



City and County of San Francisco
Department on the Status of Women

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**Gender Analysis of Nontraditional Occupations in the City and County of San Francisco Workforce
January 2017**

Highlights: Skilled Crafts

Background:

- In the 1970s, women were prevented from joining a local San Francisco carpentry union. In the 1980s, Bay Area tradeswomen activists enlisted the help of the Equal Rights Advocates and the Employment Law Center to file a gender discrimination lawsuit which resulted in a federal judge imposed consent decree where federally funded jobs had the goal of hiring 6.9% women, rising to 9% over 5 years.
- The construction sector is expected to see a 32% increase in employment opportunities in San Francisco, leading to an estimated 4,000 new jobs. These jobs are well-paid and do not require a 4-year college degree.
- According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the percentage of women in construction jobs has remained stagnant at less than 4% for 40 years. In most other nontraditional industries, the percentage of women has more than doubled since the early 1980s, whereas in construction, the percentage moved from 2% to just 3% in 2012.

City Progress:

- Overall, women make up 2% of construction occupations in San Francisco but 5% of construction occupations in the City workforce. The City exceeds industry averages along several measures.
- In every skilled crafts classification in the San Francisco City workforce, the large majority is male. The highest female employment percentages are within the laborers at 8%, cement masons at 7%, and stationary engineers at 7%. The classifications in the operating engineers, painters, auto machinists, and carpenters unions have the lowest percentage of women at merely 2% each.
- There is great racial and ethnic diversity among women in the construction trades. Women in the City's skilled craft workforce are 36% White, 26% Black, 22% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 10% Hispanic.
- To meet the demands on the construction industry, the City has coordinated City-wide construction training and employment programs. For example, CityBuild Academy is a comprehensive pre-apprenticeship and construction administration training for San Francisco residents administered by the Office of Workforce and Economic Development, in partnership with City College of San Francisco, various community non-profit organizations, labor unions, and industry employers
- According to the National Women's Law Center's 2014 report on women in construction, only 2.2% of apprentices in the U.S. construction trades are women. The City's annual report on Local Hire found that the local hiring policy resulted in a greater number of women residents of San Francisco working on construction projects for the City. In the last 5 years, out of 3,398 of the San Francisco resident trade workers who have worked on publicly funded job sites, 4.5% were women as compared to 1.8% women of all workers on all active covered projects for the City.

Recommendations:

- Monitor the number of female participants in workforce development programs.
- Foster partnerships with technical colleges to expand recruitment of women into the construction trades.
- Incorporate construction trades as part of STEM recruitment programs.
- Change gendered language in union tradesmen code books and feature images of women in the trades in promotional materials.