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Chair

Ms. Hélène LeBlanc

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● (1100)

[*Translation*]

The Chair (Ms. Hélène LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard, NDP)): Good morning, everyone. Welcome to the 57th meeting of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. Pursuant to the Standing Orders, we are continuing our study on women in skilled trades and science, technology, engineering and mathematics occupations.

Ms. Freeman, go ahead.

[*English*]

Ms. Mylène Freeman (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, NDP): Thank you, Chair.

Before we start, I just want to give notice of a motion that I'm putting down. Obviously we can't debate it today, but I just want to *dépose* it. It reads:

> That the committee on the Status of Women denounce the egregious mismanagement in the Canadian Armed Forces concerning sexual misconduct in the military; that the Committee recommend that the Canadian Government implement all ten of the recommendations found in the Deschamps Report, released on April 30th 2015; and report this to the House.

Thank you.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you.

[*English*]

We are going to translate it and distribute it afterwards.

[*Translation*]

Good morning, witnesses. Welcome.

Today, we have the pleasure of hearing from Marie Connolly, a professor at the Department of Economics, Université du Québec à Montréal.

[*English*]

From the Canadian Association of Women in Construction, we have the pleasure of having Ms. Tammy Evans, who is the president. By video conference from Halifax, Nova Scotia, from Irving Shipbuilding Inc., we have Madame Anna Marenick, who is the director of community relations and value proposition; and from the Women Unlimited Association, we have Ms. Doreen Parsons, who is the manager.

By video conference from Toronto, Ontario, we have, from Unifor, Ms. Lisa Kelly, director, women's department—thank you for waving—and by video conference from Windsor, Ontario, we have, from Unifor, Ms. Teresa Weymouth, national skilled trades coordinator.

We're all looking forward to your testimony. We especially want to thank you for coming today.

Has someone been left out? *Pardonnez-moi*.

By video conference from Umea, Sweden, we have, as an individual, Ms. Kathleen Lahey, professor, faculty of law, Queen's University.

Thank you all very much for being here. Without further ado, each presenter will have 10 minutes, and then we will have the rounds of questioning.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Connolly, you have the floor for 10 minutes.

Prof. Marie Connolly (Professor, Department of Economics, Université du Québec à Montréal, As an Individual): Thank you, Madam Chair.

[*English*]

Thank you, members of the committee, for hearing me today.

It's my first experience testifying in front of a committee, so bear with me.

[*Translation*]

I will make my presentation in English.

[*English*]

I'm fully bilingual so ask questions in either language.

What I'm going to present to you today—and you should have the notes from my presentation—are the results of the study I did. I'm going to skip the introduction on who I am; I'm a professor. It's a study I did with my colleague Brahim Boudarbat, which was published a couple of years ago in the *Canadian Journal of Economics*. We looked at the gender wage gap among recent post-secondary graduates in Canada. It was about men versus women, not specifically women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. However, I do have a few things to say about that based on the research. I'm happy to present the relevant results of the study to you.

In this study, the broad objectives are not about women in STEM. It describes the trends in the gender wage gap between 1998 and 2007. It's an empirical study. We looked at the difference between the mean wage for men and the mean wage for women. We also looked at differences in men's and women's wages for low wages and high wages.

The data we used is from the national graduates survey from Statistics Canada. This survey is a representative sample of post-secondary graduates by cohort, so you have people who graduated from post-secondary institutions in Canada in 1986, 1990, 1995, 2000, and 2005. The most recent time period in my study is the 2005 cohort, which was surveyed in 2007, two years after graduation. There is also data from 2013 on the 2009-10 cohort, but it's not part of the study. It wasn't available when we performed our analysis but it is now available.

We selected a sub-sample from the survey of full-time salaried graduates with college or university degrees, aged 50 or less at the time of graduation. In 2000, that amounted to just over 9,000 men and close to 12,000 women, for a total of 21,000 people. We looked at the differences between men's and women's hourly wages—not earnings, not income—for the mean wages, as well as for low wages, which we define as wages at the 10th percentile of wage distribution, and high wages, which are at the 90th percentile of wage distribution.

We used a methodology called a decomposition. It's a description of the differences between male and female wages. It's a sort of accounting exercise where we look at the differences we can explain and the differences we can't explain. Part of the difference that is explained is due to different characteristics of men and women. I'll give a quick example.

Suppose there's a 10% difference between men's and women's earnings. We look at the characteristics we can observe and we see that, on average, men have more experience than women. People with more experience earn more, so there could be a part of the wage difference that we can attribute to the fact that, on average, women have less experience than men. That's just an example.

We're going to try to apply that methodology to account for the differences. We're going to look at the wage gap, and then we're going to try to account for differences that come from various characteristics, which are: education level; number of years experience; province of residence; field of study; permanence of jobs, meaning whether or not someone holds a permanent job; occupation; industry; presence of children; age of the youngest child; and marital status. For this presentation today, I'm going to focus on the field of study and occupation because they are broad-level categories from which I can identify who's in STEM and who's not. We're going to show results from those.

In the general findings for the 2005 cohort in 2007, at the mean, women earned 5.9% less than men. The average wage for a woman was close to 6% less than the average wage for a man. This has been relatively constant since 1988, as shown in my study.

● (1105)

We also see that for what are considered to be low wages, the difference is less. The gap is smaller, 2.6% less for women. For higher wages, it is bigger, 8.2% less for women. The other thing that's interesting is that the gap for low wages has been decreasing over time, and that for high wages has been increasing over time. Another thing to note is that the gap generally increases with time after graduation.

I will skip the next slide in the interest of time, but you have it. It is the overall results from the decomposition. I'm skipping it to have more time to look at the field of study, which I think, is the most interesting for this committee. The first column shows the 10 broad categories of fields of study. I have highlighted in yellow the ones related to STEM. You have physical and life sciences and technologies; mathematics, computer and information sciences; as well as architecture, engineering and related technologies.

The two columns after that, “Men” and “Women”, show the distribution. If you look at architecture, engineering, and related technology for men, 25% of the men in my sample have a degree in architecture, engineering or related technologies. That figure is just 4.1% for women, so it's more than six times higher for men than it is for women. The same can be observed for mathematics, computer and information sciences. Almost 9% of men have a degree in that field and only 2.2% of women do. What's interesting is to look at the difference in the wage gap. The 38.5% that you see in the column, “Mean,” under “Fraction explained by %” means that, at the mean, if you consider mean wages for women and mean wages for men, 38.5% of that difference can be explained by the fact that women don't study in architecture and engineering as much as men do. If we look at the characteristic of having a degree in architecture and engineering, more men than women choose to get that degree and that translates into there being a bigger wage difference between men and women than there would be if the same proportion of women chose that degree.

I'm going to switch now, for science and technology purposes, to occupation. Now we do the decomposition again. For occupation, one of the 10 broad categories is directly related to STEM occupations. We find that the distribution is the same; 24% of men have an occupation in that category and only 7% of women hold a STEM-related job. That translates into, at the mean, an 18.7% wage difference. For low wages, the difference is 72%. For the top wages, it is only 9%. A very significant part of the gap can be explained by the fact that women don't have STEM-related occupations.

What do we do for this? I was asked to give recommendations. These don't come straight from the research that I just presented, but they're based on other research and general reflections. These are a few bullet points that you can take more time to read.

To hold a STEM job, one needs to have made the choice to study in STEM. We also know that parental aspirations and expectations matter a lot when it comes to educational attainment and choices. Beliefs and biases about gender differences in cognitive abilities are probably larger than the actual differences, and skills can be improved. We also know that impacts of policies and interventions tend to be larger when done earlier in an individual's life.

I think that before even thinking about changing the work conditions, you need to provide girls and women with role models and you need to aim to modify their expectations and aspirations. In terms of policies that could be implemented, I think there should be a tax credit for scientific activities for kids similar to the credits for physical activities and arts, or you could just lump them all into one credit. You could also fund awareness campaigns about women in STEM to give girls access to female role models in science. You could also fund public outreach and mentoring activities through federal research granting agencies. I know of one such activity called Synapse, through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. I don't know of a similar thing with NSERC, but I may be wrong.

● (1110)

You can also ask for more STEM courses in the curriculum at the high school level, especially mandatory ones, and just generally more funding for research in science and technology.

You can reach me. This is my contact information. I give you two links for reports, including one by the American Association of University Women that cites a lot of research in that area. I don't know if you're already aware of it, but it's a very worthwhile read for this topic.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Connolly. Your presentation was very informative. It's a good start to our meeting.

I now give the floor to Ms. Evans, who has 10 minutes.

[*English*]

Ms. Tammy Evans (President, Canadian Association of Women in Construction): Thank you very much, Madame Chair, and good morning to you and the committee members.

It is a distinct privilege to address this committee today on women in skilled trades, and I thank you on behalf of the board of directors and members of CAWIC for allowing me to do so.

My presentation today will include a summary review of preliminary results, only, of CAWIC's research to date on women in construction. It's called the CAWIC level best women's advancement project, and it is federally funded by Status of Women Canada.

I will first briefly provide a little bit of background on CAWIC. CAWIC is a not-for-profit, non-partisan association, initially organized in the early 1980s as the Toronto chapter of NAWIC, which is a U.S.-based organization that's been around since the fifties. Ten years ago, in order to focus more directly on the Canadian construction industry, CAWIC became independent of NAWIC both financially and operationally. We're still affiliated with NAWIC in the U.S.

Our mission is to support women across all sectors of the Canadian construction industry—civil, industrial, commercial, and residential. We represent those who work or who desire to work, as we call it, "on the tools" in the skilled trades or those who supervise, own, service, or supply equipment, materials, or labour to the industry. We actually represent a broad range of women working in the construction industry, and that is emphasized in all of the initiatives through CAWIC.

We received funding through Status of Women Canada to conduct a 36-month project into women's entry, retention, but primarily advancement, within the Canadian construction industry with the end goal to develop an action plan in collaboration with the industry to provide specific measurable action results in the industry. This is to increase women's movement into leadership roles. The project is the first of its kind in that it's collaborative with the industry. The industry stakeholders are developing the program themselves. They are voluntarily participating in the project, responding to the research, and developing the action plan with us. It's a well-known statistic that, where there are more women at the decision-making table, doors are open to more women's entry, retention, and advancement into leadership roles, and those businesses excel right across the world.

CAWIC launched the level best project in 2014, with the knowledge going in that, although women hover around 54% to 57% of the Canadian workforce, women make up only 11% of the construction industry workforce, and less than 4% on the tools. On top of that, we're less than 2% in the boardroom in the industry. These are staggering statistics that have not changed for the past 30 years, so although discussion is incredibly important, action is more important.

CAWIC is currently deep in its needs assessment or research phase of the project, which includes documentary research, as well as directly engaging female participants from across Canada, in primarily three centres. We went coast to coast, to the east coast starting at Newfoundland and Labrador, to Ontario for centre, and to Alberta for west. We're directly engaging the female participants as well as employer partners and the industry leaders in extensive surveys, round-table discussions, and direct interviews to identify the needs and the challenges, both from the female employee side and from the employer side. In order to facilitate the females' participation, we had to ensure that everything was strictly confidential, and all results are aggregated so that there are no identification concerns.

This actually became very important. As we were going through the research, the reluctance of the female participants to participate without the assurance that everything was strictly confidential was actually quite overwhelming. In this way we were able to really solicit very honest and frank discussion and responses, and more complete responses to the extensive surveys. All data has been preliminarily reported, and at the end it will be reported in the aggregate, both to the industry and back to Status of Women Canada.

The needs assessment focused on the following broad target questions, and dived very quickly into very detailed questions under those categories. There were four broad questions. What are the needs of women working in construction? What challenges do women face in entering the industry, staying within the industry, and also being promoted within the industry?

● (1115)

Then we went on to employers. What are the employers' challenges in hiring women, retaining them, and promoting them within their organizations? What actions, at the end, which is where the action plan comes into play, can be taken? What very specific, measurable actions can be taken to improve the numbers?

We first started with a documentary review. There is no end to research on women in construction over the past 10 years. It's incredible the amount of research that is out there. However, none of it really brings in the employers enough. It centres around employment statistics, and those are very valuable in dollar values and contributions to the economy from the industry; however, we needed to drill down specifically to the individual.

From the results that came out, the female participants identified the following primary needs and challenges: a lack of or insufficient or inaccessible training, support, or feedback for promotion; inflexible or hyperintensive work schedules; a generally unwelcome work environment, particularly on the site or in the field; pervasive gender stereotyping; overt and subtle harassment or discrimination; pro-male biases in hiring practices; pay inequity; isolated or remote work locations; extensive travel and project duration; and the challenge of balancing personal family life with work needs.

Females generally responded, through the documentation review, with the following strategies to address these needs: an improved public perception and reception of choosing a career in construction —in other words, an industry awareness campaign—which was top on the list; a demonstrated business case for women's entry into the industry; clear and measurable procurement policies that involve an increase in women's presence and employment in the industry; and career advancement policies to promote women into higher positions.

They also went on to talk more about emphasis on skills competence, so removing the gender language, removing the pro-male biases in human resource policies, and removing language such as “accommodation”, because that terminology brings about negative connotations—so gender neutralizing and more promotion based on skills. For example, removing the names on a resumé, removing the gender in a resumé, brings much greater intent to hire a female than if you have the names present. That came out of a U.S. report, and it was quite interesting. Canada is actually perhaps a little bit ahead of the U.S. in this area.

It also talked about mandatory reporting of female participation and representation in the industry; government labour and employment policy development; investment in human capital by the employers; and participation by the education system at the lower levels, at the primary levels, rather than waiting to get to the high school levels.

Although the female-participant research in our study is preliminary, we did have two extensive surveys with female participants. I've left you my material with some of the statistics that came out of that; some of which I'll identify for you.

The level of education of the female participants was interesting. It actually ranged from apprenticeship training to university degrees, at a rate of 65% all being post-secondary educated. This is important for us, because traditionally a career in skilled trades has been seen in the education system, and generally in society, as the alternative rather than the parallel to university education, in terms of a career. This was an important statistic that we wanted to draw out and understand.

● (1120)

The income levels varied for women from less than $20,000 to 65% having an income greater than $60,000 a year. That's also important in terms of society's view of what a career in construction is. We have to professionalize that view. We have to change that view.

In the employers very preliminary research.... We're only just getting into the employers research stage, but employers who have responded so far represent approximately 15,000 workers in construction. The employers responded that their perception was that women were primarily seeking a good salary, benefits, and flexible schedules in terms of their work. Note that females responded that opportunity for career advancement was their number one, so there's a disconnect here.

Employers also responded that their most critical challenge in recruiting, retaining, or promoting women has been the lack of supply. They said they would invest in policies or measures that would increase the talent pool if it were reasonable. So—

● (1125)

The Chair: Thank you.

I'm sure there will be questions raised from the information that the members have in front of them, which will hopefully enable you to complete your testimony.

We now have Ms. Marenick for 10 minutes.

Ms. Anna Marenick (Director, Community Relations and Value Proposition, Irving Shipbuilding Inc.): Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak with you today.

As you mentioned, my name is Anna Marenick and I am the director of community relations and value proposition here at Irving Shipbuilding.

Irving Shipbuilding is one company in the J.D. Irving group of companies, with 15,000 employees across its divisions. Most of our businesses are in traditional space: forestry and forest products, construction, transportation, shipbuilding, and marine, are some examples.

JDI is committed to increasing the number of women in STEM careers. We are investing in not only entry level jobs but in advancement of women throughout our organizations. A woman currently leads our white pine lumber operation, the largest of its kind in North America, and the president of Engineers Nova Scotia is a technical director here at Irving Shipbuilding.

Today I want to focus a little bit on some work we're doing at Irving Shipbuilding. It's something called the Irving Shipbuilding Centre of Excellence.

In 2012, following the 2011 award of the combat vessel package under the national shipbuilding procurement strategy, Irving Shipbuilding began a partnership with Nova Scotia Community College to build something called the Irving Shipbuilding Centre of Excellence. We are investing $250,000 annually at NSCC over the life of the NSPS with the mandate of the centre being to create pathways and opportunities for Nova Scotians to participate in shipbuilding with a specific focus on under-represented groups: women, African Canadians, aboriginal persons, and persons with disabilities. Currently women represent 4% of Irving Shipbuilding's trades workforce, a small number to be sure, so this investment sets out deliberately to change that.

From the outset the community told us clearly that this 30-year investment in shipbuilding was something they saw as game changing. The long term nature of NSPS allowed us really to critically examine what barriers existed for under-represented groups to get into STEM.

The centre of excellence is managed by a steering committee with representation from industry, provincial government, academia, organized labour from Unifor, and community representatives like Doreen Parsons who's here with me, and you'll hear from her momentarily.

The phrase we heard again and again from the community was to build this with them in collaborative partnership. Initially, I will tell you, this was met with incredibly great skepticism. While the community felt strongly that capitalizing on NSPS and its impact on Nova Scotians was important, they also worried that no tangible outcomes would materialize. This would be yet another committee, yet another report, and another make-work project. But the time horizon in front of the opportunity was such that we could really take our time to get it right.

In 2014 we held a full-day strategic planning session and we identified three main areas for focus. The first one, and I know the one that Doreen will talk about more, is early pathways to create an environment where women and other under-represented groups could even see themselves in a trade like this. What are the barriers that preclude STEM careers from even being an option for under-represented communities? These barriers existed long before jobs were advertised. This is why, from my perspective in industry, it's critical to have partners in the community who can help identify those barriers and work to overcome them.

The second area of focus is moving to learning to make sure that we are creating a diverse and inclusive learning environment. The third focuses on the workplace itself is to ensure that the workplace is appropriately welcoming for a diverse and blended population.

From that strategic planning session we began our first funding activities. We fund an organization called Techsploration, which works with grade nine girls in Nova Scotia schools to introduce them to mentors in STEM careers. The centre of excellence funded five schools from diverse communities to participate in the Techsploration program.

We are funding 12 two-year bursaries to Nova Scotians from diverse backgrounds to attend NSCC in shipbuilding trades with several teacher investments to come later on this year. But most notably is our partnership with Women Unlimited, a very established program in Nova Scotia that you will hear about more in a moment.

As we speak, 20 diverse women are sitting in a classroom at NSCC on a targeted path for employment at Irving Shipbuilding. You will hear specifics in a moment. Through the centre of excellence, participants in this program receive bursary funding for up to 50% of their tuition costs.

After we made the announcement that the centre of excellence would fund 50% of the women's cost of tuition, two other worker partners voluntarily came forward to support these women, one to support the other 50% of their tuition and the other to cover all of their program-related tools and equipment. These were unsolicited requests and, to me, go to show that there are lots of organizations who want to do more work in this space and who recognize that getting more women into trade careers benefits us all.

This $250,000 investment is one that Irving Shipbuilding will make over the life of the contract in support of increasing diversity in our workforce. Changing buildings and processes are one thing, but changing the lives of 20 women and 20 families in Nova Scotia is game changing, like the communities said in the beginning.

I will also say that getting to this point took several years of hard, dedicated work. Under-representation in any career and fixing that is complicated. We worked hard at creating an environment at the centre of excellence steering table where everyone felt comfortable being honest with each other, to support the same end goal.

I'm quite sure this work won't always be easy, but our position is that having good partners at the table, doing it collaboratively, is the only way it will work. Experienced partners are and will continue to be at the centre of this strategy.

Now I'm going to turn it over to Doreen.

● (1130)

Ms. Doreen Parsons (Manager, Women Unlimited Association): Thank you, Madam Chair and members of the committee, for the opportunity to speak regarding your study on women in STEM occupations.

My name is Doreen Parsons and I am the manager of the Women Unlimited Association, a not-for-profit organization in Nova Scotia promoting the full participation of diverse women in the skilled trades and technology fields.

The Women Unlimited model was established through a collaborative partnership with industry, governments, educational institutions, apprenticeships, and the community to address the systemic barriers that limit the full participation of diverse women in these fields. Since 2005, 570 women have participated in our programs across Nova Scotia, and 94% have successfully completed them. Our programs are offered at four Nova Scotia Community College campuses.

Our model is women-centred and comprehensive in scope, and it provides a continuum of services and supports. It is long term by design, supporting a woman through her full journey from career exploration through to college-level training and into employment. Women are with us for between three and five years.

The Irving Shipbuilding-Women Unlimited pilot program was launched in April 2015. Twenty diverse women were recruited through a joint selection process between Irving Shipbuilding and Women Unlimited. They are participating in a 14-week Women Unlimited career exploration program focused on the metal trades.

Upon successful completion, and with educational funding from Irving Shipbuilding, they will enrol in welding and metal-fabrication training programs at the Nova Scotia Community College in September 2015. I should note that the Nova Scotia Community College has designated seats for these women. The women who successfully graduate from those two-year diploma programs and who meet employment eligibility criteria will be employed by Irving Shipbuilding as positions become available in 2017 and beyond.

In my opinion, the Irving Shipbuilding-Women Unlimited pilot program is groundbreaking as an excellent example of a promising practice. Why? I believe there are five reasons.

The first one is that we have an intentional partnership among Irving Shipbuilding, Unifor, Women Unlimited, the Nova Scotia Community College, and the Government of Nova Scotia through the Irving Shipbuilding Centre of Excellence. This is an innovative, collaborative, and Nova Scotia-grown partnership.

The second reason is that we have a common vision with clearly defined goals. We will contribute to Irving Shipbuilding's workforce strategy, to the centre of excellence mandate, and to Women Unlimited's mandate to increase the number of diverse women trained and working in the marine industry, and we will collaboratively design an inclusive, respectful model.

The third reason is that we have a well-defined action plan and strategy with diverse women at the centre. This strategy includes: a partnership team that will work together for the program duration of three to five years; a customized Women Unlimited program focused on the metal trades, specifically, welding and metal fabrication; a connector pathway designed to address issues related to the success and retention of women in the Nova Scotia Community College training programs; and a commitment from Irving Shipbuilding and Unifor to work together to prepare the ISI workplace.

The fourth reason is that we have well-established trusting relationships and open communication. Women Unlimited has been working in partnership with the Nova Scotia Community College and the Government of Nova Scotia for more than 10 years and building relationships with Irving Shipbuilding and Unifor for almost five years. We respect each other, communicate openly and honestly, and provide joint leadership on this initiative.

Finally, the fifth reason is that we remain flexible and responsive, engaging new members in the partnership and expanding the strategy as required. For example, as Anna mentioned, we have recently engaged two new corporate partners that will contribute educational bursaries as well as tools and equipment for the participating women and significant industry expertise.

In March 2015, Women Unlimited received funding approval from Status of Women Canada's women's program to increase economic prosperity for tradeswomen in the marine shipbuilding industry in Nova Scotia. This project will focus on addressing issues related to the retention and advancement of women in this industry, creating the capacity for more respectful and inclusive workplaces that promote and foster the full participation of diverse women in skilled trades occupations.

● (1135)

Women Unlimited works with women who—

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Perhaps you could conclude very briefly, or was that all?

Ms. Doreen Parsons: Yes, I will, just very briefly.

Women Unlimited works with women who are dedicated to building careers in the skilled trades. Women represent 50% of the population and under 5% of trades workers. They are a growing pool of talent for employers—hard-working, professional, and dedicated. These are well-paying jobs. and we know that when you improve a women's economic situation there is a ripple effect that spreads to her children, her family, and her surrounding community.

The greatest barrier women face is finding employers who are not only willing to hire women but who are willing—

The Chair: Thank you.

Now we go to Unifor, for 10 minutes.

Ms. Lisa Kelly (Director, Women's Department, Unifor): Thank you, Madam, for the opportunity to address you and members of the committee.

I'm going to take a short period of time and then have my colleague Terry Weymouth conclude with some specific examples around skilled trades.

Unifor is an organization representing 305,000 employees and workers across the country in very diverse occupations, from members who make cars right up to pilots. About one-third of our membership is female, so just around 87,000 members. Of our membership, we represent over 40,000 skilled trades.

For our skilled trades numbers, we track about the same as the numbers you've been hearing here, which is around 4% female membership in the trades. In the STEM occupations it's a little bit more difficult to get the numbers on those because as you heard from one of your presenters in an earlier session, there isn't complete agreement on what makes up STEM occupations. But I can tell you that we represent significant numbers of members in aerospace, telecommunications, health care, and the education sector, and I'll give you some examples from those areas.

Across the board we hear from our female members that they have issues with accessible, affordable child care. That is a fundamental issue that affects many of our members no matter which of the areas they're going into. Where we have members who work in shift work or in intensive work scheduling, there is also a difficulty in balancing the roles that women play in taking care of their family members—their children, their parents—and fulfilling other roles, and balancing that with work as well.

We've identified some of the same issues you're hearing from others, the streaming and the lack of role models. You'll hear from Ms. Weymouth about how you need to see it to be it, and you'll hear about some of the role modelling that we've been trying to be party to. There is attitudinal barriers not only within young women in what's open to them but there still remain attitudinal barriers of employers in giving opportunities. Again, I won't go through all of our brief but you'll see some more examples in there.

We have looked at the women in our STEM occupations and found that they still cluster in the lower wage and lower security occupations. The example I've given is that we represent a university that does a lot of health care research, and the principal investigators who have more secure jobs tend to be male, and the women tend to be the research assistants working on one-year and 18-month contracts. Eventually we hear from our members that they need to leave that precarity in order to seek out something more secure that might take them out of a STEM occupation and certainly take them out of the trajectory they might have otherwise been in. So movement within the careers is identified there.

Harassment is still an issue where an employer is not giving a clear signal that women are welcome and that women are there because of their ability. We do find there is resistance to women being in workplaces where they are the overwhelming minority.

I'm going to throw it over to skilled trades specifically and to some promising examples. But before I do, again on a broad basis, in our trade union education we try to make sure people are exposed to diverse members delivering that education from different occupations.

I'm happy that we're going just after the Irving Shipbuilding example and that it's not just white women. It's also women of colour, it's also women with disabilities, and it's also racialized men. We try to bring in our anti-harassment, respectful workplace education. We also have a program of joint investigation where there are allegations of harassment or of a lack of a respectful workplace.

● (1140)

We have a scholarship offered to women going into a male-dominated field. That was put in place by one of our predecessors, the CEP, following the Montreal massacre, and tries to encourage women and give them the support they need in order to take steps that at the time when that scholarship was put in place were usual for women.

I'll throw it over to Terry.

Ms. Teresa Weymouth (National Skilled Trades Coordinator, Unifor): Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair, and distinguished members of the committee.

My name is Teresa Weymouth and I'm the Unifor national skilled trades coordinator for Chrysler. I'm here to speak to you about women in skilled trades. I come to you with 26 years of experience as a journeyperson and an electrician, and 10 years as the national coordinator.

Employment and Social Development Canada has reported within the next decade 25% of skilled trades in Canada will be eligible to retire and that is over one million jobs. Sector councils are currently forecasting skilled shortages in mining, construction, petroleum, automotive, and in electricity. While discussing this impending loss to the workforce it must be addressed that while women make up 48% of the Canadian workforce, the Conference Board of Canada reports that typically less than 3% of all apprentices that are in construction, automotive, and industry trades are women. This clearly indicates that women are an untapped resource, poised to serve the future of both the skilled trades and on a greater scale the Canadian economy.

A few of the barriers for women in trades that we will look at, while also looking at Unifor's promising practices, are: sector awareness, language and terminology, and a lack of access to apprenticeships.

The first barrier I would like to address is the lack of sector awareness. It is important for women to seek out trades as a career option. It is one thing to not choose a pathway, it is another to not know the opportunity exists. Our country's superstructure is built by trades, but women are not a part of it. The question is, why? Unifor has addressed the under-representation, stereotypes, and lack of skilled knowledge through education. The development of the Unifor women's skilled trades and technology awareness program utilizes practical and hands-on workshops. We have delivered this program in various forms since 2001. We will go into more detail in promising practices.

The Unifor skilled trades department is in the process of doing a comprehensive gender, sector, and classification survey. This survey of skilled trades testimonials will be used as a form of outreach to students. The process of uncovering testimonials provides a link to potential mentors and provides a network to other trades.

Our trades are in the most technical areas of the country. When we lose jobs in this area, we lose skilled trades, which results in the loss of transfer of knowledge. This means there's no longer an opportunity for skilled tradespeople to mentor the apprenticeships.

The second barrier I would like to address is language and terminology. The term non-traditional implies that these jobs are not normally associated with women and reinforces the negative notion placed on these occupations. Adjusting terms goes a long way in changing work environments from exclusive to inclusive. To explore this notion of exclusive language, Unifor conducted a survey of 500 women to better understand what the phrase “women in non-traditional occupations” meant to them. Participant responses highlighted how language reinforces gender bias. For example, women associated this term with women doing men's work.

A literature review conducted for this survey indicated there is no internationally standardized definition of what constitutes a non-traditional occupation. StatsCan and the U.S. Department of Labor define a non-traditional occupation as a job in which one gender makes up less than 25% of the total number of workers in that occupation. Agencies in Saskatchewan and Quebec report that a non-traditional job is an occupation where 45% and 33% respectively of the workers are women.

This enforces the notion that the term “non-traditional job” is no longer a useful term in this time of change for women's roles in the workplace. To address this issue, Unifor has proactively presented our study findings on terminology and language to the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum, changed references of “non-traditional” in all skilled trade presentations, and in 2009, changed the designation “journeymen” and “journeywomen” to “journeyperson” in our collective agreements.

Finally, as to the lack of access to apprenticeship, we took a look at Unifor promising practices. We see more pre-apprenticeship programs readying women to opportunities in the trades. Our skilled trades department and master bargaining committees recognize the need for a collaborative, innovative strategy to build diversity in our skilled trades workforce.

Change often requires intervention and positive actions. Our union has participated in a number of promising programs to increase the participation of women in trades.

● (1145)

In 2009 one of our former unions to Unifor, the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union, participated in a joint venture with the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology. The women in trades program, through the CEP humanity fund, educated over 20 aboriginal women in the Regina area on the basics of the construction industry.

In 2010 CAW, now Unifor, partnered with the Saugeen First Nation education department to promote skilled trades for indigenous women. A three-day program was offered at the CAW Family Education Centre. The women assembled and participated in workshops on the apprenticeship system, basics of electrical wiring, and health and safety. They also programmed robots and participated in mock interviews—

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Weymouth.

I will let you finish your sentence, because I might have caught you mid-sentence. But we will conclude, so if you would, just finish your sentence.

Ms. Teresa Weymouth: On the final day, a panel of indigenous women in trades spoke about their challenges in overcoming barriers. It was a community event, which included the men of the community providing child care.

The Chair: Thank you very much. I hope that during the questions you will be able to conclude, but we also have your presentation. Thank you very much.

Now we move on to Ms. Lahey. You have 10 minutes.

Professor Kathleen Lahey (Professor, Faculty of Law, Queen's University, As an Individual): Thank you very much for this opportunity to speak to you about this. I am not going to focus on the question of skilled trades so much as address the educational trends concerning STEM-area educational programs. I would like to pick this up by noting that despite all of the recommendations that were made by this committee in its 2010 report, which was entitled “Building the Pipeline: Increasing the Participation of Women in Non-Traditional Occupations”, the situation in Canada has actually gotten worse, not better.

I would like to begin by unpacking some of the statistics that were presented to this committee in this particular study in earlier hearings this year. Namely, Statistics Canada presented information that suggested that there has been a great improvement since 1991 in the whole STEM education area. It is true—and I think this committee should be aware of this—that between 1991 and 2005-06 the number of women in various STEM education programs in universities and colleges in Canada did improve. In fact, in some areas, the programs had enrolments of women as high as 44%, which is headed toward equality.

However, as of 2007-08, in every single one of the sub-disciplines that are classified as STEM educational programs, the number of women has not only fallen significantly, but it is lower than it had started out in the early 1990s, so there is a significant reversal that has been taking place over the last 10 years.

The only exception to that is programs in geology, but that is really just because there were a few percentage points above the original 2002 levels that this particular study I am referring to looked at. This is based on data that was assembled by the National Council of Deans of Engineering and Applied Science and the professional association of engineers, Engineers Canada.

● (1150)

In particular, I would draw this committee's attention to the fact that in the most male-predominant sectors of the STEM educational areas—namely electrical, mechanical, software and computer engineering, and mathematics departments—the percentage of women is between 9% and 12%, which is an unbelievably low number of women. This is with the large number pilot projects, and so on, that have been aimed at this particular problem. I would say the time has come to face the fact that the ways in which the government of Canada is tackling this problem are simply not working. In order to assist this committee in looking for perhaps more robust solutions, I would like to draw attention to the fact that Canada's methodology for studying the problem of STEM enrolments in universities and colleges does not stand up when compared with the approaches taken in the United States, or the EU, or other advanced economies.

Specifically, the difference is that Canada has continued to use the methodology of collecting first-person accounts, small sample studies, pilot projects, and community, cooperative, or industry-led projects that are of a very localized level and not particularly embedded in any kind of regulatory framework.

At the same time, the employment equity laws have become almost dysfunctional in terms of correcting gender imbalances as the result of long-standing practices of discrimination, and the federal contractors program, which is meant to ensure that the corporate sector is non-discriminatory even though it's not fully regulated under employment equity laws in all jurisdictions, is nonetheless going to be subject to some sort of regulation. The difference is, I believe, in addition to the non-use of the regulatory tools, which the government has and should be using for the well-being of everybody in Canada, it is not rigorously using scientific methodologies that are easily available to the government of Canada to get a close understanding of what the problems are.

When the U.S. and when the EU went about studying what the problems were in the STEM areas educationally, they assembled independent blue ribbon panels of leading gender, employment, labour, and industry experts to collect as much information as they could, not only with desktop interviews and studies but also with on-the-job scientific studies that calibrated what was going on. They came up with a remarkably similar set of recommendations, none of which have ever been seriously made in the Canadian context.

What have these independent studies shown? They have shown that, consistent with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women—the UN convention which has produced a significant number of policy requirements that are binding on all governments that signed that convention, including the Canadian government—that it's going to take full stream or full force gender mainstreaming and gender-based analysis on a continuing basis in every aspect of the educational structure in order to correct these kinds of deficiencies. The recommendations are as follows.

First, ensure national sex equality laws and government departments responsible for their application have effective means of monitoring for gender imbalances on a continuing basis in all occupations and particularly in the STEM areas with respect to trades education and employment.

Second, establish a high-level ministry for women's affairs at each level of government including local levels that have independent statutory authority and funding to carry out investigations and address departments in deficiencies that do not meet sex equality standards that guarantee parity or 50-50 representation for women and men in all aspects of Canadian life.

● (1155)

Third, governments need to actively commit to and carry out ongoing gender analysis of all of the programs. For this purpose I would like to remind you that just a few years ago with the Canadian chairs program, 19 multi-million dollar chairs were established in universities to ramp up Canada's performance in innovation and scientific research. Every single one of those appointments was to a male candidate, and part of the reason for that was that the entire short list consisted of nothing but male candidates.

Industry Canada became concerned about this enough to put the program on hold for a short period of time, brought it back, and this time—the second time around—14 appointments were made, and all but one were men.

The continuing inability to even maintain a semblance of gender balance in the chairs program had originally led to a Canadian Human Rights Commission case and a settlement agreement in which there was to be gender equity in all of those chairs from that time on, which was in the early 2000s. This is something that is just simply not being done at all.

Further recommendations that came out of the U.S., EU, and other highly scientific studies included the requirement of funding on a permanent basis and not on a mere project basis; active, independent, and professionally staffed networks for women in science, who are both supported in their own research as scientists and as gender experts in overcoming the gender barriers.... It's a sort of double burden that has to be funded by the government, because women in the STEM educational areas cannot possibly do both jobs at the same time.

The list goes on to require that there be adequate resources for returnees and immigrants who experience tremendous amounts of discrimination, even though a lot of effort goes into recruiting people in the scientific areas to come to Canada. Also, the strong recommendation in both of those studies and others like it is that flexible, affordable child-care programs and meaningful paternity leave are maintained in all aspects of skilled trades and STEM education employment and research areas.

Finally, there is a strong set of findings that a great deal of the responsibility lies on the shoulders of the corporate culture, where—as has already been noted—very few women are even on the boards of directors. The management pipeline for management in the areas that do the most STEM hiring has been shrinking for the last 10 years, and the supply of women moving up into the CEO levels has been shrinking year after year, with no solution in sight.

The Chair: Ms. Lahey, would you briefly conclude, or should we will move to the question period?

Prof. Kathleen Lahey: Move to the question period.

Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you very much for your presentation.

Now, Mrs. Truppe, you have seven minutes.

Mrs. Susan Truppe (London North Centre, CPC): Thank you very much.

I'd like to welcome everyone. I think this is the biggest group we've had here since we started the study. Also, thank you for rescheduling from last week, as well. We appreciate the flexibility in your schedule.

I think I'll start with Irving Shipbuilding and Women Unlimited. They were all very good presentations, and seven minutes go really fast.

I think maybe I'll start with Anna. First of all, I just want to say the centre of excellence sounds wonderful. Congratulations on that. It sounds like a very good facility to get women engaged and involved.

You mentioned, I think, that 4% of women were represented in the shipbuilding. I just wonder if there are plans besides the centre of excellence. How do you get the word out that these are good jobs and great pay?

● (1200)

Ms. Anna Marenick: Certainly we have a very strong local partnership with our trades population through Unifor. We have very strong advocates for women in trades.

We're taking a long-term strategy and a short-term strategy. As we are hiring, because we have the opportunity to have qualified women come into the workforce, we are always looking to do that. We've been very open about the fact that we have smaller than what we'd like percentages of women in our trades workforce, so as we're hiring we try to be as inclusive as we can in our current hiring processes.

But the reason why we are really focusing on the centre of excellence is to take that long view to make sure we're building that pipeline to create that possibility, while at the same time working on our current workforce culture. Creating a pipeline of workers who are not interested in working here doesn't serve the purpose. We're trying to do both at the same time, as we're starting to ramp up for positions through the national shipbuilding procurement strategy.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Thank you.

Doreen, I have a couple of questions for you.

You mentioned Status of Women funding for increasing prosperity. How much funding did you get and what is the duration? Is it halfway through or did you just get it?

Ms. Doreen Parsons: It's $291,358 and it is a 36-month project. It just started in March 2015.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: You were talking about the career exploration program, and as I understand it, it's a 14-week project that is at the centre of excellence and then they go to college. Do they go for one year or two years?

Ms. Doreen Parsons: Generally two years. The welding and metal fabrication programs are two year pre-apprenticeship programs.

Irving Shipbuilding is contributing 50% of the tuition, and the corporate sponsor has also stepped up to match that. That isn't usual for all of the other programs; that's a special situation.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: I thought that it was great that the two corporations stepped up to pay the balance, the tools, and everything they needed. That was really good of them.

Ms. Anna Marenick: If I can add, too, one of the things that we think is great about this class of women is that all of these 20 women right now who are participating in this program did so from a desire to participate in trades, not because they knew this funding was an option. We told them about that later.

What Women Unlimited does really well is help women understand why these careers are good careers. The fact that these women came forward and said they wanted to be welders and tradespeople I think really shows that there are women out there who want to do that, and we just need to help with that.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: I know that when I hosted round tables in some areas of Canada, that was a big thing. Someone mentioned—and it might have been here—that it's an educational thing, number one. They're not getting told about this so much through the guidance counsellors or parents. That was huge, and they're so well paying. At the tables, it was just amazing the money that I heard they were making. The more we get in there, the better.

I think also, Doreen, you said that, since 2005, 570 women, 94%, completed the course. How many—if there is even stat on that—of those who completed the course were employed or got jobs after that?

Ms. Doreen Parsons: There's about 70% who are continuing with their education or employed, because it varies depending on whether they're in school or not.

In Nova Scotia it tends to be that they go to the Nova Scotia Community College for training prior to entering fields.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: For the other balance of the percentage, they just ended up doing something else or maybe they weren't interested in it.

● (1205)

Ms. Doreen Parsons: That's correct. They go into another program or career.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Thank you.

Now I'll turn it over to the Canadian Association of Women in Construction, Tammy.

Is there a Women in Construction in London, Ontario? I think there is. Do you know if there is?

Ms. Tammy Evans: It's not a chapter of CAWIC, but there are some committees within local construction associations.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Okay.

I remember reading a big write-up on them and I wanted to meet them. I haven't had an opportunity yet.

I think you also mentioned that you receive Status of Women funding. How much did you get, and what's your duration? Are you partway through as well?

Ms. Tammy Evans: It's a 36-month project. We started January 2014 and we received $249,900.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: You still have a bit of a ways to go.

Ms. Tammy Evans: We're still in the needs assessment phase.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Okay, great.

You mentioned that 11% of women were in construction, and I just want to know how you get the message out that these are really good, well-paying jobs.

Ms. Tammy Evans: We have to get into the schools.

We've been trying to collaborate with other organizations and the unions getting into the schools and raising the profile. What we'd like to recommend—and one of our recommendations in our report will be—a media campaign. There are some smaller campaigns out there, but we need the industry to get involved, so it was already one of our recommendations to the industry in past studies, and we're going to recommend the same thing to the governments.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Freeman, the floor is yours for seven minutes.

[*English*]

Ms. Mylène Freeman: Thank you.

Thanks to all our witnesses. Again, thank you for rescheduling to this week. We're very glad to have you all with us.

My first question is for Professor Lahey.

Could you maybe explain to the committee or talk to us about the fact that there is a wage gap for women in STEM fields and that there are fewer women being employed in these fields? How much is that costing the economy? How much is that affecting not only women, but how is this wage gap affecting the overall Canadian economy?

Prof. Kathleen Lahey: The first big problem with having a wage gap like that is that it means women are not working full time, full year, permanently, but are in much more precarious positions. We're not taking full advantage, as an economy, as a society, of all of the talent that has been so laboriously identified, developed, and then made available through the wage force.

The second big loss is that as those wages are not paid and those incomes are not earned, governments are not earning revenues on their human capital investments, which they should be expecting to reap as a consequence of that.

Thirdly, they are then part of the shrinking cohort of women who are available to be the role models, which we're now hearing from these very small, localized programs are actually what are needed.

The whole problem could be addressed much more efficiently by simply stepping up and enforcing the Canadian human rights code, enforcing the federal contractors program. It could be addressed by getting the kinds of regulatory reporting, monitoring, and investigative mechanisms in place that would make it possible to bring the profound shift that has taken place in the educational and employment sectors into visibility, so that the public at large is aware that this is a new problem, a growing problem.

It's like trying to put a forest fire out with a teacup. It is just not capable of turning things around.

Ms. Mylène Freeman: How do you see us addressing that? I mean, how do our budgets and tax policies influence women's labour force participation?

Prof. Kathleen Lahey: On every level.

First of all, I would point out that the Canadian Academies has already done a very comprehensive study that encompasses the kinds of problems that exist in the STEM educational areas in Canada. It's a very recent report. It contains a lot of very concrete proposals and scientific findings of the same nature as those produced in the U.S., the EU, and some of the other countries.

It has been ignored, but it should not only be taken into very serious consideration, it should also be redone and updated. The government has a very serious role to play in carrying out a profoundly detailed investigation. I would hasten to add that the Canadian Human Rights Commission settlement that was reached in relation to the under-appointment of women to some of the prestigious chairs in universities should be reactivated. That is something that is completely withering right on the vine.

Beyond that, the whole tax transfer system, because it has been subjected to so much austerity, has placed a great deal of pressure on universities, with the result that tuitions have been rising rapidly. Young women going into university are facing larger amounts of debt than young men going in. Even at the age of 16, there is now a wage gap in Canada that grows rapidly by the time women reach the ages of 32 to 34, and it just doesn't go away.

Women who do undertake to gain these kinds of expensive educations and put their whole employability on the line by daring to enter into a very discriminatory area of education and employment after graduation also come out with higher levels of debt, lower incomes compared to their male cohorts, higher debt repayment payments every month, and longer repayment periods. In the long run, they end up with much less net wealth, much less economic security, and much less ability to attain financial stability, compared to the very same men they went through their educations with.

It's a very complex, multi-layered problem, and as it's permitted to persist in Canada, it's simply going to grow and become more difficult to solve.

● (1210)

Ms. Mylène Freeman: How would our budgeting process and our policies benefit from enforced gender responsive budgeting and GBA across programming?

Prof. Kathleen Lahey: Many needs assessments have already been carried out, and it would not be difficult to estimate what it would cost to set up a truly autonomous status of women committee in the federal government with its own investigative powers similar to those of the Auditor General of Canada and the Parliamentary Budget Officer. From that position, then, there would be an independent investigative mechanism within the government to follow and track the adequacy of the budgeting that has been allocated to this particular area of employment and education.

If that were put into place, it would mean, of course, moving to a different funding model for Status of Women Canada, but the benefit of that would be that it would have its own ability to investigate, hire experts, analyze the problems, make policy recommendations, monitor on a very close level, and also have monitoring and oversight capacity with respect to other departments, such as the Department of Finance, such as human resources, and so on, and be able to really sort of advocate for this particular goal of achieving economic autonomy and equality for women, not only in the STEM areas but in related areas where there are similar kinds of problems.

Just pursuant to that point—

The Chair: Ms. Lahey, thank you very much, but our time is up, so hold that thought maybe for another question.

Mrs. O'Neill Gordon, you have seven minutes.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon (Miramichi, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I want to welcome all our guests here today and say what a great contribution you have all made to our study.

I want to begin first by addressing Doreen Parsons and Anna Marenick from Irving. Being a New Brunswicker, I certainly know and realize the support that Irving gives to all our communities. It's always there for all of us, so I congratulate you on that. As well, I've never been exposed to this kind of support, which you give in another area, and you certainly deserve a lot of congratulations for all you do to encourage girls.

As my colleague mentioned, the funding is very important and very positive because quite often these girls would not go into this without funding from somewhere, so your funding is of great help.

You mentioned the career exploration program, and I think you mentioned there were 20 students in that program already. I'm wondering who is eligible to apply. Do you have an idea of how many women you would have helped in this organization already?

● (1215)

Ms. Doreen Parsons: Yes, 570 women have participated in our programs since 2005. We do extensive recruitment and outreach in diverse communities throughout the province. We have four sites across the province, one specifically for this Irving Shipbuilding pilot program. We reach out to women who are from diverse communities, who are of diverse ages. We reach out through our own diverse staff. They generally have to have significant interest in exploring trades and technologies. We ask that they have either a grade 12 or a GED and that they have significant interest in these fields. So we have diversity within each of those different sites.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: Do you have anything else to add?

Ms. Doreen Parsons: The majority of the women are either unemployed or underemployed, and generally working less than 20 hours a week, if they are employed.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: Okay. Do you have a long list of people waiting to get into this program?

Ms. Doreen Parsons: We have a significant number of women who apply during our recruitment process, and again we select 20 for each of our sites. So yes, we have a significant number of women who are interested in participating in Women Unlimited. I would say that much of our recruitment is as a result of our network of women who have already gone through. Some women spoke about role models. The women who went through our program and are now working in industry are perhaps our greatest champions and are the women who really reach out to other women in their communities to participate. There is a ripple effect for sure.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: Yes. I know you would have many positive results. Is there any one in particular that you'd like to champion?

Ms. Doreen Parsons: There are so many stories of women who have participated in our program that it's hard to choose just one, but about 60% of the women who have participated in our programs are single mothers, so the impact is significant for them but it's huge for their children as well.

It significantly impacts her children, her family, and her community. Our experience has been that women want to stay in Nova Scotia because their kids are here, their families are here, so it's wonderful if they are able to secure employment in this province because they are likely to stay. It's a great opportunity for employers such as Irving to be part of our partnership.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: Yes, it provides these parents with good salaries so they can take care of their children. That's another positive note as well.

Ms. Doreen Parsons: Absolutely. We provide travel fares and transportation supports as part of our program. We try to address all the barriers that impact their success in these programs.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: That's great. That's nice to hear.

I think Tammy it was you who mentioned a lot of good ideas to initiate women. I wonder if any of them are already in place in your work. One that caught my attention was role models, and we certainly see that is a big idea to help women get into the STEM programs.

Do you want to elaborate on that, please?

Ms. Tammy Evans: Yes. CAWIC has a mentorship program for women entering the industry. It's not necessarily for young people; it's for anybody in the industry. If you're looking for a role model, we try to match you with a member in or outside our organization. It depends what the need is.

Our studies have shown that mentorship is incredibly important. A senior mentor allows for a broad range of mentoring. It's not necessarily just on that particular issue, but it's a broad range of connections and relationship building, which is invaluable for women in the industry.

● (1220)

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: Yes. It gives the individual a more positive attitude if they have someone to hear their story.

Ms. Tammy Evans: And it's an ear, a natural ear.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: Yes. To listen to them.

Marie, you mentioned the study and how important it is. I'm wondering if you have any ideas on how we can encourage girls to spend more time studying, and they too can then qualify for high-paying jobs.

Prof. Marie Connolly: It has come up before, and I think providing young girls with the message—

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: At an early age.

Prof. Marie Connolly: —that they are worthwhile at an early age, that they have the skills to enter those fields, to choose those fields of study, and then to work in those areas.

There's a lot of research on gender biases, girls can't do math, that kind of stuff, right? There's research showing girls can improve their skills but that knowledge is not acquired, so from early on they tend to think they just can't do it. That is not true, so we have to work hard to change those biases.

The Chair: Thank you.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Duncan, I now give you the floor. You have seven minutes.

[*English*]

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you to all of you. You have provided such good information. I have two pages of questions so I'll get to what I can.

Professor Lahey, you have given really good recommendations. Can you provide very specific recommendations regarding national sex equality laws and effective monitoring for gender imbalances in areas such as STEM education and employment? What's your wish list?

Prof. Kathleen Lahey: I don't need to have a wish list, because I would prefer to rely on the scientific studies that have produced information on what actually works. What actually works is to make it perfectly clear to universities and colleges that they are there to serve everyone in the country, which includes women and men equally, which means that whatever ameliorative programs are necessary to get women and diverse individuals into the STEM areas of education need to be done, should be done, and have to be done or their funding could very well be on the line.

Governments should not simply feel that they have to hand money out in ways that have not been successful in solving these kinds of problems. It is completely unfair to women in any of the professions and in any of the sort of male-predominant sectors to carry the burden of solving the problems of non-government regulation at the same time that they're meant to achieve the level of qualifications that the men against whom they are competing don't have to carry, in addition to carrying the heavy load of unpaid work obligations that they normally have and that are not going to be compensated for by having temporary child care programs made available while they go to specially funded local programs.

In Ontario, for example, many years ago there was a very aggressive women's apprenticeship program that contained all of the elements that have been described by the Irving Shipbuilding project. It was provided by the Government of Ontario and it was available in all the communities across Ontario. It included access to affordable tools. It included supports for women to be able to overcome all sorts of barriers in their particular apprenticeship programs.

So there are specific things that work. Basically what it means is that the burdens of unpaid work, the burdens of the cost, the burdens of addressing the structural discrimination built into these different areas all have to be shouldered by governments, which uniquely are able to raise revenue and target spending in ways that are really guided by large-scale studies that have proven what works, including taking people to court when they won't comply with the law and using things other than just sort of carrots to induce compliance.

We live in an era in which government seems to believe that it's going to become more effective as a government by letting the market do what it wants, and then acting as if, when the market actually produces something constructive like the Irving Shipbuilding project, there's some sort of a big turnaround on the horizon. It just doesn't work that way and the data makes that perfectly clear.

● (1225)

Ms. Kirsty Duncan: Thank you, Professor Lahey.

You talked about Canada's approach to gender and STEM not working. You talked about Europe and the United States. Can you tell us what they're doing specifically and what's working there?

Prof. Kathleen Lahey: What's working there is the list that I started down. It contains a total of 15 particular programs, all of which need to be mounted by and monitored by governments. It begins with putting effective non-discrimination laws and programs into place with commissions and compliance bodies that have enough funding to be able to go out in the field and see what is actually happening on the ground by collecting contemporary data, making sure that every possible inequality is being addressed immediately, and having sufficient remedial powers to take steps to correct them. That's the number one, most effective tool that has been shown in a study in the EU involving the 27 core EU countries and the 10 new EU countries. It was carried out by using all of the tools of econometrics and statistical analysis to find out what factors really make a difference.

Then going down the list it's the items that I mentioned in relation to gender mainstreaming and having a fully effective and enforcingly capable Status of Women organization at every level of government to carry out this ongoing kind of invigilation, because these problems are not unique to STEM. As I was going to say at the end of the last question that I was asked, people have held up the example that women lawyers are doing so much better so it must be a unique problem in the STEM area. In fact, that's just simply not the case.

When the Law Society of Upper Canada carried out a comprehensive study a few years ago of how women in law were doing, they found that, number one, the number of women has been falling as the costs of law school tuition have been going up; number two, that full-time women lawyers who have children perform an average of 35 hours of unpaid work each week in caring for children, caring for elders and other members of the family, and caring for their homes. They're the same age, it's the same year of graduation, the same type of work, but male cohorts only performed an average of 13 hours of unpaid work each week.

Canada can pick up a huge burden off the shoulders of women in all sectors, all occupations, by taking the $22 billion that will be spent this year to subsidize women's unpaid work in the home and use just half of that to set up a national child care program that would immediately transform the range of options that are realistically available to women. That has also been demonstrated to be true in this massive EU-EC study that was carried out very recently. The reality is that until all of the caring functions that women, because of their sex, are expected to perform out of the goodness of their hearts or perhaps out of the lack of alternatives, are lifted from them and shared equally by society as a whole—using government as part of the way society expresses its goals and aspirations—this problem cannot be solved.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Barlow, go ahead for five minutes.

[*English*]

Mr. John Barlow (Macleod, CPC): Thank you very much.

Again I want to thank everybody for being here and adjusting your schedules appropriately.

First of all, I wanted to start with Ms. Evans. I only have five minutes. I'm going to try to go as quickly as I can.

You had a great comment and I wanted to just highlight that a little bit. You had mentioned that 65%—or something like that—of women go into post-secondary education or get some kind of university degree. But we still look at college and the polytechnics as an alternative, not a parallel. I think that is a great message that we have to get out. All of us are from that generation, I think, where going to technical school or a polytechnic was where the kids who couldn't handle university went. If they only knew the salaries that come out of those things now.... How do we change that perception? Is there something you are doing to try to change that perception?

● (1230)

Ms. Tammy Evans: We are trying to change that perception within the industry. One of the things that have become very prevalent in our knowledge base going through this research program is that the industry itself is quite fractured in its initiatives. Within the industry, women are even more fractured, so we don't have enough of a voice for women. As part of CAWIC, we're trying to advance partnerships within the different organizations in the industry—unionized, non-unionized, and alternative shops—to actually speak with one voice on these issues. Regardless of it being male or female, we have to raise the profile of the industry. We have to do that through a cooperative effort, not just the industry itself.

The industry has traditionally sat back because there's been so much work available. But if the industry doesn't step up, it can't address the shortage of skilled workers and the lack of succession planning for the skilled trades. It has now recognized that this is an issue, and I think the industry is prepared to work together with government agencies and different organizations to raise the profile at the grassroots level with parents and within the schools. This is something that is going to become incredibly important, and we have to do it now. CAWIC is working with the industry through partnerships to do that.

I did want to mention that there's been a lot of discussion about the importance of raising parity within education so that more women are represented in construction and STEM education programs. There is still a significant gap between completion rates, and the completion rates are not being addressed, so the issue of women completing the program and actually entering into the workforce is still a live issue.

We have done some work in the industry and in the education system to open up more programs that attract women. There are more educational institutes going out into the market and speaking to the market to raise the profile, but there aren't enough employers participating and taking on these students. Apprenticeships aren't being completed. The women aren't getting the tickets, and even some of the men aren't getting the tickets, so we need to get the employers involved. A lot of that has to do with engaging the industry employers directly. That happens through some government initiatives and some regulatory work that needs to go hand in hand with that.

Mr. John Barlow: I think this goes against what Ms. Lahey is saying. I think some of the data she is using might be old, or maybe I'm a bit off. The data we have from Status of Women shows an increase in the number of women going into the skilled trades, though maybe not into all of them. For example, I just looked it up and the number of women going in to be heavy equipment operators has doubled. The number of industrial electricians has gone up significantly. The number of women in construction has gone up significantly, and the number going into the apprenticeship program has gone up 5% in the last couple of years.

However, you're right about the number who are actually completing. We aren't hitting that. I know it's still early, but do you see programs like the Canada apprenticeship loan program, with $4,000 per training period that can be used for child care, mortgage payments, groceries, or tools—

Ms. Tammy Evans: It's still early, but those are very valuable programs. The challenge there is that when you go into the schools and you go into the different industries, they're actually not aware of those programs, so there's not enough profiling of those programs. Even the OYAP program, the Ontario youth apprenticeship program, is out there specifically. The YWCA is active, but we're not getting the message through the industry. We're not engaging the industry enough to get them to participate. We need a strong, active commitment from the industry employers to get engaged in this process and to hire on.

Mr. John Barlow: I think that's why Irving's program is so outstanding.

Ms. Tammy Evans: It's an excellent program.

Mr. John Barlow: I hope we can take that model and take your template across the country, because I think that's such a great partnership.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Barlow.

[*Translation*]

Thank you, Mr. Barlow.

Mrs. Sellah, the floor is yours for five minutes.

● (1235)

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I want to thank all the witnesses in attendance or joining us by video conference for their contribution to our study.

My question is for Ms. Connolly.

On your website, I saw that you have an exemplary career and that you have received some 20 honours and awards for your work. Do you think grants or higher wages for women in STEM would be an effective way to encourage them to go into those professions?

Prof. Marie Connolly: You mentioned higher wages, but I am wondering how those higher wages could be implemented.

That being said, I would say that grants are definitely a big help. Loans and grants are very appreciated, especially grants, since loans eventually have to be paid back. Grants mostly help women access those fields of study. Awarding grants that target women in particular can obviously help.

It's interesting to note that one study—which was not carried out by me—looked into the chosen fields of study. It compared the way boys and girls choose their field of study. By identifying the various factors that influence those decisions, the study showed that girls place far less emphasis on the wages they could earn once they graduate. Boys actually focus more on the wages than girls do. Is that because girls are less informed or because they are interested in other considerations? That is less clear.

According to the same study, the parents' education is a factor that greatly influences young girls' decision. In that study and in a number of other studies I have read, the parents' expectations and aspirations regarding their children have an influence.

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah: Thank you.

Good afternoon, Ms. Lahey. I would also like to ask you a question.

Women in STEM occupations have lower incomes than men. We know that is the main obstacle preventing women from entering skilled trades.

Why wouldn't the income splitting included in the 2015 budget support those women who already have a fairly low income?

[*English*]

Prof. Kathleen Lahey: Well, yes. It depends entirely on the composition of the family income overall. First of all, single women and single parents will get absolutely no benefit from income splitting, which is a $2 billion program for 2015. Secondly, unless they're in the top 15% of income earners, they will not get anywhere near a fair share of tax benefit from income splitting.

At the same time, the repeal of the child tax credit has taken approximately $2 billion out of the hands of parents, many of whom are single parents, so the whole tax transfer system as it pertains to taxation within the family is pushing the very women that the government says it's so concerned about further back into the pack, as they attempt to just maintain some sort of an affordable income coming into their household. In after-tax terms, income splitting has taken that group of women a step backwards.

At the same time, this expectation that was just referred to, where young girls perhaps don't plan for higher incomes in the same way that young men do, means that the income-splitting tax benefits will actually encourage young women and women graduating from college to pay even less attention to their salaries, because they will know and will have discussed with their peers, their spouses, and their partners that in fact their paid work is perhaps worth more to the family when it's replaced with unpaid work. So while the whole country is working at trying to get women into better employment situations, we're now using tax subsidies to get them to not work.

● (1240)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Lahey.

Ms. Crockatt, you have five minutes.

Ms. Joan Crockatt (Calgary Centre, CPC): Thank you very much to all of our witnesses today.

Ms. Lahey, you're in Sweden, correct? Can you hear me?

Prof. Kathleen Lahey: Yes, I'm in northern Sweden.

Ms. Joan Crockatt: And you've been there since 2013.

Prof. Kathleen Lahey: No, I arrived yesterday.

Ms. Joan Crockatt: I was just wondering. I'm really appreciative that you have, I'm sure, fought many of the front-end battles for women getting into higher income positions, and so on, but I'm wondering if it might be possible that you haven't been aware of some of the recent changes, like the women building futures program and several others that we've heard of today.

Prof. Kathleen Lahey: Actually I'm extremely aware of all of these programs and I have been living continuously in Canada. In 2013, I did visit as a visiting scholar at Umea University in northern Sweden, but I came right back after that three months. In fact, I produced a multi-hundred page detailed analysis of recent budgets that critiqued, specifically, those programs. I'm intimately aware of the programming in this area.

Ms. Joan Crockatt: Okay. I simply wondered because I saw that you were quoting some rather old data, but that's fine. I'll just leave that there.

Marie, I'd love to go into your testimony and I found that very interesting. I think it sort of takes us to the front end of some of the things we've been dealing with here for the last many months, which is how to modify girls' goals and aspirations so they're actually preparing themselves to be able to take STEM professions. Not only to get them into STEM professions, but also to let them know there are specific STEM professions that if they target themselves toward —as you've pointed out, architecture and engineering—those will lead to higher paying jobs for them.

I wondered if you could tease that out more. What do we need to tell parents? What do we need to tell young girls? What information do you think is actually a game changer for them?

Prof. Marie Connolly: The first thing I want to say is that the numbers I've presented to you today are an accounting exercise, not a causal exercise. I wish I could—

Ms. Joan Crockatt: There are some human factors, too.

Prof. Marie Connolly: I wish I could say that if all women took this sort of position they would make a lot more. I can't say that for sure, but it is true that even though there's a wage gap in favour of men, some occupations seem to be higher paying.

What we need to tell them, I wish I knew. The two reports that I cite at the end of my presentation, I think, ask themselves those kinds of questions and I think they have more insight into those questions than I do. I also just told you that girls seem to pay less attention to the salary, but despite that I think it would be important to tell them that there are occupations they can have that will give them more financial freedom.

From the point of view of younger girls, that's true in many areas, not only in what they choose as a career, as a field of study, but to counteract those gender biases that have been found in literature. Simply to tell them that they're able to achieve a high rate of success and that they have the skills necessary to do that, I think is important.

I don't mean to suggest that high schools should be separated by gender, but there are studies that show that women who are in women-only high schools tend to “act like men”. By that I want to say that they have the same sort of risk and appetite for competition that women, when they are placed in a two-gender setting, don't seem to show. Women tend to shy away from competition when they're with men, but not when they're only with women. So there is this insight to what's going on, but I think it should be addressed from an early age so that girls develop a taste for those kinds of fields.

● (1245)

The Chair: Thank you very much. That's all the time we have for now; it's five minutes.

Mrs. Perkins.

Mrs. Pat Perkins (Whitby—Oshawa, CPC): Thank you all for the presentations today. I think I'll start off with Tammy Evans, if I could.

Tammy, you made a comment in response to Mr. Barlow's question, and you said that the information isn't getting out. Somehow people are not receiving the information that they need in order to have uptake on some of the programs.

Regarding advertising, there have been some very critical remarks made about the type of advertising that is done to support government programs and so on, saying it's self-serving and those sorts of things. I'm hearing quite the opposite here, that we need to get those programs out there for people, for the uptake, and I'm very grateful to hear that because it's certainly something that I'm going to take to heart and advocate that we do more for. I really appreciate those comments.

With respect to the ladies here from Irving, there were some comments about early pathways, getting in there when they're quite young, the Techsploration and grade nine girls. I think Doreen might have been the one who spoke about that. Can you expand on how young...? You're talking about grade nine, and then we have other comments here saying that this should occur at the elementary level, and we've had this discussion with several groups who have presented.

Is grade nine the base that you've been achieving or are you trying to go a little bit lower in age?

Ms. Anna Marenick: What we're trying to do is partner with established channels. There are a lot of organizations who are doing really good work. We have no intention of re-creating the wheel, so Techsploration is an established program in Nova Scotia that works with schools, targeted at the grade nine level. The school would be assigned a mentor. The girls would go to the employer and then the employer would go to the school.

Mrs. Pat Perkins: I just want to know, in terms of age group, are you going to be targeting younger girls? We have very limited time; I'm so sorry. It's a great program, but I'd like to know whether you are going to target a younger age at any point. Is that what you plan?

Ms. Anna Marenick: The possibility is there. We're in our first few years of funding, so I think that we're still trying to figure out what will work. At this point we're likely looking at grade nine and up.

Mrs. Pat Perkins: That's really good. Thank you very much.

I will go back to Tammy because I think that you said the earlier they get involved, the better. As for the type of programming that you were doing, could you expand on what it is, at what age it's appropriate, and what types of exposures there are? Are you getting hands-on things? How is that working?

Ms. Tammy Evans: What CAWIC has been doing is partnering up with the school boards. We will actually go into the schools, into the elementary schools, and we'll have a career day at grade six, so we'll actually talk to them. We'll bring in tradeswomen to talk to them about trades at a very early age, but we're also encouraging the school boards, the schools, and the guidance counsellors to bring in the parents, because it starts at home, and that's really important.

We have to educate the parents, or not so much educate as bring awareness to the families because when the child comes home and is excited about maybe being an electrician, one of the parents, both parents, or whatever the family setup is, may say, "Oh, no, you're much smarter than that," or "You won't earn enough money," when in fact it has been proven that within five years of a university education and within five years of completing an apprenticeship program, the apprenticeship program is a six-figure income potential. Parents don't know this, neither do the kids, neither do the guidance counsellors, and neither do the teachers, so we have to get that message back into the schools.

● (1250)

Mrs. Pat Perkins: Regarding the industry awareness campaign, you say it's number one in the response for the data that you've been collecting.

Ms. Tammy Evans: From the employer side and from the female participants, they are saying that they weren't aware, and some of them weren't aware of the funding programs that are out at both the provincial and the federal levels. That's something that's important, so we help to share that information and we partner up with organizations to help share it, but there has to be more of that. The industry has to get involved in that, and actually, the industry, the employers, have to be aware that there are programs that support employers, and I think the message isn't getting to the employers.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Bateman, the floor is now yours for seven minutes.

Ms. Joyce Bateman (Winnipeg South Centre, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

[*English*]

Thank you so very much to all our witnesses for being here today and for sharing your time and expertise with us. What you're talking about matters so very much.

I see some recurring themes. Certainly there's the importance of starting early. There's the importance of making sure that parents support the child instead of saying, "No, you wouldn't want to do that." There's also the importance of partnering with industry in areas of excellence and having the union support and work in partnership with the employer, with the employee, to the common good. I so very much value that we're working as a team.

I hope I have a chance to get around to everyone here, but perhaps I can start with Ms. Evans.

You mentioned in your responses to Mr. Barlow and Ms. Perkins that industry doesn't know about the good government programs. Families don't know and people don't know. What do you recommend for getting that message out?

Ms. Tammy Evans: I recommend a stronger collaborative effort with industry associations. I think we have construction industry associations right across Canada. We have the Canadian Construction Association, and all of the provincial associations are members of the Canadian association. Then you have geographical local construction associations.

If you involve those associations—the general contractors association, the road builders association—you actually raise the issue to a higher level and you put it on their agenda for discussion with their members.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: How do we reach the mother who, when the child comes home and says, as in your example, "Hey, Mom, I want to be an electrician", replies and presumably while they're doing something else, "Oh, no, no"? How do we reach those parents?

Ms. Tammy Evans: I think you reach them through the education system. Education is mandatory, so why can't we reach them? If they don't want to come in, if we don't want to implement these programs through the province and then through the school boards, how about a paper campaign? How about something that has to be taken home to the parents, that raises the information and the discussion at home, at a level that is—

Ms. Joyce Bateman: What age do you recommend for something that gets sent home with a child that the parents get to read?

Ms. Tammy Evans: Definitely by grade 6.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: By grade 6; so when the children have career days, parents get educated too.

Ms. Tammy Evans: Yes. Perhaps it's on "bring your parent day", when your parent comes in. Maybe your parent works in an office, or....

I actually have two careers. I've put them together. I was a woman in construction, and now I'm a construction lawyer. I went to a career day not for my son but for my youngest son's classroom. I actually chose to speak about my career in construction and in law together—

Ms. Joyce Bateman: Oh, lovely.

Ms. Tammy Evans: —to show them that you can be anything you want to be. Yes, I'm a woman in construction: here are the plans, here is my hard hat, here are my boots. It made it real.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: How many people are you reaching through your school program?

Ms. Tammy Evans: In that particular program, it was 300. For the CAWIC program, we try to do it through the school boards.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: How many school boards are receptive to this, and how many are you actually able to visit?

Ms. Tammy Evans: I think they're all receptive. It's about organizing. We do probably four or five a year through the different school boards.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: Four or five.

Ms. Tammy Evans: That could be....

Ms. Joyce Bateman: So there are a lot more families and a lot more parents to reach.

Ms. Tammy Evans: Yes.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: I'd like to move to you now, Ms. Connolly, and to your damning statistics, if I may. It was wonderful to see the clarity of your report. Only 4% of women are even in the architecture field. You used that as the first example.

As I asked Ms. Evans, how do we reach these young women? How do we reach their families? What ideas do you have? Clearly this permeates the body of your report.

● (1255)

Prof. Marie Connolly: Right.

To echo what Ms. Evans was saying, there is one point that I did go over quickly in my recommendations. The federal government, through research granting agencies like NSERC, funds a lot of scientific research. University professors get their funding through those. Well, they could have specific spending categories geared toward public outreach. They already fund communication and knowledge transfer activities. A lot of university professors use that for going to conferences to talk to their academic peers. That is very valuable, but I think probably more could be done to go and talk to local high schools.

You're not going to reach every parent in Canada, but having highly successful women...and men as well. As long as people can talk passionately to young children and young adults about what they do, and about the scientific careers they have, I think that is valuable. I think you have, through those agencies, a channel that you can use to fund that kind of outreach.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: What a great idea, to make that an inextricable component of the research funding.

Prof. Marie Connolly: Yes. The CIHR, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, has a program like that. It's called Synapse. It's an outreach and mentoring program. I have not seen the equivalent for NSERC or SSHRC, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. Something like that could be exploited.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: That's a wonderful idea. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. I would like to thank you very much for your time.

You have a little time left, so you could have a very brief comment to thank everybody. But I would like to give just a little chance for the opposition for one question, one brief question.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: Hold on a second, Madam Chair.

There's justice and there's justice. You cut me off in the middle of my time. I have waited patiently for the whole round and I have listened attentively and, Madam Chair, I find this the utmost of disrespect that you would interject and cut my time off—

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: —to empower the opposition who have already had a question and most of whom are so disrespectful to our witnesses that they've already left this meeting.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Bateman. This is all the time we have.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: No, but I have 45 seconds left.

The Chair: Please use your 45 seconds to ask a question right now.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: On a point of order, I'd like to find out first whether you or *la greffière* keeps the time, because I think we are having problems on this committee with the timing of individuals.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Bateman.

Please ask your question and then we'll conclude with your time. Thank you.

Please do ask your question.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: I am so sorry to all of our witnesses. My question was for the wonderful women from Unifor and I'd like to start with the first lady, Lisa Kelly. I actually am so very impressed with the presentation you put together.

I mean, if we don't get the message out, you are not able to assist people, you're not able to grow that 305,000 people in your cadre. Much as Ms. Connolly and Ms. Evans have said with clarity, they are trying to be creative about reaching out and not waiting until we're training people from barista to welder, but to maybe engender.... How could Unifor help reach the younger people, like maybe the grade sixers that Ms. Connolly or Ms. Evans were referring to?

Ms. Lisa Kelly: I'd like to throw that over to my colleague, Ms. Weymouth, because she actually has been part of many a very valuable outreach, not only at a school-age level but at a working-age level.

Terry, do you want to speak to that?

● (1300)

Ms. Teresa Weymouth: Thank you very much.

Yes, we've been doing the women's skilled trades and technology awareness program since 2001. We've actually presented this course to more than several hundred people. We've also taken this course and changed it, depending on who our audience was. We've done a program for the Saugeen First Nation mothers and daughters. We used the same techniques to address 67 women, mothers and daughters, in that first nation.

We just recently did the Ontario Women's Directorate program, a partnership with the Women's Enterprise Skills Training and St. Clair College. There were 67 people who took that last year, and 75 this year will take that training.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

I would like to thank all our witnesses. I feel we had very valuable information.

We will have our meeting next Tuesday.

This meeting is adjourned.