

# CHOOSE THE CAREER THAT FITS WOMEN IN TRADES

Carmen was an unemployed single mother who wanted a chance to learn valuable skills and earn a decent wage for her family.

She chose a career in the trades.



**“I knew the jobs I liked best were the ones that were physical and hands-on, but I knew I would need some training to get a job that paid more than minimum wage.”**

*As a single mother, 33-year old Carmen needed to provide for herself and for her child. But without skills, she had to take low-paying jobs. She was bright, hard-working and capable of more, but she needed help to make it happen.*

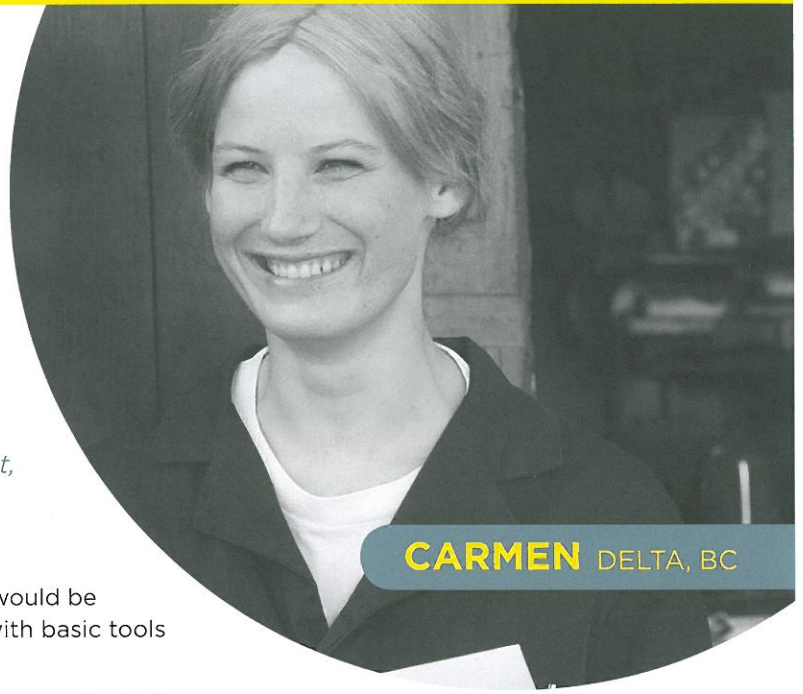
Carmen struggled to pay the bills by working as a cleaner or day labourer. It wasn't stable or fulfilling work, and it didn't pay the bills for herself and her daughter. “I knew the jobs I liked best were the ones that were physical and hands-on, but I needed training to get a job that paid more than minimum wage.”

She did some research into the trades and discovered that she had an opportunity to earn wages that were much higher. When her employment counsellor recommended that she attend the women in trades training information session at the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW), she jumped at the chance. The UFCW is one of the partner organizations participating in ITA Women in Trades Training, an initiative sponsored by the Industry Training Authority (ITA). She applied for the introductory course immediately, and a few weeks later, she was thrilled to learn that she had been accepted, and

that her tuition would be paid for, along with basic tools and textbooks.

She proved to be a motivated student who didn't miss a day of class. After being introduced to a range of opportunities in the trades, she decided that she was drawn to sheet metal work. “My interest had really been sparked earlier, when some previous tenants moved out of the house I live in and left a roll of sheet metal behind. I started cutting it and working with it and I loved watching the metal take shape.”

When she finished her course, Carmen took the standard pre-apprenticeship exam for sheet metal work—and passed. Next, the ITA Women in Trades Training initiative helped connect her with an apprenticeship opportunity that would allow her to continue learning on the job while she earned a good wage. Within two weeks, she was interviewed and hired by a Vancouver company that builds hospital and laboratory equipment from sheet metal.



**CARMEN** DELTA, BC

Carmen is doing work that she loves, learning something new every day and earning a great salary. Just as important, she is doing work that her daughter can be proud of. “Now I'm a role model for her; she's already interested in the trades. And I hope to be an inspiration to other women.”

#### **FIND OUT MORE**

Find out whether a career in the trades is the right fit for you. The ITA Women in Trades Training initiative is connecting women of all skill levels and backgrounds to funded trades training opportunities.

Call **778-328-8700** in the Lower Mainland, **1-866-660-6011** Toll Free in B.C., or e-mail [info@womenintrades.ca](mailto:info@womenintrades.ca).

You'll also find more information at [womenintrades.ca](http://womenintrades.ca).

#### **ABOUT THE INDUSTRY TRAINING AUTHORITY**

The Industry Training Authority (ITA) helps people in B.C. reach their full potential by supporting training in the trades. The ITA is a provincial crown agency that manages B.C.'s trades training system, working collaboratively with industry, training providers, career counsellors, labour unions, government and others.

The ITA has made a special commitment through the Canada-B.C. Labour Market Agreement funding to support Aboriginal people, women and immigrants in finding career opportunities in the trades.

The ITA Women in Trades Training initiative currently involves five projects operated by partner organizations, and is part of a long-term strategy to match women's skills to the needs of B.C.'s workplace.

**WITT**  
WOMEN IN  
TRADES  
TRAINING

Canada

 **BRITISH COLUMBIA**  
The Best Place on Earth

 **ita**  
industry training authority

Initiative funding provided by the Industry Training Authority (ITA), through the Canada-B.C. Labour Market Agreement between the Governments of Canada and British Columbia. For more information about the ITA and its programs, visit [www.itabc.ca](http://www.itabc.ca).