

Women in Apprenticeship Background & Context Information

Occupational Segregation

Nontraditional occupations are defined by the Department of Labor as those in which women comprise 25 percent or less of the total employed workforce. Women have made major strides into many traditionally male industries and occupations in recent decades. Public service blue collar occupations such as police officers boast more than 10 percent female workers nationwide. Due to the relative “invisibility” of trades careers to women and girls, as well as discrimination in the industry, the percentage of women working in construction trades has remained stubbornly low at less than 3 percent since the 1970s. However, due to the large size of the construction industry, more women are employed today as trades workers than are employed as dental hygienists, for example.

Wage Segregation

Wages in Traditional vs. Non-Traditional Careers for U.S. Women

Occupation	% Female	Avg. Wages
Secretary	96.1%	\$15.40
Receptionist	93.6%	\$12.57
Waitress	73.2%	\$9.77
Cashier	75.5%	\$9

Occupation	% Female	Avg. Wages
Truck Driver	8.9%	\$17.72
Mechanic	1.6%	\$19.07
Firefighter	4.8%	\$24.25
Construction Trades	3%	\$22.71 (PDX area)

National stats: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Annual Averages 2008.
 Portland area stats: May 2008 Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Area Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton, OR-WA

Women in Apprenticeship

Nationally, only 3.2 percent of all trades apprentices are women. Oregon has double the national average inclusion rate at 6.9 percent female apprentices. The registered apprenticeship programs in the Portland metropolitan region with which OTI partners include nearly 10 percent women on average.

Of the 6,400 registered apprenticeship programs tracked by the U.S. Department of Labor, nearly 75 percent have zero female apprentices.

American Apprenticeship Initiative

The American Apprenticeship Initiative (AAI) is a part of a policy platform to address the rising costs of higher education. Over \$175 million in grants was awarded in fall of 2015 to states that submitted competitive applications to expand apprenticeship opportunities for workers and businesses. Oregon received \$3 million to develop apprenticeship programs in its promising advanced manufacturing industry. This work has continued through OTI's "Industrial Fabrication Program," awarded in 2017.

National Apprenticeship Week

The Department of Labor has designated November 13th - 19th, 2017 as National Apprenticeship Week. This week presents apprenticeship community stakeholders with the opportunity to showcase their successful programs and partnerships and elevate the message of apprenticeship.

Women in Apprenticeship Day

National Women in Apprenticeship Day is November 16th, 2017. Oregon is observing this day on Thursday, November 16th, 2017. Oregon Tradeswomen is honored to have the support of Governor Kate Brown and Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler both of whom have issued proclamations in observance of this day.