

National Strategy for Women in Trades Developed by 2020

Ottawa, ON – August 28, 2019 – The Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF-FCA) announced today that a task force of its members from across the country will oversee the development of a *National Strategy for Women in Trades* based on extensive consultations with stakeholders over the last two years.

In 2018, CAF-FCA hosted the first-ever national conference dedicated to female participation in the skilled trades. In 2019, the second Supporting Women in Trades was held in Vancouver. In total, more than 600 delegates gathered at the events to share ideas and engage in a conversation on how to remove the barriers women encounter pursuing careers in which they are traditionally under-represented. *A Road Map to Supporting Women in Trades* was developed in 2018 from results of the inaugural event and the subsequent 2019 conference culminated in a CAF-FCA commitment to lead the development of a national strategy.

“Our country is going to need thousands of new trades professionals in the next five years, and the creation of a National Strategy to help attract more women to the trades will be critical to meeting labour market and economic needs,” said Shelley Gray, CEO of B.C.’s Industry Training Authority and task force participant. “To do this, it’s important to develop workplaces that are welcoming, positive, and inclusive of everyone interested in pursuing an apprenticeship.”

The task force, comprised of apprentices, tradeswomen, representatives from women’s organizations, labour groups, employers, educators and jurisdictional apprenticeship authorities will inform specific strategy content and establish a national target to increase participation and retention of females in skilled trades careers. “We already know what the barriers are. Insights from this task force, along with twenty years of CAF-FCA national research in the area will provide a clear direction on how to create sustainable change.” said France Daviault, Executive Director of CAF-FCA. “The entire skilled trades community needs to work together and set targets for increasing female participation – what gets measured gets done”, she continued. The first meeting of the CAF-FCA Strategy task force is on September 9, 2019. The *National Strategy for Women in Trades* will be presented at the *National Apprenticeship Conference* in Calgary, AB on May 24-26, 2020.

About CAF-FCA

The Canadian Apprenticeship Forum – Forum canadien sur l’apprentissage (CAF-FCA) is a non-profit organization that connects Canada’s apprenticeship community. Participants work collaboratively to support vibrant and innovative apprenticeship systems and policies with a view to developing a highly skilled, inclusive and mobile skilled trades workforce. Employers, unions, equity-seeking groups, educational institutions and the jurisdictions support CAF-FCA operations through membership.

CAF-FCA is the only organization that brings together apprenticeship stakeholders from across trades, across sectors and across Canada to share information and promising practices, identify challenges and propose joint solutions. As a national voice for the apprenticeship community, CAF-FCA influences apprenticeship strategies through research, discussion and collaboration. Its research agenda and events provide stakeholders with accurate, unbiased insights into apprenticeship challenges and barriers and illustrates the substantial benefits of hiring and training apprentices. For more, visit caf-fca.org.