



**July 8, 2019**

The Honorable Jill Dunlop  
Associate Minister of Children and Women's Issues  
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services  
5th Floor  
438 University Ave.  
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

**Dear Associate Minister Dunlop,**

Congratulations on your recent appointment to Associate Minister of Children and Women's Issues.

The Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON) represents over 200 residential builders of high, mid, and low-rise buildings in the province, with a focus on the GTA. Our members build Ontario's communities, homes, and future. We are committed to providing leadership and fostering innovation in the industry through the following six core focuses: Training and Apprenticeship; Government Relations; Labour Relations; Health and Safety; Building Science and Innovation; and Building Code Reform and Technical Standards.

As a long-time supporter of the skilled trades and in your new role as Associate Minister of Children and Women's Issues, we would like to highlight the importance of increasing the number of women in the trades.

While the number of women in the trades is increasing every year, women remain under-represented, comprising only 13.7% of all apprentices across Canada. This is a troubling stat for two main reasons. First, on its face, the number is simply too low. Second, as one of the better stats on women in construction, it illustrates a glaring data-gap. In order to meaningfully address the lack of women in the trades, we must first acquire better data by trade and sector. This will allow the government to use metrics to direct funding and resources to programs that work.

As you may know, this past March, RESCON released two reports surrounding recruitment and retention in the skilled trades.

The first report on recruitment, [\*A Behavioural Economics Approach to Recruitment in Skilled Construction Trades\*](#), provided a wide array of behaviourally driven tactics to: improve the impacts of educators; change the misperceptions of parents and young people about skilled construction work; and enhance the online platforms regarding careers in construction. The report noted that improving information about the skilled trades and using behavioral economic insights to career guidance can have significant impressions on young women when making decisions about post-secondary pathways.

The report also highlighted programs across the GTA that are providing mentoring, career coaching and training just for women, like the Halton Industry Education Council and the Centre for Skills Training and Development, organizations which RESCON partners with.

While it is important that we are recruiting more young women into the industry, it is equally important that we are retaining women currently employed in the skilled trades.

The second RESCON report on retention, [Retaining Employees in the Skilled Trades](#) (REST) summarizes findings from a comprehensive survey of construction workers in the residential and residential-related infrastructure industry across the GTA.

This report found that women have the highest representation in the construction industry in Trades Support roles like administrators, designers and planners rather than on-site in the skilled trades. The report also found that of those surveyed, men reported having worked longer in construction than women, raising further questions regarding retention of women in the skilled trades.

One specific recommendation from the REST report was to invest in high quality media production, specifically: *Documentary material that promotes the role of women in the trades and portrays the trades as a viable pathway to self-sufficiency for those in marginalized communities.*

RESCON, in partnership with Job Talks, has adopted the above recommendation by releasing the Job Talks Construction video series which highlights [women](#) (and men) in the construction skilled trades.

In order to continue the conversation and progress on this topic we would like to meet with you and your team to discuss ways RESCON can work collaboratively with the government to lead young women on pathways to success in the skilled trades.

Please contact Amina Dibe to set up a time that is convenient for a meeting. She can be reached via email at [dibe@rescon.com](mailto:dibe@rescon.com) or by phone at 905-760-7777.

Thank you,

Andrew Pariser

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amina', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Vice-President  
RESCON