



Women in Nontraditional Trades: Recruitment, Retention and Placement Resource Guide



Women in Nontraditional Trades: Support Strategies and Online Resources

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Introduction

The U.S. Department of Labor describes nontraditional occupations for women as those in which women comprise 25 percent or less of those employed. Job Corps encourages our female youth to consider male-dominated industries such as automotive, construction, renewable resources and energy, and transportation. In collaboration with industry representatives, credential partners, and the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship, Job Corps has strengthened its career technical training program to give our female graduates a competitive edge in the nontraditional workforce. Job Corps also works to implement an effective female recruitment plan to develop female-targeted promotional materials.

This resource guide provides additional strategies and resources to further engage our female youth population in outreach efforts and in the classroom. In it, you will find information on female recruitment, curriculum, and organizational resources.

Job Corps welcomes tips from the field to share with the Job Corps Community. Please utilize the Discussion Board on the Career Technical Training website to post your best practices and inquiries.

Job Corps' Strategy to Train More Female Students in Nontraditional Trades

Job Corps has taken several strategic, system-wide actions to positively impact female students' experiences in career technical training and give them a competitive advantage in the marketplace. These include:

- **Identification of High-Growth, High-Demand Occupations:** Job Corps has identified high-growth industry sectors and high-demand occupations most appropriate in terms of successful entry-level placement of its graduates. This process included the elimination of many shorter-term, lower wage training areas that did not position our students –

particularly female students – competitively for entry-level employment leading to living wage careers.

- **Alignment of Career Technical Training Programs with Industry Certifications:** Job Corps continues to align its career technical training programs with industry-based standards and certifications. Equipping our students with in-demand skills positions them to attain greater industry knowledge, more opportunities for advancement and higher earning potential.
- **Green-Collar Training Initiative:** Today’s Job Corps female student learns and thrives in an eco-friendly classroom. Since launching the Green-Collar Training Initiative in 2009, students receive the benefits of: (1) a strong set of work readiness skills required in the green economy; (2) green career pathways for education and career advancement; and (3) green technologies incorporated into training programs.
- **Better Occupational Opportunities for Tradeswomen (B.O.O.T) Award:** The Job Corps National Office created the Better Occupational Opportunities for Tradeswomen (B.O.O.T) Award to acknowledge female students in nontraditional trades who excel in performance and commitment to their trade. An award is also given to an instructor who inspires and mentors female students in nontraditional trades.
- **Female Recruitment Magazine:** Each month, the Job Corps Community, in particular Outreach and Admissions counselors, receive the “Y.E.S.” (Young. Empowered. Successful) Magazine. Information covers traditional and nontraditional trades, student profiles, labor market information, and testimonials.

Job Corps recognizes that the selection of a career technical training program plays a major role in recruitment and retention of females. That is why it is working collaboratively system-wide in support of successful female outcomes.

Female Recruitment Tips

The Job Corps Outreach and Admissions staff play a vital role in increasing female enrollment as well as promoting nontraditionally female trades. Center staff--from administrators, instructors, to outreach and admissions--in collaboration with their regional office, can develop an effective female recruitment campaign based on the following suggestions.

Tip #1: Set a Goal

Goal-setting marks the beginning of desired outcomes. Develop goals that are realistic and attainable, such as the following:

- Goal – Increase females in the Construction trades by 15% over the next two years.
- Goal – Equip Career Technical Training instructors with classroom strategies for female student retention.
- Goal – Increase employer awareness about Job Corps female graduates in nontraditional trades.

Tip #2: Develop a Strategy

Once goals have been identified, map out specific steps to achieve those goals. For example:

GOALS	STRATEGY
Offer complete range of student support services.	Establish a mentor network for women interested in entering nontraditional positions.
Strong collaboration.	All center staff are equipped with female recruitment strategies and materials.

Tip #3: Targeted Messaging

Staying on topic is essential in capturing your audience's attention. For example, create marketing materials highlighting female engagement such as job opportunities for women and use real student quotes. Some suggestions to keep in mind when developing your messaging:

- Market trades as a career.

- Required qualifications such as physical fitness and math-orientation.
- Diversity of job-site projects.
- Apprenticeship opportunities.

Tip #4: Outreach

Job Corps Outreach and Admissions (O/A) staff are integral players in recruiting females for non-traditional trades. Involve the O/A staff in the development and launch of key activities that support female recruitment efforts such as hosting Job Corps tours and fairs.

Outreach means reaching out to your community. Here are a few simple activities:

- Advertise in local publications inviting females to call for information about a traditionally male program.
- Host Job Corps tours and fairs.
- Arrange job-site visits and experimental work experiences to introduce female students and potential students to nontraditional careers.

Tip #5: Support Services

Provide support services required for student success, such as mentor programs, child care and transportation.

For additional resources on female recruitment, please refer to the following:

- Center for Energy Workforce Development (CEWD) – <http://www.cewd.org>
- CEWD March 2014 Newsletter - <http://cewd.org/newsletter/March2014.htm#1>
- CEWD Female Recruitment in Nontraditional Positions toolkit, <http://www.cewd.org/toolkits/cewdhhwtoolkit.pdf>
- U.S. Department of Labor – Recruitment and Retention of Women in Washington’s Apprenticeships, <http://www.lni.wa.gov/TradesLicensing/Apprenticeship/files/pubs/womensbooklet.pdf>

- University of Missouri-Columbia - Gender Equity Project, <http://www.napequity.org/nape-content/uploads/R2g-tiprecruiting.pdf>

Recommended Resources for Instructors

Instructors are the front line in connecting with their students. Equipped with relevant resources, lesson plans, and activities, instructors impart invaluable information and skill sets. The following resources address women in nontraditional trades and their preparation for required industry knowledge and skills.

- Nontraditional Employment for Women (NEW) Apprenticeship Curriculum - NEW's programs include a mix of hands-on shop skills, classroom instruction, physical fitness assessment, job development and placement services, social service referrals, and case management, http://www.new-nyc.org/forwomen/program_description.html.
- Wi\$eUp – Wi\$eUp is a financial education project targeted to Generation X and Y women. The centerpiece of the program is an eight-module curriculum offered online, as well as in a classroom setting, in educational institutions and other organizations in all ten U.S. Department of Labor/Women’s Bureau regions. In the online program, the curriculum is complemented by an “Ask the Experts” feature, which permits participants to send questions by e-mail to volunteers with financial expertise. Another feature available to participants in both the online and classroom-based versions is a series of bi-monthly, *free* one-hour teleconference calls with featured speakers and a question and answer session. Participants and experts are recruited by local organizations who collaborate with the Women’s Bureau, <http://wiseupwomen.tamu.edu>.

Classroom Strategies

Complement your successful female recruitment campaign with a strong retention program in the classroom. Sustaining the student's interest begins with examining the classroom environment: (1) does she understand the expectations to succeed in the program?; (2) is she physically fit to perform the duties and tasks required on a project site?; and (3) is she treated equally to her male counterparts?

The following resources provide guidance in developing classroom strategies that can assist in her successful completion of the trade.

- Race Forward: The Center for Racial Justice Innovation (formerly Applied Research Center) – Green Equity Toolkit: Advancing Race, Gender and Economic Equity in the Green Economy - <https://www.raceforward.org/research/reports/green-equity-toolkit-advancing-race-gender-and-economic-equity-green-economy>
- Institute for Women in Trades, Technology & Science (IWITTS) - <http://education.ky.gov/CTE/Documents/STRATEGIESFORINCREASINGNONTRADITIONALENROLLMENT.pdf>
- Tomboy Tools – A Maryland-based company that sells construction tools designed specifically for women. <http://www.tomboytools.com/>
- Tradeswomen, Inc. – A support and advocacy organization for women who work in the trades
<http://www.tradeswomen.org/PDFs/HireAWoman-recruit.pdf>

Female Empowerment Organizational Resources

Collaborating with organizations, both local and national, that promote women in the workforce can benefit recruitment efforts, retention, and workforce readiness. Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW) is one such example. The following is a list of national organizations to assist in this endeavor.

- Automotive Women’s Alliance Foundation (AWAF) - <http://www.awafoundation.org/>
AWAF is a professional organization dedicated to the advancement of women in the global automotive industry.
- National Association for Women in Construction (NAWIC) - <http://www.nawic.org/nawic/default.asp>
NAWIC is an international association that promotes and supports the advancement and employment of women in the construction industry.
- National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) – <http://www.nawb.org>
NAWB connects workforce development professionals, Workforce Investment Board members, and policy makers with the knowledge, training and tools to help make informed, smart decisions about how to invest in workforce strategies that advance the economic health of their communities through a skilled, competitive workforce.
- Nontraditional Employment for Women (NEW) - <http://www.new-nyc.org/>
NEW is a New York City based organization that provides occupational skills and fitness training, job readiness, counseling and case management, and job placement services in occupations in which women are underrepresented.
- U.S. Department of Labor Women’s Bureau - <http://www.dol.gov/wb/welcome.html>
The Women's Bureau develops policies and standards and conducts inquiries to safeguard the interests of working women; to advocate for their equality and economic security for themselves and their families; and to promote quality work environments.

Quick facts on Women in Nontraditional Trades

Nontraditional Occupations for Women in 2012 -

<http://www.dol.gov/wb/stats/Occupations.htm#nontrad>

2008 data - <http://www.dol.gov/wb/factsheets/nontra2008.htm>

- Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations (WANTO) Grant Program - <http://www.dol.gov/wb/programs/family2.htm>

The U.S. Department of Labor's Women's Bureau (WB) and the Office of Apprenticeship (OA) jointly administer the Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations (WANTO) grant program. The purpose of the WANTO program is to increase the number of women entering and remaining in apprenticeships associated with non-traditional occupations. This purpose is achieved by providing grant funds to eligible community-based organizations that, in turn, provide technical assistance to help employers and labor unions place and retain women in apprenticeships that are in non-traditional occupations.

- Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW) - <http://www.wowonline.org/>
Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW) works nationally and in its home community of Washington, DC to build pathways to economic independence for America's families, women, and girls. WOW has a distinctive history in changing the landscape of women and work.

- Work 4 Women: Exploring High-Wage Nontraditional Career Options - http://www.wowonline.org/pdf/W4W_Exploring_High_Wage_Nontraditional_Career_Options.pdf

Work4Women provides an opportunity for women to find job opportunities with high salaries. This project from Wider Opportunities for Women, or WOW, helps women and girls explore nontraditional jobs, find training programs and support systems to help existing women workers remain in the male-dominated fields.