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Releases

This International Women's Day, BCFED challenges men to Be More Than A Bystander in the workplace

The following is a statement from the BC Federation of Labour leaders Sussanne Skidmore and Laird Cronk on International Women's Day:

This year, the Federation is focusing on shifting the culture in B.C. with respect to women's' rights and safety.

Sussanne Skidmore, Secretary-Treasurer of the BCFED and long-time feminist and human rights activist encourages men to speak up when they see sexism, bullying or harassment in the workplace; "Every day in this province, women face tremendous barriers. Women make 88.5 cents for every dollar a man makes. Women continue to remain under-represented on Boards and senior leadership teams. There are so many systemic barriers to women's equality, the challenge can feel overwhelming, but individual men can help make a difference."

Laird Cronk, BCFED President recently rose to the challenge. "Last month I attended a *Be More Than A Bystander* training session for men, through the BC Centre for Women in the Trades (BCCWITT), which educated the male participants on the everyday threats and sexism women face. The program was not only eye-opening, but it also gave us the skills to really identify this behavior and appropriately intervene."

Last year, the BC Federation of Labour—through the BC Centre for Women in the Trades—partnered with the Ending Violence Association of BC (EVA BC) and the BC Lions to modify the *Be More Than A Bystander* program for the construction sector. BCCWITT's program provides men from the construction industry with the skills to identify and counter sexism in the workplace and to bring these teaching to other men in the industry.

The BCFED encourages anyone who works in a sector where there are more men than women working, to contact BCCWITT and ask them how to get this training for your workplace. They can be reached at info@bctradeswomen.org or on their website at www.bccwitt.ca

"Together, we can change the culture in our workplaces," said Skidmore. "The BC Fed is committed to connecting workers with the skills needed to transform industries like construction."