

NEWS

▼ OKANAGAN COLLEGE

B.C.'s first female carpenter to speak at conference

A Red Seal carpenter who broke down the barrier for women entering the trades in B.C. will be the keynote speaker at the TRADE UP! Women in Trades 2013 Conference on Saturday, July 6, at Okanagan College.

Kate Braid started work in construction in the 1970s and spent 15

years building houses, highrises and bridges.

An award-winning poet with multiple titles to her name, Braid wrote about her experiences in her 2012 memoir *Journeywoman: Swinging a Hammer in a Man's World*.

"Kate is a pioneer in this industry and has be-

come an inspiration for so many women," said Nancy Darling, administrator for the Women in Trades program at Okanagan College and organizer of the conference.

"Kate did much more than earn her Red Seal—she has influenced a generation of trades people.

"As the first woman

to become a full-time carpentry instructor at BCIT, she's a perfect example of what's possible."

Braid's keynote address is just part of the free full-day conference, which features a variety of interactive professional development workshops including blueprint reading, working in camps, entrepreneurship, a look at WorkSafeBC's new apprenticeship portals and free training opportunities, plus electrical safety training for trades workers.

Participants will also have a chance to try the College's Virtual Collision Repair Paint Simulator, or try their hand at virtual welding using the College's welding simu-



Kate Braid

attending the conference can register at www.okanagan.bc.ca/wtti. There is no cost to participate.

The conference is sponsored by WorkSafeBC, ITA (Industry Training Authority), BC

Hydro, FortisBC, Robertson's Clothing & Shoes, Community Futures Development Corporation of the Central Okanagan, Women in Trades Training Initiative, and Solo GI Nutrition.

lator.

"We've designed this conference to give women interested in entering the trades—and those who have years of experience—a chance to connect, learn more, and appreciate what can be accomplished today," Darling said.

Anyone interested in