



NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Community Services

B.C. SUPPORTS MENTORING, MORE JOB OPTIONS FOR WOMEN

VICTORIA – Women re-entering the workforce after a prolonged absence, as well as those entering for the first time, will benefit from focused career support as a result of Empowered to Work, a new mentoring project announced today by Ida Chong, Minister of Community Services and Minister Responsible for Seniors' and Women's Issues.

“Our government is committed to expanding opportunities for women in B.C.’s robust economy,” said Chong. “However, we recognize women often face challenges in launching their careers, especially if they lack experience and training, have been away from the job market, or are new to Canada. Empowered to Work gets at the heart of those challenges, by matching women with experienced, successful mentors who will guide and encourage them as they find their way in the workforce – whether that’s the trades or another career path.”

The Province is awarding three grants, totalling just over \$450,000 to the Minerva Foundation, GT Hiring Solutions Inc. and the YWCA of Vancouver. With this funding, these organizations will deliver unique training and mentoring programs to more than 400 women between the ages of 18 and 60. The programs vary in length from day-long workshops to courses from six weeks to nine months and will be available in the Lower Mainland and on Vancouver Island, including Victoria, Duncan and Campbell River.

“The skills training and mentoring support I’m getting from the HardHats program will enable me to get a great job and head start on an apprenticeship opportunity,” said Melissa Chancey, a student enrolled in a current HardHats course run by GT Hiring Solutions. “Every week, I’m gaining new skills, learning about the different sub-trades and meeting the best people to work for in Victoria. I’m really looking forward to the opportunities ahead in the construction field.”

The YWCA’s Connect to Success is a new women’s mentoring program, while GT Hiring Solutions’ HardHats and Minerva’s Helping Women Work are established programs. Support from the Province will allow the latter two organizations to accommodate more women, expand an existing program or broaden their scope to include women they were not previously serving.

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1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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