been an advocate for women in the construction industry especially for mentoring. Here is what Andrea has to say about the event & being in this industry.



"Honoured I was invited, able to attend, and represent TESC Contracting Company Ltd. at this years Canadian Mining Expo! What an amazing learning opportunity, especially being so new in the industry. An even more special opportunity is that I was able to attend this event with and learn from one of the more inspiring people in my life - my mom! Julie Zulich, thank you for showing me the ropes and introducing me to Timmins and the construction world - looking forward for what's to come!"

THANK YOU TO
OUR COMMITTEE
MEMBERS COMPANIES





PROVIDING MENTORSHIP FOR WOMEN **ASPIRING** TO BE TRADESPEOPLE

by Tania Johnston (CEO, MCA Canada)

The WiMC Forum will allow women who work in mechanical construction to seize new opportunities, learn skills and mentor. It's a move that will lead to new professional development programs dedicated to help women build long and productive careers in the industry and help those that come up behind them. Mentoring programs for those just entering the trades or considering a career, are of the utmost importance.



Peer-to-peer mentoring can be vital. It's invaluable to have an industry mentor whose journey is complementary to yours and someone who is invested in your success. The right mentor can energize someone and provide the counsel they need when dealing with work and life balance. Enhanced opportunities and abilities for member companies to attract, develop and retain high-performing women as team members should be a goal of every MCA Canada member. Together, we can make the industry a preferred choice of career for women.

There are not many women working in the trades but it is something that the industry can and will change in the coming years. Year-after-year, women continue to be inadequately represented in the trades. In response to this ongoing trend, the industry is coming together to empower women with training, financial assistance and new opportunities. Like the government, schools are also playing a pivotal role in helping women find and retain jobs in the trades. To help women learn more about the trades and the skills they will require when they are on a job site, schools are offering apprentice training programs at a reduced rate. Course curriculum is being geared specifically to women.



OUR 'VOICE' ON SOCIAL MEDIA



SOCIAL MEDIA STATISTICS (90 DAYS)



LINKEDIN
TOTAL
FOLLOWERS = 456

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/mcac-women-in-mechanical-construction>



INSTAGRAM
TOTAL
FOLLOWERS = 151

<https://www.instagram.com/mcacanada.wimc/>



FACEBOOK
TOTAL
FOLLOWERS = 160

<https://www.facebook.com/WomenInMechanicalConstruction>

In our last issue, MCA Canada's Membership Engagement Coordinator Jessica Shaver discussed the WiMC Initiative's social media strategy, which included adding 'Instagram' as a new platform launched of February 2022. The WiMC Committee has seen a significant increase in followers and engagement across all social media accounts.

We are excited to announce our new quarterly podcast series, which will feature a committee member speaking with some of industry's most influential women. "Podcasts are an accessible way for the WiMC Initiative to connect with our audience on topics of interest pertaining to our industry. We will be airing our 1st episode by the end 2022." says Jessica.

IN THE INDUSTRY, WOMEN ARE **MAKING AN IMPACT**: HELPING ACHIEVE NET ZERO AND IMPROVING ENERGY EFFICIENCY



WiMC Committee Members and CEO of MCA Canada, Tania Johnston appeared in front of the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology in July, to discuss the importance of the mechanical contracting sector in the move to Net Zero and increased energy efficiency in the built environment.

“Billions of dollars are being invested in energy efficiency, retrofits and new construction over the years ahead at all levels of government,” said Tania Johnston, CEO of MCA Canada. “To help small businesses in our sector we need a coordinated plan with federal and provincial buy-in that helps more skilled workers in trades like ours that are especially important to solving Canada’s problems.”





WHAT'S NEXT FOR WIMC?



During the MCA Canada Annual National Conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia, the Committee will meet on September 29, 2022. Here they will discuss the WiMC Initiative's annual goals. The year 2023 is going to be filled with exciting new developments!



Immediately following the meeting, the Women In Mechanical Construction Reception will take place. The event is sponsored by TESC Contracting Ltd.

2023 INDUSTRY - WIDE EVENT **COLLABORATION** FOR WOMEN IN TRADES IN THE WORKS!

The WIMC Committee is in discussion with other National Canadian Associations about organizing a women in the trades event in the Toronto area for the end of 2023.

Participants will be able to attend educational & mentoring sessions, interactive workshops, networking receptions, and team building exercises at this event. Keep your eyes out for more information about this amazing collaboration!





2022 WOMEN IN MECHANICAL CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE



TOP ROW (L-R)

CHAIR JULIE ZULICH (TESC MECHANICAL CONTRACTING)
VICE CHAIR JUDY-LYNN MASON (SERVCO CANADA GROUP OF COMPANIES)
JASON CAMPBELL (AECON INDUSTRIAL)
DAWN ERMEN CORMIER (ERMEN PLUMBING & HEATING)
NADINE FULLARTON (MCA NEW BRUNSWICK)

2ND ROW (L-R)

JENNIFER LOWE (LOWE MECHANICAL) | JANE GOWING (BLACK & MCDONALD)
TANIA JOHNSTON (MCA CANADA) | JESSICA SHAVER (MCA CANADA)
RACHAEL LOLUA (MCA HAMILTON-NIAGARA)

OUR MISSION

MCA Canada's Women in Mechanical Construction is a forum through which women who work in mechanical construction share experiences, seize opportunities and learn skills that will help them advance their careers.



ARE YOU INTERESTED IN CONTRIBUTING TO WIMC NEWSLETTER?

We'd love to hear from you! Have you got something you'd like to share?

Are you interested in speaking to our members or presenting to them?

Are you interested in sponsoring a workshop that fits in with our initiative?

Are you interested in joining the initiative?

Do you want to be a mentor or are you looking for a mentor?

CONTACT US

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