

For immediate release

CAF-FCA Launches National Mentor Development Program for Women in the Skilled Trades

OTTAWA, ON (Feb 5, 2024) – Today, the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF-FCA) launched the National Mentor Development Program for Women in the Skilled Trades to offer online programming to develop and enhance mentorship skills for women and gender diverse individuals in the trades. This virtual, 4-month program is facilitated by subject matter experts in collaboration with tradeswomen coaches from the manufacturing and construction sectors. The program will be offered free of charge to participants from across Canada.

Tradeswomen identified the need for a program of this type. At its inaugural Supporting Women in Trades Conference in 2018 and its subsequent conferences in 2019 and 2022, CAF-FCA consulted with over 300 tradeswomen to identify their specific needs. As outlined in the Road Map to Supporting Women in the Trades, tradeswomen identified mentorship as one of their top priorities. They recommended “establish and maintain mentoring programs for women in the trades where experienced tradeswomen mentor and guide those just starting out.” Research also supports the creation of this program due to the retention barriers women experience in the trades. The rate of program completion is significantly higher for male apprentices in most of the Red Seal trades, with Heavy Duty Equipment Technician reporting the largest gender gap (29 per cent) followed by Industrial Mechanic (Millwright) (27 per cent) and Plumber (26 per cent). According to the National Apprenticeship Survey, women are more likely than men to identify discrimination as the reason why they left an employer.

By creating this program, CAF-FCA is directly addressing a top priority for tradeswomen. Through research and extensive consultations with tradeswomen, CAF-FCA and its partners, the Office to Advance Women Apprentices and Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium, understand training best practices and have created a program shaped to meet apprentice needs, therefore increasing the chances of successful program implementation.

Those who are interested in applying to be a participant or a coach can apply at: leadership.caf-fca.org

For more information on the National Mentor Development Program contact Program Manager, Stephanie Shrum, at: stephanie@caf-fca.org

About CAF-FCA The Canadian Apprenticeship Forum – Forum canadien sur l'apprentissage CAF-FCA is a national not-for-profit organization collaborating with stakeholders in all regions of Canada. We influence apprenticeship strategies through research, discussion and collaboration – sharing insights across trades, across sectors and across the country – to promote apprenticeship as an effective model for training and education. For more information, visit the CAF-FCA website at caf-fca.org.

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