

Ten Easy Steps for **Retaining Girls** for Your Professional Technical Class

- ① Create a safe space in your classroom. Post a statement that corresponds with your school's policy on welcoming a diverse student body. Intervene to prevent bullying and harassment. Teach tolerance and acceptance.
- ② Counteract the invisibility of women in the trades! Present images of young women in the trades on your classroom walls.
- ③ Dispel stereotypes about the kind of work that men and women can do; discuss and de-construct ideas about gender and physical work.
- ④ Build a "girl-friendly" curriculum. Here are a few Women in Trades Fair projects from a variety of workshop presenters that have proved popular: picture frames, bird houses, flower planters, trivets, and wind chimes.
- ⑤ Bring in community role models. Tradeswomen can offer candid advice about their experiences in professional technical classes and in the field.
- ⑥ Use gender neutral language. Verbally demonstrate that you include young women in your classroom. Consider using female and male pronouns and some terms like "journey-level" or "journey person" rather than "journeyman." For example, "When a carpenter completes her apprenticeship, she reaches journey-level status."
- ⑦ Offer young women information about careers in the trades. Visit apprenticeship training centers. Compare wages in the trades to other careers; be sure to include traditionally female dominated careers like child care or office work.
- ⑧ Call on successful graduates and past students to act as mentors and role models.
- ⑨ Encourage young women to take leadership roles in the trades. We invite you and your students to lead workshops at the Women in Trades Fair; your students will gain confidence in their skills and abilities as they teach others what they have learned.
- ⑩ Ask for evaluation and feedback. Let young women tell you how you might modify the class projects to be more inclusive of female students.

Take an extra step. Become an advocate for women in the trades:

Educate yourself about the history of women's work in the trades. Did you know that until Title IX in 1972 most "shop" classes were for boys only and most "home ec" classes were for girls only? And until 1978, women could be legally excluded from apprenticeship programs. Talk openly about history and the barriers women and also men of color have faced in entering apprenticeship programs. Do your part to chip away at those barriers!

**For more information, contact the Trades Offer Girls Options (TO GO)
Program of Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc.**

www.tradeswomen.net * 503-335-8200
1714 NE Alberta St. * Portland, OR 97211