

Construction Training and Support for Women: Sisters in the Building Trades

Sisters In The Building Trades is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) corporation founded in 2006 to provide women working in the construction trades with individual and personal support as well as mentoring and assistance in what has predominately been a male-dominated industry. According to Sisters in the Building Trades, women have remained at 2.5% of the construction-trades skilled workforce for the last 30 years.

More specifically, the mission of the Sisters in the Building Trades is to "expand a network of active women that will affirm building trades sisters as a positive and growing part of the construction workforce; increase the number of trades women through cooperative recruitment efforts and mentoring support for enhanced retention; hold regular meetings allowing women to network and share their experiences; match mentors to new trades women; enter into partnership with disadvantaged women to provide encouragement and hope; reinforce appropriate workplace conduct; increase public awareness of construction careers; provide speakers to career fairs and other outreach opportunities; support recruiting efforts of apprenticeship programs; and use our skills in volunteer work."

Melina Harris, President of Sisters in the Building Trade and Carpenter's Union Local 1797 member in Renton, Washington was selected as one of Engineering News Record's Top 25 Newsmakers of 2010. Harris' efforts have helped Tradeswomen in the U.K., Australia and South Africa, among other countries, learn about workers' rights, career paths and mentoring opportunities in their construction markets. She was instrumental in helping Australian Tradeswomen form their first-ever networking group.

At the first national conference for women in the trades held on April 30, 2011 in Oakland, California, more than 625 craftswomen gathered to learn how to boost their share of the workforce. The meeting, co-sponsored by the AFL-CIO's Building and Construction Trades Dept., included women from the U.S. and Canada (ENR 5/4/2011).

Disaster Training

Harris is using the group's expertise and contacts in local emergency response to develop the Building Trades Disaster Response Project, an initiative in Seattle and beyond to coordinate training efforts between building trades' members and local, state and federal officials.

As a method of preparation for the unforeseen, the Sisters in the Building Trades uses its unique ability to reach out across trade and political lines and barriers and is:

- Offering OSHA 7600 Training, OSHA 10, HAZWOPER 40 and First Aid/CPR.
- Reaching out to All Building Trade Crafts, and their Apprenticeship Instructors as well as Contractors and their Safety Personnel
- Coordinating an effort to build a local database of trained volunteers
- Coordinating an effort for shared training of First Aid/CPR, OSHA 10 and HAZWOPPER 40

Sisters in the Building Trades is working on coordinating training with Search and Rescue, FEMA, Red Cross, and CERT Community Emergency Response Training. Sisters in the Building Trades is also working to connect disaster training and its skilled workers and volunteers with:

- City Emergency Management
- County Emergency Management
- State Emergency Management
- Federal Emergency Management
- Washington State Labor & Industries/DOSH/WISHA

Members Of The Sisters Alliance Project

[Allied Cleveland Tradeswomen](#)
[Anew Apprenticeship An Nontraditional Employment For Women Wa Puget Sound](#)
[Canadian Construction Women](#)
[Cluw Coalition Of Labor Union Women](#)
[Us Department Of Labor, Women's Bureau Region X](#)
[Green For All Hard Hatted Women](#)
[Institute For Women And Work](#)
[Legal Momentum](#)
[The Seattle Majestics](#)
[Moxie Trades](#)
[Nawic – National Association For Women In Construction](#)
[National Committee On Pay Equity](#)
[National Organization For Women Nevada](#)
[Port Jobs](#)
[Professional Women In Construction](#)
[Sheet Metal Local 66 Women's Group](#)
[FaceBook Page](#)
[Sisters In The Trades – Canada](#)
[Susan Eisenberg On Equal Terms](#)
[Tradeswomen, Inc \(Ca\)](#)
[Washington Women In Trades](#)
[Wild Labor Women's Institute For Leadership Development](#)
[Commission On Women](#)
[Women Ironworkers](#)
[Women's Council Of The Master Builder's Association](#)
[Womens Tool Shed](#)

[Alaska Women's Network](#)
[American Society Of Professional Estimators](#)
[Blue Collar Women](#)
[Chicago Women In Trades](#)
[Construction Center Of Excellence](#)
[Electrical Workers Minority Caucus](#)
[Ibew Local 46 Women's Group](#)
[Jobs With Justice Wa](#)
[Lower Nine](#)
[Missouri Women In Trades](#)
[National Alliance For Partnerships In Equity](#)
[National Association Of Women In Masonry](#)
[National Organization For Women Seattle](#)
[Oregon Tradeswomen](#)
[Pride And A Paycheck](#)
[Sawic South Africa Women In Construction](#)
[Sisters In The Brotherhood Ubc](#)
[NY Sisters In The Brotherhood Ubc](#)
[Southern Oregon Tradeswomen's Network](#)
[The Union Edge Talk Radio Show](#)
[Vermont Works For Women](#)
[W.I.N.T.E.R. Women](#)
[Women Count For The Presidential](#)
[Womantalk Live Radio](#)
[Women In Construction Shop](#)
[Workshop For Women](#)

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