

## Creating Inclusive Cultures Through Allyship: CCWESTT Conference Presentation

Presenters: Tracy Boyer, YWCA Shift Change Project; Bonnie Douglas, We Are Trades Project, CCWESTT

### Presentation Description

How can men see themselves as part of positive change in the gender movement and why does that matter? What could we do to accelerate culture change in the workplace? We invite women, men, and non-binary people to participate in a facilitated session to hear about the YWCA Shift Change Project through the eyes of a male supervisor and other lived experiences.



You will participate in energetic table conversations around creating inclusive culture through allyship. These conversations will be an opportunity for people to listen to lived experiences, connect ideas and explore how we can transform and accelerate positive culture change in the workplace. We will share our learning around training to creating a culture shift in skilled trades and understanding in this work through lived experiences that bring many voices and actors to the table.

### Presentation Summary

On May 13, 2022, Shift Change, in collaboration with Bonnie Douglas of CCWESTT, presented on allyship and culture change at the CCWESTT Conference in Halifax, NS. The presentation included a description of the Shift Change project and CCWESTT We Are Trades project, an overview of the skilled trades sector, highlighted the learning from the Gender Inclusive Leadership Course (GILC) for male supervisors, offered in partnership with NSCC. A panel discussion on male allyship was hosted with Steve Law, course facilitator, and two participants from the third cohort of the GILC; Brett Morrison (Irving Shipbuilding Inc.) and Blair Lipsett (Academic Chair, NSCC). Audience members engaged in table conversations about allyship and culture change.

### Highlights from Table Conversations (What we learned)

Audience members engaged in three rounds of table conversations about allyship and culture change. Each table provided two things they believe are important for us to remember about allyship and culture change. At the start of the conversations, an audience participant, unprompted, approached the men on the panel and encouraged them to experience the feeling of being the only men in the room. This is an experience felt by women often, over many years, in male dominated fields and was an interesting opportunity for reflection in the moment. The main ideas from the table conversations were around conversation, accountability, leadership, bystander intervention, allyship, and stereotypes/biases. Some key messages from the conversations included:



- Creating space for hard conversations to happen and once conversations are started to keep them going.
- Leadership needs to be accountable and engage in continuous learning.
- Allies need to have the courage to speak up when they witness discriminatory language or behaviours.
- Male allies need to encourage other men to be allies. Allyship needs to be normalized in workplaces.
- We need to consider our personal biases and work to challenge gender stereotypes in the skilled trades.