

WOMEN Building Canada

The official publication of **CAWIC**
Canadian Association of Women in Construction

Spring 2024 | Issue #1



INSIDE:

A Journey of Grit and Glory

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President & CEO

Jack Andress

Operations Manager

Shoshana Weinberg
sweinberg@matrixgroupinc.net

Senior Publisher

Jessica Potter
jpotter@matrixgroupinc.net

Editor-in-Chief

Shannon Savory
ssavory@matrixgroupinc.net

Editor / Social Media Manager

Jenna Collignon

Finance / Administration

Lloyd Weinberg, Nathan Redekop
accounting@matrixgroupinc.net

Director of Circulation & Distribution

Lloyd Weinberg
distribution@matrixgroupinc.net

Sales Manager

Jeff Cash
jcash@matrixgroupinc.net

Matrix Group Publishing Inc. Account Executives

Colleen Bell, Jackie Casburn, Rob Gibson, Jim
Hamilton, Scott Hendren, Touhid Khan, Frank Kenyeres,
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Brian MacIntyre, Shaun Minett, Lynn Murphy, Caitlin
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Layout & Design

Kayti McDonald

Advertising Design

James Robinson

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WELCOME TO WOMEN BUILDING CANADA

GET TO
KNOW

On behalf of the Canadian Association of Women in Construction (CAWIC), welcome to the inaugural edition of our official magazine – **WOMEN Building Canada**.

At CAWIC, we're excited to provide you with this new publication examining some of the most critical issues and opportunities facing women in our sector. Since CAWIC launched in October 2005 much has changed, but what has remained constant is our passion and our commitment to help support women in the construction industry.

Today, 12%¹ of the construction workforce is women, but women comprise an even smaller proportion of workers on site, less than 5%. The stats show that while there have been small advancements, there's significantly more work to do and it begins with diversifying executive leadership teams, eliminating workplace harassment, and offering access to professional development. In addition, women need to be offered flexible work environments, and more importantly, the gender and job title pay gaps need to be eliminated.

I know and have witnessed that through collaboration, united commitment, and a strong voice, the challenges faced will become better understood and addressed, and will help transform the industry for the better. When we talk about the industry's issues, we are taking the first step in building real solutions and action. Representation and a strong voice are critical to bringing new opportunities to life which will help improve the construction industry for generations to come.

At CAWIC, we are committed to expanding our voice, putting forward solutions, and enhancing the success of women in the construction industry. In fact, with a new two-year strategic plan in place, we have set the stage for an exciting and dynamic path ahead – not just for CAWIC members, but for the entire construction industry and the individuals who work in it. We will continue to find new ways to provide our members and the industry with increased support, resources, and value. Our new magazine is only one of many new initiatives underway.

In our first edition of the magazine, we examine:

- the inspiring journey of Jamie McMillan, the founder of KickAss Career and a recognized speaker and expert on the global stage. In the article, **A Journey of Grit and Glory**, Jamie will inspire you to examine what is possible when you find your place and understand your potential;
- how we can work together to build the next generation of leaders. The article **I Helped Build That!** examines how we can inspire the next generation to consider a career in construction;
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). In our **Roundtable of Perspectives**, individuals from across the industry examine why DEI is critical and discuss what we can collectively do to dismantle and remove the barriers, change behaviour, and embrace a diverse and inclusive workforce;
- the **Building Better: A Women In Construction Report**, which sheds light on the untapped potential of women in the construction industry and the systemic challenges they face on their path to leadership;
- this year's outstanding bursary award winners. Each year, CAWIC supports women looking to embark on a career in construction. Be sure to read our article **Celebrating Success** to learn more about this year's bursary award winners;
- and so much more!

I hope that you enjoy this first edition of **WOMEN Building Canada**. If you have any future story ideas or if you would like to share your feedback, please contact me at info@cawic.ca. **W**



CAWIC

Lisa Laronde

President

CAWIC

The stats show that while there have been small advancements, there's significantly more work to do and it begins with diversifying executive leadership teams, eliminating workplace harassment, and offering access to professional development.

REFERENCE:

1. BuildForce Canada Key Indicators (2023-11). <https://www.buildforce.ca/en/key-indicators>



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WHAT AN ACCOMPLISHMENT!

And here we are... Launching our first national magazine! What an amazing feat to be a part of.

Since being elected to the CAWIC Board in 2017, my main takeaway is consistency, vision, and making things happen! I would like to thank our members, volunteers, Board of Directors, sponsors, and industry affiliates for your support, as you all have played an amazing part to help grow CAWIC.

Looking back, my journey began as a Special Events Director focussing on special events and programing. I was so grateful for this opportunity as we launched amazing site tours, golf days, education events, and even our own branded women's leadership program. As my professional and personal life evolved and I welcomed the arrival of my son, I remained steadfast in supporting and guiding our national organization and helping to address some of the biggest challenges and opportunities facing other women in the industry. Even through the pandemic, CAWIC continued to build on its foundation and prepare itself for a strong future.

I can say without a doubt that after being appointed President in 2019, my ambitious goals for CAWIC are now coming to fruition. We are working to make construction an inclusive sector where women can start and grow their careers. We aim to provide increased support for working moms and those transitioning back to work from maternity leave. We are continuing to expand our reach across Canada and growing the allied network of CAWIC ambassadors to help with local events. We have increased our bursaries to help aspiring women pursue careers in the trades and academics within the construction industry. I came into CAWIC with visions of growth and expansion – to grow our members, increase our bursary recipients, and be the association for women in construction Canada-wide – and that's exactly what we have done.

We have raised capital for a larger operating fund to hire our newly appointed Executive Director, and now we are launching our inaugural national women in construction conference in September 2024! I am so excited to see you all there. Advancement for women in construction is taking on a new direction, and we will continue to be at the forefront to support and enhance women in our industry.

I would also like to celebrate passing the torch to our newly elected President Lisa Laronde. She is such a strong and powerful woman in our industry, and she is bringing to CAWIC additional areas of focus and new initiatives, including the new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. I believe we are in good hands as we lean in with new, strong, and dynamic leadership. I am looking forward to mentoring the new Board of Directors and celebrating the sisterhood we share with the common mission we all care about to enhance the success of women in our industry.

May this magazine bring you joy, and the stories of Canadian women working in our industry inspire and light a spark within you, to powerfully stay connected and take charge of your career or owning your own business within this amazing sector. **W**

GET TO
KNOW



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Luana Buratynski

Past President

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We are working to make construction an inclusive sector where women can start and grow their careers. We aim to provide increased support for working moms and those transitioning back to work from maternity leave. We are continuing to expand our reach across Canada and growing the allied network of CAWIC ambassadors to help with local events.

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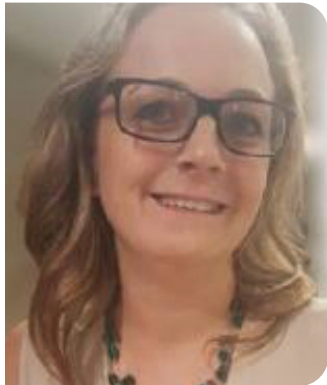


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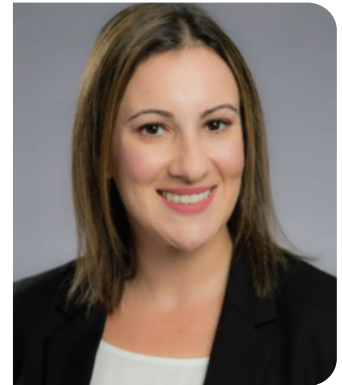
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A Journey of *Grit and*

A chance encounter with a former classmate led Jamie McMillan down an unexpected path. Now an ironworker and industry advocate, Jamie travels North America showcasing to youth the opportunities a career in trades can offer, which is something she wishes she had learned while she was still in high school.

M Glory

By Kaitlin Vitt, Magazine Staff Writer

Jamie McMillan is known for her engaging presentations delivered through KickAss Careers, an organization that advocates for young people to join the trades. While she recognizes she's developed a compelling way to connect with youth, she doesn't take all the credit.

"I'll tell you the truth – I didn't create it myself," McMillan says. "I had the kids help me create it."

When she started offering presentations to encourage young people to join the trades, she asked the students she spoke in front of to critique her on how to be a better presenter. "It led to me becoming an expert on the subject based on the knowledge the students passed on and some of the things that I've learned along the way," she says. "Now, I have industry, schools, detention centres, all kinds of people reaching out to me to try and spread the good news."

As a traditionally male-dominated industry, and one with labour shortages, the construction sector is looking for solutions to appeal to more women and other

underrepresented groups. Education and awareness often come up in conversation among leaders – the more that people know about the benefits, the more inclined they'll be to join. But simply giving a presentation to cross it off the list isn't enough; it's about reaching potential employees in a way that resonates with them and shows them the benefits they give to and receive from the industry.

"Put your mindset back into the mindset you were in when you were in high school, and you had thousands of pathways to choose from. For some people, it was scary and intimidating, and you didn't know how you were going to make it. What would you have liked to have heard?" she asks. "Students like authenticity and credibility. If there's anything students can see through, it's BS. They want to see actual people in the industry."

McMillan suggests having hands-on activities for the students to take part in at the presentations.

"If you want to see more people enter the skilled trades, give them something to build or create that makes them feel empowered. Then they'll see they have the ability to do

those jobs. That's where you will start seeing their minds shift, as they realize there's opportunity for them. 'I'm seeing somebody who's in that career, and they're doing really good, and they're answering my questions, and maybe I can be like that person some day.'"

FINDING HER WAY

The way McMillan was introduced to the construction industry was like a meet-cute in a Hollywood movie, except it was between McMillan and her future career.

One day, McMillan was walking down the street. A driver pulled over their car to take down notes from a phone call but realized their pen ran out. This person rolled down their window to ask McMillan for a pen. The driver turned out to be a former high school classmate of McMillan. The two caught up, and the driver told McMillan about her journey of becoming an ironworker.

Her former classmate's story stood out to McMillan – she got paid to go to school, she had hands-on training rather than having to sit in a classroom all day, and because of her training, she had a stable, well-paying career.

McMillan left the conversation feeling inspired and did some more research on becoming an ironworker. She decided to apply and got in as Mr. Jamie McMillan, a misidentification she corrected when she wrote her entry test for the school program.

She was always interested in working with her hands. Her dad was a miner, and her mom was a nurse. Her parents would also buy old houses and fix them up.

"I grew up with a hammer in my hand, learning how to do a lot of stuff for my family. It came naturally to me," she says. "I'm a hands-on, visual learner. Forget reading and listening skills – I'm not good at that."

When McMillan started in the industry, she noticed how few women there were, although, for her first year and a half, she

"If you want to see more people enter the skilled trades, give them something to build or create that makes them feel empowered. Then they'll see they have the ability to do those jobs. That's where you will start seeing their minds shift, as they realize there's opportunity for them."

– Jamie McMillan, Founder,
KickAss Careers

had a female co-worker who she'd carpool with, and she says that camaraderie was welcome.

"I realized there were probably many women who could have been in the skilled trades had we known about the industry in school, if people had been advocating and promoting it to us," she says.

In addition to the challenges that come with being part of an underrepresented group, another barrier she experienced is that she felt like she had to prove herself over and over again, from job site to job site. This ties into being a woman in a traditionally male-dominated industry.

"Every time you go to a different job, you're learning a bunch of new stuff, and that's great, but you're meeting new people that you probably didn't work with before who don't know you, and they expect you to prove yourself over and over and over and over," she says. "If you make one mistake as an underrepresented group in this industry, they forget all the good that you did. You can be the most amazing worker on a job site for

three years, but one mistake, and that's all they remember you for."

When McMillan has encountered situations like this, she says she stands up for herself and remembers how much all her hard work has paid off to get her to where she is. She also reminds herself why she chose this career path in the first place.

"I'm absolutely in love with the physical aspect of my job. I like the idea of building infrastructure. I love the idea of being able to work with different types of materials and cranes and big machinery and equipment and just seeing the results of your work," she says. "When you stand there and you walk in on a jobsite and there's nothing on the ground, and then you're leaving and there's this beautiful building that's there that you get to brag about and tell people about – that is such an empowering feeling."

ADHD AS A SUPERPOWER

No matter how someone shapes their career in the trades, it's a job where you can always learn something new, which is



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something that stood out to McMillan when she started in the industry.

"We get paid to never stop learning. It's the best medication for my ADHD," she says. "I'm not going and doing the same repetitive tasks day after day. I'm constantly doing different things, constantly learning."

McMillan's attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) has impacted her since she was a kid, but she didn't have a name for it, and didn't have the information about it to manage it through medication, until the last few years.

Knowing this about herself has helped her understand her feelings and actions more.

"People with ADHD, we have a really hard time regulating our emotions. One we really struggle with is rejection sensitivity dysphoria (intense feelings in response to perceived or real criticism or rejection)," McMillan says. "I always took things way more personally, and I couldn't understand why the guys were always like, 'Oh come on, Jamie, just lighten up.'"

This rejection sensitivity has, at times, made her ruminate on her actions, and she says this has created distance between herself and others, since she assumed they didn't like her or that she was annoying them. Now that she knows this about herself – that it's a part of ADHD – she can better manage situations that bring about similar emotions, knowing that for her, the feelings are intensified more than what she might actually feel.

Her ADHD is even an advantage, she says, particularly because of her ability to hyperfocus, that is, concentrate on something that interests her for a long period of time. This trait is what makes people with ADHD such great leaders, she says.

"When you use your ADHD doing something that you can hyperfocus on and that you love, it goes from being a disability to a literal superpower," she says. "People with ADHD, we become so hyper focused on things that we love."

THE LAUNCH OF KICKASS CAREERS

A few years into McMillan's career, she received an email from Skills Ontario, asking if she'd be interested in becoming a mentor

for young students at various events. She'd sit with the students and talk with them about her experience.

She agreed and started attending these events as a mentor. At one of the events, a panellist didn't show up, and McMillan was asked to fill in. "The next thing you know, teachers were coming up to me asking me to go to their schools," she says.

She started taking time off work to deliver presentations, and eventually,

the demand was so high, she started her company, KickAss Careers.

Along with her team, McMillan visits schools and attends events to talk about the skilled trades, showing young people all the opportunities in the industry. This is her main focus now; it was too difficult to manage both her job as an ironworker and all the presentations she was being asked to do.

But she still gets her hands-on trades fix – if she has the itch to weld, she welds



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If you're interested in having Jamie present at your local high school or at a corporate event, or you'd like to check out her book, visit the KickAss Careers website.

www.kickasscareers.ca



with students on a school visit, or if she wants to do some woodwork, she'll go into a woodshop, plus she has projects to complete around home. She's still very much involved in the trades, just in a different way than before.

McMillan, who lives in Hamilton, Ontario, sees herself going back to more regular ironwork eventually, maybe even heading out to British Columbia this summer when school is out. That's another aspect she likes about the industry – the opportunity to travel and make your career what you want it to be.

“I'm an adventurous person. I like road trips. I love travelling. I love climbing mountains,” McMillan says. “Working in the trades, you can literally live in a van or travel around the world.” **W**

Through KickAss Careers, Jamie McMillan travels approximately 30 weeks a year providing engaging keynote presentations and workshops to more than 50,000 students, parents, educators, and employers each year across North America. Her efforts have gained international notoriety for opening doors and minds to the possibilities of well-paid careers in skilled trades and technology sectors. Jamie was recently appointed to the Executive Committee for the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans.

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Building Inclusion REQUIRES All Hands on Deck

A new report recommends three areas of focus to build a more inclusive construction sector: shifting mindsets from mentorship to sponsorship; prioritizing flexibility and work-life balance; and investing in training for women. Is the construction industry ready to move from ideas to action?

By Darla Read, Magazine Staff Writer

A recent collaborative report on Canadian women in construction points to sponsorship as the way to build a better, more inclusive work environment. *The Building Better: Women in Construction* report was commissioned by Ambition Theory – a company that provides professional consulting and leadership training to women in construction – and the National Centre for Construction Education and Research (NCCER); both of which have the desire to increase opportunities for women in the construction industry.

Andrea Janzen, CEO of Ambition Theory, says having this type of report is key to bringing about change.

“Quantitative data is really important for identifying what the issues actually are and getting buy-in from decision makers in the industry,” she explains. “It also provides a benchmark so that we can measure the actions that we’re taking to ensure that we are moving in the right direction.”

She says such a report means that now the burden of responsibility can shift off the shoulders of women and onto organizations.

“To date, most initiatives have focused on changing women, but our research clearly identifies that women aren’t the issue – it’s the culture and the environment, explains Janzen.

Points to Ponder



72 per cent of women have never or rarely had a woman manager or supervisor.



Women in the study demonstrate higher career mobility between companies, hold more career titles, earn greater numbers of advanced degrees, and gather larger professional networks than men. Yet women only fill 14.8 per cent of leadership positions.



88 per cent are already in or would like to be in a leadership role during their careers.



When asked what type of support they need to help them advance their careers, women said they wanted to “be invited to the same meetings that their male counterparts attend.”



Women receive sponsorship only half as often as they receive mentorship.



25 per cent of respondents reported that they have faced disciplinary action for missing work due to family or personal situations.



45 per cent of women are uncomfortable, hesitant or only comfortable sometimes asking for a work schedule adjustment for family matters.

Source: Building Better: Women in Construction

“I have been sharing about sponsorship for years. We don’t simply need an advisor quietly giving us advice behind closed doors: we need advocates – someone who knows our skillset and interests and what we bring to the table – to put our name forward for opportunities that don’t exist yet or haven’t opened yet.”

– Kristen Hallberg,
President Elect, CAWIC

Kristen Hallberg, President Elect at CAWIC and Senior Manager, Innovative Technologies for WEDGE Environmental Monitoring, agrees. “I have been sharing about sponsorship for years. We don’t simply need an advisor quietly giving us advice behind closed doors: we need advocates – someone who knows our skillset and interests and what we bring to the table – to put our name forward for opportunities that don’t exist yet or haven’t opened yet.”

The report points to exactly that: one of its three key recommendations is sponsorship instead of mentorship as the answer to making the construction industry

more inclusive to women. The report states, “while mentorship is an important and vital component of a successful culture, it has not been successful in accelerating women into leadership positions.” While women may receive valuable advice and guidance, it isn’t enough to overcome systemic barriers that prevent women from advancing their construction careers.

Janzen notes mentorship is important, saying, “I was pleasantly surprised by how many women surveyed were on the receiving end of mentorship behaviours, which leads to

Share the Report Far and Wide!

The *Building Better: Women in Construction* report is free to all those who are interested in building a more inclusive construction industry. Download it from the link below and share it on your social media platforms and with colleagues and company leaders.

<https://buildingbetterreport.com>



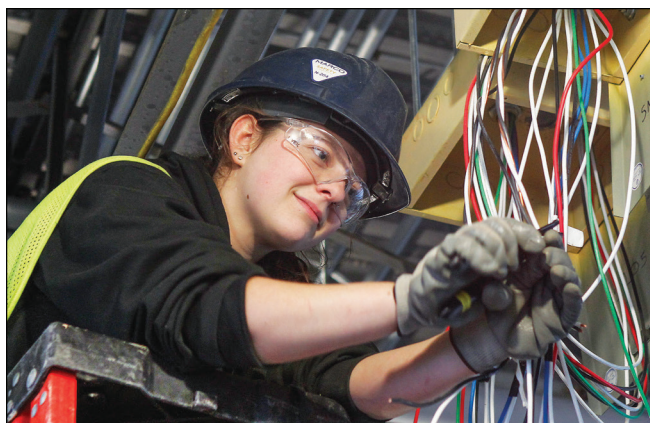
a sense of belonging and supports people in their current roles." However, she adds, mentorship isn't the full answer.

Sponsorship is seen as providing opportunities and exposure to help someone advance their career, allowing people to learn as they go and stretch outside their comfort zones to expand their abilities.

According to the report, a sponsor is someone who:

- has and will put their reputation on the line for them;
- assigns women high-profile job tasks;
- makes introductions to influential stakeholders;
- provides women with high visibility opportunities;
- includes women in meetings that provide contact with people who could help advance their careers; and
- advocates publicly on their behalf for career-advancing opportunities and/or promotions.

However, the report notes women receive sponsorship only half as often as they



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receive mentorship. What's interesting about the report is those with less than one year of work experience ranked 'salary' as the most important consideration when looking for opportunities. For those same women, a 'clear path for career advancement' was ranked towards the bottom.

On the flip side, women with more than one year of work experience marked a 'clear path for career advancement' as the most important: illustrating the importance and need for sponsorship.

These findings also line up with 88 per cent of women surveyed saying they are already in or would like to be in a leadership role. However, 72 per cent of women have never or rarely had a female manager or supervisor. As the saying goes, "if you can see it, you can be it," but there is little representation of women in leadership in the construction industry.

Hallberg was struck by this comment from an Ambition Theory participant in the report: "Women in construction are often told to get more field experience and that we should know how to do every task and operate every piece of equipment before we can become a manager, even though men aren't expected to prove they can do this before they're promoted to leadership."

"The report highlights the negative situation that we see far too often – if you aren't part of the boys' club and seen as having 'paid your dues,' you don't get the opportunity," explains Hallberg, adding, "The time is now for us to call out these types of negative expectations and truly support women in their careers."

Also of significance to Hallberg is the large sample size – 770 women participated in the study – as well as that the largest group of those interviewed had been in the industry for 15+ years.

"To me, that signals that we have a wealth of knowledge and resources to impact change."


While the number of women in the construction workforce has increased steadily since 2016, it is still not representative of women making up half the population. In Canada, women make up just 12 per cent of that workforce, though it is

less than 5 per cent when looking at women specifically in trades. While recruitment and hiring efforts have helped bring more women into the industry, the report found those efforts don't guarantee women will stay.

Work-life balance is important to women, and that doesn't necessarily mean working from home. The report found women want flexibility because in addition to becoming burnt out by the extra burden of having to prove they're equally capable as their male

counterparts, they are often carrying more of the load at home.


When asked what flexibility means to them, women answered that they want to be able to function as a leader and as a parent: they want to feel comfortable asking for time off when they need it and not have to worry about facing disciplinary actions if they need to leave work for personal reasons. Currently, the report found 45 per cent of women are uncomfortable, hesitant, or only comfortable sometimes asking for



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a work schedule adjustment for family matters.

Hallberg says the gender inequities in the construction industry cannot be solved by women alone. "How do we get the industry to recognize the financial impact of this?" she asks. "As the industry is moving further into boomers retiring and the resulting worker shortages, industry leaders need to consider and attract the other 50 per cent of the population that has been left out. As the national association for women in construction, we know that we need to continue to raise attention on the issues and bring forward real solutions to help the industry attract and retain women."

The report recommends industry focus on three areas: shifting mindsets from mentorship to sponsorship; prioritizing flexibility and work-life balance; and investing in training for women, and work has already begun on spreading the report's findings.

"One thing that has been super exciting is that we are getting a lot of invites to present at industry conferences that aren't just women's conferences," and the response has been very positive, says Janzen. "I've presented to audiences made up of 90 per cent men, and they are excited to take action and do their part."

Janzen adds, "The next step is to educate everyone in the industry about what the real issues are and teach them about sponsorship as an evidence-based solution." One of the ways industry leaders can do this is by sharing the report, she says.

Another way is industry-wide education, which the report notes is vital to changing company culture and mindset. Industry leaders should consider investing in training to help leaders learn about the issues and better understand the differences between mentorship and sponsorship. .

The report also recommends company leadership get curious and document its current work environment so more flexible options can be implemented for both office and field work.

Questions to consider might include: does your organization require overtime? If

not, does management reprimand or punish those who turn it down?

Finally, the report points out that investing in training shows a company's commitment to career advancement.

"Many women attempting to enter the construction industry may feel intimidated or under-educated compared to their male

counterparts," the report says. "Seeing that she can learn within your company could be just the motivation a woman needs to apply for an open role."

"It is clear. Together, we are stronger and together we can carve a path to building a stronger Canada," says Hallberg. **W**

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I Helped Build That!

A career in construction offers a variety of benefits for women, but many do not know of the opportunities that exist. Showcasing the rewards, the ways to advance, and the sense of accomplishment felt while building something from nothing can activate interest in building a lifelong and successful career in the trades.



By Kaitlin Vitt, Magazine Staff Writer

For one of the building projects Leah Traviss worked on, she felt like she was on a crime show.

She was the project coordinator for the company building the Forensic Services and Coroner's Complex in Toronto. She says it was one of the standout projects in her career.

"It was a really fascinating project, learning about ballistics and autopsy suites,

for example," she says. "It felt like I was on an episode of CSI."

Today, Traviss is the Senior Project Manager with MARANT Construction, a company that focuses on commercial interior spaces. She says a sense of accomplishment from working on construction projects is what drew her to the industry and has kept her in it for 15 years and counting.

"One of the biggest things that has kept me interested in the construction industry is the pride of working on projects and to

be able to look at the work that we've done, and say, 'Yes, I've been a part of that,'" says Traviss, who is also the Director of Community Outreach for the Canadian Association of Women In Construction (CAWIC).

Highlighting the impact people can have with a career in construction is one way to attract more people into the industry, something especially important with today's labour shortage. There's particularly a need to appeal to women and other underrepresented groups in the industry,



"One of the biggest things that has kept me interested in the construction industry is the pride of working on projects and to be able to look at the work that we've done, and say, 'Yes, I've been a part of that.'"

– Leah Traviss, Senior Project Manager, MARANT Construction, and Director of Community Outreach, CAWIC

since it is a traditionally male dominated sector, though there has slowly been a shift over the years with more women joining.

"You see a lot more women on the sites, whereas when I started out there were still quite a few women in the office in the coordination positions and not as many in the project management roles, but I'm starting to see a lot more women in management as well," says Traviss. "One of the goals of CAWIC is looking to help encourage women to pursue careers in the construction industry, not only in the offices but also in the field."

Through partnerships, events, resources, and a network of professionals, CAWIC exists to enhance the success of women in the Canadian construction industry. The association's mentorship program provides an opportunity for mentors to share knowledge, guidance, and encouragement to those starting out in the industry. Traviss says it's important for women to find a mentor or sponsor in the industry to help them along in their career.

PRESENTING OPPORTUNITIES

Traviss attended Ryerson to study architecture, thinking she'd focus on the design side of the discipline, but she ended up pursuing project management.

"My program opened me up to some different options, which included the project manager stream and building science stream. I decided at that time to make the decision to switch into project management because then I could work more on the hands-on side of building versus the design side," Traviss says. "As a project manager, you see all phases of a project, right from the start to the finish, working with the designers, the owners, the consultants, and some of the trades as well. It's a really involved position."

Raising awareness of the vast opportunities in the construction industry is an important aspect of getting more young people interested in the sector, she says. "It's important to get into schools with youth at a young age to tell them your story and give them an understanding of different

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opportunities that are out in the trades and that construction is a very lucrative career choice," Travis says.

But how can the construction industry stand out among all the other options students have to choose from? What will make them remember you visiting their school? It's about engaging with them through workshops and activities rather than simply talking at them, says Jamie McMillan, founder of KickAss Careers, an organization that encourages young people to join the trades.

"Send your people from your worksite to the schools to go talk and have hands-on career opportunities for them to try," says McMillan. "Organize workshops with little building projects, and let them see what their hands can create."

When students see they have the ability to actually do this sort of work, McMillan says they'll feel empowered and believe that they can pursue a career in trades.

FINDING THE RIGHT FIT

A career in construction goes beyond the frontline labour, which are the jobs that may first come to mind for those outside the industry. It's important to share that there are opportunities for engineers, accountants, safety managers, and more.

"We need to remove the stigma that it's a last-resort kind of career," says Susan Carey, President of BuildSafe – Construction Safety Services Inc. "People need to understand that you can make a very good living in construction and that the industry is forever changing. If you're someone who doesn't like to go to the same office in the same location every single day, construction is a good option."

Carey has owned and operated BuildSafe, a health and safety services company, for four years. She has a background in healthcare, working on the management side. In her position, she saw lots of workplace injuries, which is what led to her interest in working to proactively reduce tragedies.

"With BuildSafe, I get to be on the preventative side, which is nice," Carey says.

For Carey, the switch to the construction industry wasn't too surprising of a change –

her dad was a pipefitter, her husband works in construction, and so do her two sons.

"The construction industry is something I've always been exposed to," Carey says. "It just seemed like a good fit to move into health and safety and to try to apply those healthcare experiences to hopefully have an impact in this sector."

As Carey demonstrates with her background in healthcare, using the existing interests of potential workers in the

construction industry can be advantageous to show them all the opportunities that exist.

"We need to find out where the new generations' interests lie. If someone has the aptitude and interest to build and create things, construction is a great career path," Carey says.

Because of the range of career types and the many companies looking for workers, those starting out in the construction industry don't need to settle for the first job



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that they're offered. Traviss recommends learning about the company and getting a feel for the company culture before signing a contract.

"Do your due diligence and go to different interviews to get to know the companies,

what they're all about, what their culture is, and who the people are who make up the company, because that is very important," Traviss says.

A flexible work arrangement may be one aspect of a company culture that stands out to women. Traviss says this is something important to her and something her current position offers. She is the mother of a five year old, and her company allows for flexibility so she is able to accommodate her child's school pickup schedule.

These discussions can be difficult to bring up with companies, since no one wants to feel

like they get special treatment, but Traviss says by having an open conversation with management, both the employer and employee can show up in the best way they can, ultimately leading to success for the company and the employee.

Inspiring the next generation of construction workers starts with conversations and representation. Making sure women of all ages know that opportunities exist will help encourage their participation – and success – in the construction industry.**W**



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STRENGTHENING CANADA'S CONSTRUCTION SECTOR THROUGH DEI

Across industries, board rooms, and project teams, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is more important than ever. The following roundtable discussion illustrates the issues and provides solutions.

As the construction industry continues to face increasing demands for workers due to an aging population, upcoming retirements, and a competitive job market, a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) will strengthen Canada's construction sector. Recently, CAWIC and the *WOMEN Building Canada* magazine reached out to a few CAWIC members to understand and reflect on the role of DEI today for the industry.

Thank you to our roundtable participants:

- Susan Carey, President, BuildSafe – Construction Safety Services Inc.
- Elizabeth Driscoll, Director, Design Concrete Inc.
- Lisa Laronde, President, RSG International

- Alessandra Valerio, Building Envelope Consultant, UL Solutions
- Jamie West, President, Peninsula Construction

WHY IS IT IMPERATIVE FOR CAWIC AND THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TO PRIORITIZE AND PROACTIVELY EMBRACE AND TAKE POSITIVE ACTION ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION?

Carey: Prioritizing and embracing DEI has so many benefits, like drawing from a larger talent pool, improved team performance, and increased employee engagement. DEI even impacts the bottom line, as more diverse companies report higher revenue percentages. Having a diverse, equitable, and inclusive team makes for a more well-rounded team.



Susan Carey
President
BuildSafe – Construction
Safety Services Inc.

Driscoll: Working in the construction industry is exciting and rewarding and there's a serious need to reach new talent to meet the demand. Projects are delayed, overbudget, and repetitive. We must make a serious effort to reach a broader group of people by providing a safe and welcoming space, which in turn will provide our industry with unique and creative ways to achieve great things.



Elizabeth Driscoll
Director
Design Concrete Inc.

Laronde: Women represent a mere five per cent of the on-site construction workforce and while we're seeing that number grow, as leaders we must do our part to attract and retain women in the industry. It begins by creating a culture of inclusion. We need safe work environments that are supportive, dynamic, flexible, and offer fulfilling opportunities. When we focus on DEI, we will attract top talent which in turn will lead to better representation and a plethora of new and dynamic ideas. At the end of the day, focus and action on DEI will make our industry stronger.



Lisa Laronde
President
RSG International

Valerio: Prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion in the construction industry and for CAWIC is crucial for driving innovation, empowering the workforce, and enhancing decision-making. Embracing diverse perspectives leads to better problem-solving and more efficient solutions while attracting and retaining top talent. Additionally, it allows for a deeper understanding of clients' needs, promoting adaptability, and resonating better with diverse communities.



Alessandra Valerio
Building Envelope
Consultant, UL Solutions

West: As a national organization, we have a stage that spans from coast to coast; therefore, we must proactively embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion. We can be the voice for women, and we can address the industry's labour shortage by encouraging, supporting, and highlighting women in construction. We can succeed together and make the industry an attractive and viable career path for all.

WHAT WAYS CAN EACH OF US CONTRIBUTE TO PROMOTING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN THE BROADER COMMUNITY?

West: First and foremost, collectively each one of us needs to seek a deeper understanding of the barriers that women and other underrepresented groups face daily in the construction industry. That will enable us to advocate and speak out against discrimination and inequality. We must support initiatives and organizations that champion diversity and inclusion in our communities, while also actively

participating in and encouraging similar initiatives within our organizations.

Valerio: Promoting diversity and inclusion in the broader community involves advocating for equity, amplifying diverse voices, and creating inclusive spaces. Engaging in educational discussions, supporting marginalized groups, and actively challenging biases contribute to fostering an environment where everyone feels respected and valued. This collective effort helps build a more equitable and understanding community for all.

Promoting diversity and inclusion in the broader community involves advocating for equity, amplifying diverse voices, and creating inclusive spaces.

Driscoll: Volunteer your time with organizations that reach young people to help introduce them to potential career opportunities. Let people know what you do, why you do it, and what brings you joy. Mentor and share your experiences, which will help educate those around you and empower the next generation.

Carey: I think the first step is educating yourself about diversity, equity, and inclusivity. Once you understand what each of these mean and how they work together, you now become an ally. As an ally, you can start to speak up in situations where you may see diversity, equity, and inclusivity being ignored. Education for all is key!

Laronde: It starts with representation across the industry; we need to see more women sitting at leadership tables and collectively we need to drive the decisions and focus on DEI. But it goes even further than that – we must create safe spaces where women can have safe and open discussions about the issues impacting their development and the industry. Through ongoing dialogue, we can develop solutions to issues such as pay equity, discrimination, daycare, and so much more. Those steps will genuinely support women and in turn will help attract new talent to our industry. **W**

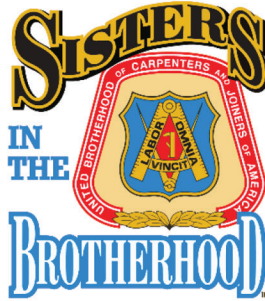


Jamie West
President
Peninsula Construction

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CAWIC is thankful for the support of industry, individuals, and the women who are proving that the construction sector IS a great place to build a career. Our organization would not be successful without the backing of organizations and people who believe in our mission.



CORPORATE MEMBER

For nearly five years, Flynn Group of Companies has been a proud and active supporter of CAWIC. Beyond being one of CAWIC's Platinum-level corporate members, Flynn has provided ongoing support through its generous sponsorship, event participation, and volunteer contributions from Flynn employees.

This past year, Flynn hosted a membership recruitment event, which allowed construction professionals to connect and learn more about CAWIC from the association's current members.

"As a woman in the construction industry, I was drawn to CAWIC because of its distinct focus and the community that surrounds it. Since joining, I have watched the association and the value it provides continue to grow. It plays an important role in helping grow the recognition of women in the industry, as well as providing a stronger sense of community where we can grow and meet others who are facing the same challenges and opportunities.

From 2019 to 2023, I was proud to be CAWIC's national president. Through my contributions, I helped the organization build a strong foundation, which will help us continue to grow and expand nationally. Personally, for me, I gained extraordinary connections, support, and value from CAWIC. In addition, it has provided me even greater opportunities to expand my leadership in the industry. Whether I am at the CAWIC Board table or attending events and programs, I am continually supporting women in the industry, learning new things, and developing lifelong connections."

Luana Buratynski, CTR
Technical Sales & Business Development Lead,
Northern Facades, a division of the Flynn Group of Companies
Immediate Past President, CAWIC

"[CAWIC] plays an important role in helping grow the recognition of women in the industry, as well as providing a stronger sense of community where we can grow and meet others who are facing the same challenges and opportunities."

– Luana Buratynski



INDIVIDUAL MEMBER

"Working in a male-dominated industry, my goal in joining CAWIC over a decade ago was to develop relationships with women who shared a common goal to succeed in the construction industry, despite all the odds against us.

Back then, CAWIC was the one association that welcomed women with open arms. I was amazed and inspired by how much we had in common, and I no

longer felt alone. Since that time, the CAWIC community has grown exponentially, which was made possible by uniting our voices, knowledge, and resources through the passion of our members and women that we inspire.

Take, for instance, our Bursary Program, which has been helping women across Canada with their educational costs since 2005. Not only do these women go on to achieve success in the construction

industry, but many of them stay on and give back to the CAWIC community. Knowing that I can play a small part in that goal has had a positive influence on my career."

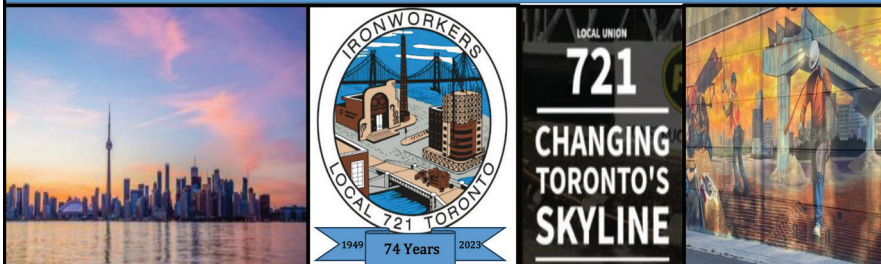


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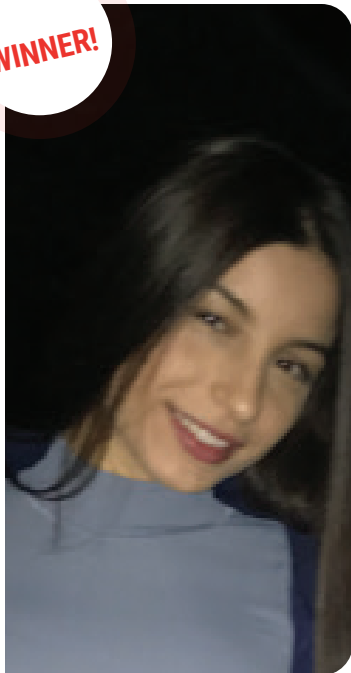


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– Monica Quintal



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PAST BURSARY WINNER

"In 2018, I received the CAWIC bursary and attended my first event. There I met many wonderful women, many inspiring me to continue my education and career further into the industry.

Since graduating from George Brown College's Renovation program in 2019, I started an apprenticeship and I am now a carpenter working in residential renovations. I have just finished my last term of carpentry school at Mohawk College and have taken the Red Seal certification test.

I love working in the construction industry because it is such a rewarding job, and you will always be learning for the rest of your career. I am very grateful for CAWIC bursaries and events for supporting women in the industry." **W**

CAWIC members are dedicated to the success of women in the construction industry. To explore membership options, visit www.cawic.ca.



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CELEBRATING SUCCESS: CAWIC Bursary Winners

With the increasing demand for skilled trades in Canada, it is essential for the industry to actively support women in recognizing and pursuing career opportunities within construction. CAWIC plays an important role in this by providing educational bursaries, empowering women to take the first steps in their successful construction career.

"One of our commitments at CAWIC is to actively promote education and encourage women to pursue careers in the construction industry," explained Christina Kontogeorgopoulos, Vice President, Finance, CAWIC. "We help do that by awarding bursaries each year to deserving recipients who are the next generation of women who will lead and support the construction industry."

Each year, CAWIC utilizes a portion of the proceeds from special events, programming, and membership to support the next generation of women in construction. Students from post-secondary institutions in construction-related programs across Canada have the opportunity to apply for bursaries between \$1,000 and \$2,000.

"Since 2005, our Bursary Program has helped more than 75 women across Canada pursue their construction education, and we look forward to continuing to help pave the way for the next generation of women," shared Kontogeorgopoulos. "It's never an easy task to select the winners. We have so many outstanding applicants, which is a testament to the number of driven students eager to enter the industry and make their impact."

The 2024 Bursary Program will open in March 2024. Watch the CAWIC website for more information about how to apply.

Thank you to
our Platinum Sponsors
Choice Properties and Stephenson's
Rental Services for sponsoring two
of the CAWIC Bursaries and
thank you to our 2023 Skilled
Trades Bursary
sponsor, Cooper Equipment
Rentals Limited.

Congratulations!

The CAWIC Bursary Committee
would like to congratulate the 2023
Bursary Award Winners.

2023 CAWIC BURSARY RECIPIENTS



Abiodun Adeleye

Construction Engineering
Technician Program, George
Brown College
*Stephenson's Rental
Services Bursary for Women
in Construction*



Kayla Boettcher

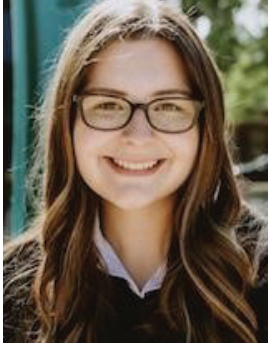
Architectural Technology,
Algonquin College Centre for
Construction
*Choice Properties Bursary
for Women in Construction*



Harkirat Dhaliwal

Construction Management,
George Brown College

2023 CAWIC BURSARY RECIPIENTS Continued



Sophie Delaquis
Bachelor of
Science –
Construction Project
Management,
Southern Alberta
Institute of
Technology



**Chantal
Shahmooradian**
Master of
Architecture,
Toronto
Metropolitan
University



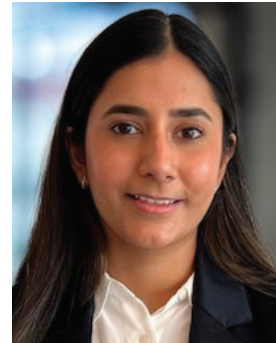
Avery Sheppard
Bachelor of Science
in Civil Engineering,
University of Alberta



**Dagmawit
Habtom**
Architectural
Technology,
George Brown
College



**Kennady
Remillard**
B. Tech,
Construction
Management
Degree, Red
River Polytechnic



Kirandeep Kaur
Bachelor of Science
– Construction
Project
Management,
Southern Alberta
Institute of
Technology

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Shawntel Campbell
General Construction Carpentry Techniques, Algonquin College of Applied Arts & Technology



Rebecca World
Carpenter-Red Seal, Yukon University

If your company would like to support the next generation of women in construction through your own bursary, please contact bursary@cwic.ca.



Valaria White
Electrical Techniques, Niagara College of Applied Arts & Technology



Robyn de Groot
Welding, Vancouver Island University



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Nathan Bergstrand

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Ken Luxon
Steve Murray

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"Since 2005, our Bursary Program has helped more than 75 women across Canada pursue their construction education, and we look forward to continuing to help pave the way for the next generation of women."

– Christina Kontogeorgopoulos,
CAWIC

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Working Together Towards An Incident Free Future



Workplace Safety - A Priority in Skilled Trades:

Workplace safety is a top priority in skilled trades, proper industrial workwear can help reduce these risks and keep workers safe and productive. New safety innovations have been designed specifically for workwear, including anti-slip features that prevent slips, trips, and falls, as well as IceFX technology which provides cold weather slip and fall protection, and VizLite reflective technology, which is challenging the industry standards for enhanced visibility in low light and no light conditions.

The Increasing Selection of Women's Industrial Workwear:

Traditionally, finding workwear that fits well has been a challenge for women in the skilled trades. However, the selection of women's workwear has evolved over time, with more options available that cater to their specific needs. Finding workwear that fits well has many benefits, including improved comfort, enhanced mobility, and increased protection. With an expanding selection of women's workwear, it is more accessible to find the perfect fit.

Commitment to Expand the Quality and Fit of Women's Workwear:

Mark's Commercial is committed to expanding the quality and fit of women's industrial workwear. We recognize the importance of offering women's workwear that performs as well as men's. To achieve this, Mark's Commercial has been investing in research and development to create innovative designs that are specifically tailored to the needs of women in the skilled trades. By continually improving the quality and fit of women's workwear, Mark's Commercial is helping to ensure that women have access to the best possible protective gear.

"Mark's Commercial is committed to expanding the quality and fit of women's industrial workwear"

Industrial workwear and safety innovations are essential for keeping all workers safe and productive in the skilled trades. Mark's Commercial is committed to offering a range of innovative safety features in workwear that cater to the unique needs of all individuals. As the selection of workwear continues to expand, workers are better able to find the perfect fit to enhance their comfort, mobility, and protection. With a commitment to future innovations in design, Mark's Commercial is helping to ensure that everyone has access to the best possible protective gear.



coming soon

ELEVATE. EMPOWER. TRANSFORM.

*The power of women's perspectives for
construction excellence*

Join us for CAWIC's upcoming national conference on
September 10-12, 2024 in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario

**STAY TUNED FOR
OUR BIGGEST YEAR
IN CAWIC EVENTS
YET!**



- May 28, 2024 - Spring Golf Day
- Summer - Wine Tour
- July 2024 - Summer Social
- September 2024 - Family Event
- November 2024 - Holiday Mingle
- And so much more, including webinars, site tours, leadership training, and member events across the country

Enhancing the Success of Women in Construction

CAWIC Membership



The Canadian Association of Women in Construction (CAWIC) is the national not-for-profit organization committed to enhancing the success of women in the Canadian construction industry.

As the leading voice for women in construction, we recognize the importance of advancing skilled trades as a mechanism to create a strong, innovative, and thriving country, and we are committed to helping support women throughout their construction careers.

Membership with CAWIC has its benefits

- Network with connections from across the industry
- Expand your knowledge and skills through programs, mentorship, and events
- Gain ongoing communication and information through CAWIC's website, newsletter, and other resources
- Be part of a strong industry voice for women in construction
- Expand your company's presence with your logo and website posted on cawic.ca
- Enhance your profile by being included in CAWIC's Membership Directory
- And, so much more.

JOIN CAWIC TODAY

www.cawic.ca

CAWIC MEMBERSHIPS

INDIVIDUALS

CAWIC can help support you along every step of your construction career through mentorship, programs, events, and networking.

STUDENTS

Students who have a valid student card can access a wide range of member benefits free of charge.

CORPORATE

CAWIC can help support your team in connecting with fellow professionals and accessing resources, events, and programs to advance their skills and knowledge.

SUPPORT YOUR TEAM WITH A CAWIC CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP

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Event sponsor*	✓	✓		
Voting members receive complimentary admission to a select program or event*	✓	✓	✓	
All employees members	✓	✓	✓	
Company logo on website	✓	✓	✓	✓
Digital marketing package	✓	✓	✓	✓
Early bird access to events	✓	✓	✓	✓
Social media promotion	✓	✓	✓	✓
Voting members	8	5	3	3

**Does not include CAWIC Signature Events or Conference*

Leadership ♦ Mentorship
Membership ♦ Partnership

Thank you TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

CAWIC would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our outstanding volunteers who support the association throughout the year.

Through your investment in CAWIC, you are showing your dedication and leadership for women in construction. Your support is critical to helping CAWIC connect and bring together women from across the construction industry.

We look forward to your continued support throughout 2024 and beyond.

Alessandra Valerio
Alyssa Robinson
Annette Matthews
Ashley Marshall
Asta Schouten
Brittany Nicolas
Brooke Nichols
Carla Parsons
Catherine Chant
Cheryl Zahara
Cheyanne Hammell
Christina Kontogeorgopoulos
Christina Marra
Dannielle Fenske
Deb Howey
Diana Stojkoska
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Sue Peterson
Tianna Shahmooradian
Victoria Roberts

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