

# Women in Trades Conference inspired by success

KELOWNA - The 2009 Women in Trades Conference, produced by Okanagan College (OC), takes place October 16-17 at the Kelowna campus and is inspired by the success of the college's Women in Trades program.

Nancy Darling, Administrator with Okanagan College explains that with federal and provincial Labour Market Agreement funding, the college began offering trades programs for women in March of this year in Kelowna, Vernon, Penticton and Chase.

Interest was so keen that a waiting list was created in each area. Second intakes in Kelowna and Penticton have begun with a fall calls starting in October in Vernon.

Darling notes that as the

women graduate into their trades foundation programs, all the trades are represented with women choosing to study everything from aircraft maintenance engineering to electrical, plumbing, welding, automotive service, RV technician, collision repair, painting and refinishing, carpentry and culinary arts.

She adds that the conference offers the highest calibre of speakers and presentations with Kevin Evans, CEO of the Industry Training Authority, taking centre stage on Saturday as keynote speaker.

Other presenters include an electrical contractor (employer) and a female apprentice (employee) of a local company sharing two perspectives on women in trades; Judy Kujundzic, the apprenticeship manager from

Victoria Shipyards; Jeryl Merriweather, a senior Work Safe BC officer; and Lindy Monahan, a mentor to the women in trades students - plus a student being mentored through OC's Women in Trades program.

There will also be an opportunity for mentors and those wishing to be mentored to sign up at the conference.

Trade Show style booths will be set up around the atrium of the new Centre for Learning on the campus with organizations such as the Construction Safety Association of BC, T.R.A.D.E.S UFCW 24/7 Kelowna, the Canadian Home Builders Association of the Central Okanagan, Work Safe BC and Community Futures Development Corporation of the Central Okanagan being represented.

Darling says, "We hope to bring together lots of students, apprentices and employers, to build camaraderie and share best practices. We want women to learn how to access training and support, to engage in lifelong learning, to meet and connect with other women in trades, to learn about safety.

"To become motivated and inspired as well as hear about the future of careers in trades in the province of BC."

She adds that many women who come into the Women in Trades program have multiple barriers to overcome, including unemployment and under-employment.

Darling says, "These students are very well supported and really encouraged to take the necessary steps to effec-

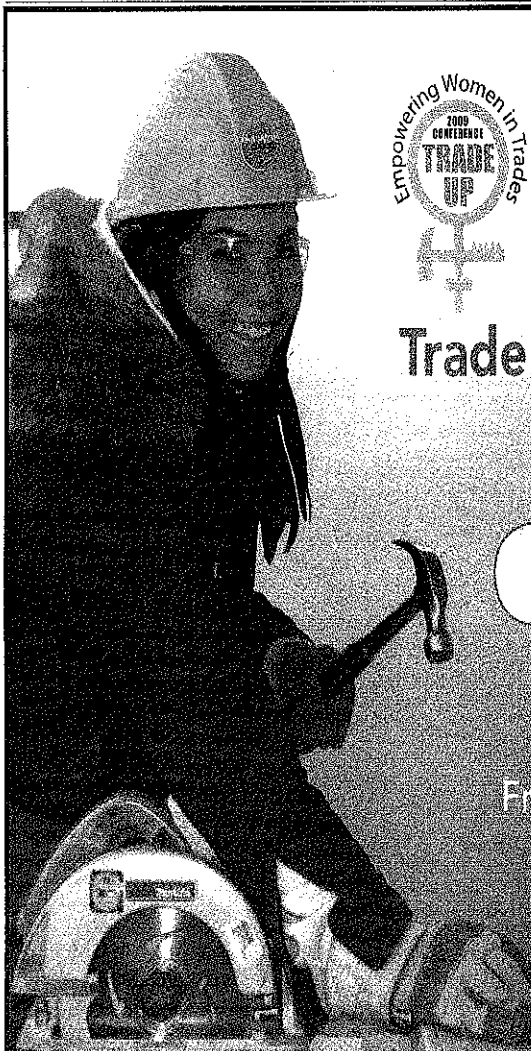
tively change the course of their lives. The Women in Trades Conference will help connect them to other women in trades, to education, to the community and show them ways to achieve the success they are after.


"In our program, they not only learn new skills that will help them get a job, they also gain confidence and build their network of support. Our overall goal is to increase the number of women entering careers in trades and ultimately having more women signed up as apprentices in the province of BC. With this training they learn new ways to better support themselves and their families.

"We really are transforming lives and communities - one woman at a time."

[www.okanagan.bc.ca/wtti](http://www.okanagan.bc.ca/wtti)

STO Oct 09





## Okanagan College

is pleased to invite you to the


# Trade Up Empowering Women In Trades 2009 Conference


**No charge for participants**


**Kelowna Campus, 1000 KLO Rd**

**Speakers & Networking Reception**  
Friday, Oct. 16, 4:30 - 8 p.m. Check-in at the Pit

**Workshops & Keynote Speaker**  
Saturday, Oct. 17, Sat, 8:45 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Check-in at the Pit







**Please Register Online at [www.okanagan.bc.ca/wtti](http://www.okanagan.bc.ca/wtti)**

or contact Maura Lucente at 250-575-6194

