



PRESS RELEASE



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Pre-Trades Program for Women Expands: More Classroom Capacity Plus Housing for Students

EDMONTON, Alberta, October 27, 2006 — A 42-unit affordable transitional housing facility and expanded training center are taking shape out of a downtown warehouse.

Women Building Futures, a not-for-profit society, is expanding their training facility and adding a housing component, which will allow 400 women each year to access the 16 week JourneyWoman Start Program, which provides “apprentice-ready” employees to the construction trades.

“Today’s celebration marks an important step forward for the Women Building Futures training facility,” said the Honourable Jim Prentice, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development. “Canada’s new government is proud to be a partner in this project, which is not only helping to build a better a community, but is also helping women build better lives.”

“The Women Building Futures facility expansion is an excellent example of the innovative projects that are possible when different levels of government, not-for-profit organizations and communities work together on a common vision,” said Yvonne Fritz, Minister of Seniors and Community Supports. “The Government of Alberta is proud to be a partner in a project that is creating quality, sustainable and affordable accommodations for low-income women and children.”

“The City of Edmonton is proud to support WBF as they strive to help women find their way out of poverty and into trade related careers. We believe the housing facility will help alleviate another stress for these students as they pursue a sustainable future,” says Mayor Stephen Mandel. “I think it’s a great opportunity for the students themselves to be part of the retrofit as the warehouse is renovated and two floors are added.”

“Women Building Futures is a remarkable program that helps women succeed in the construction trades,” said Rob Martin, Executive Director of the Edmonton Housing Trust Fund. “The Trust Fund is proud to be a partner in the transitional housing project portion of this development, which will provide a safe, affordable home for low-income women and their children, helping to ensure their chances for future success.”

“Since 1988 WBF has helped hundreds of low-income women prepare for entry into construction-related jobs and apprenticeships. The new training facility will allow us to increase that number to over 400 students each year. The housing facility will improve access to our program for women across Alberta,” said Tamara Hauglum, Chair of the WBF Board of Directors. “The new space will also allow us to expand our programs beyond the existing construction trades to include program areas such as road building, motive power, electronics and communications and more,” added Hauglum.

The project received more than \$3.4 million from the Canada – Alberta Affordable Housing Program, \$850,000 from Western Economic Diversification, and more than \$1.4 million from the City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Housing

Trust Fund. Construction is underway to retrofit two floors into a new training facility, to retrofit another floor into residential units and to add two additional floors for housing.

WBF is currently conducting a campaign to secure funding to complete the land purchase for the site where the warehouse stands, to offer a scholarship program and to create an endowment fund to support annual operating costs of the new building.

Media inquiries:

Leslie Lozinski
Marketing Director
Women Building Futures
Cell: 780-499-7103

Sophie Dupuis
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
403-515-2986

Robert Storrier
Public Affairs officer
Alberta Seniors and Community Supports
780-415-9952

Jim Molnar
Communications
Edmonton Housing Trust Fund
780-944-5697
Cell: 780-405-0735

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