

ORIENTATION/CAREER FAIR CHECKLIST

CWIT holds orientation/career fairs twice annually to kick off recruitment for our pre-apprenticeship program, the Technical Opportunities Program (TOP). These events, typically attended by an average of 150 women, serve many purposes and generate a lot of enthusiasm for the program. Though not a job fair per se, apprenticeship program partners and tradeswomen host information booths, as do many contractors and other employers, providing an opportunity for women to thoroughly explore these career opportunities and demonstrating that women are successful in these careers and the industry is serious about recruiting them. At the same time, involving apprenticeship program partners demonstrates to them that women are interested in these careers and helps to build their capacity and commitment to recruiting them into their programs.

The event typically begins with a presentation including an experience tradeswoman, a recent TOP graduate working as an apprentice and an apprenticeship program coordinator or contractor. This is perhaps the first time that attendees have heard directly from a woman working in the trades and her first hand experiences of the rewards and challenges of the industry is critical to helping women assess their own interest in and suitability for a construction career. A new apprentice who has recently graduated from the program brings the goal within reach, "Last year I was sitting where you are now, and now I'm earning \$17.00 per hour as an apprentice..." Finally, by involving an apprenticeship program and/or contractor we are ensuring that women hear first-hand the expectations and requirements of these programs and that apprenticeship programs are able to craft their message to this audience.

After the speakers, staff provides an overview of our pre-apprenticeship program, the Technical Opportunities Program, and how it can help prepare them for a construction career. This presentation includes a detailed discussion of the class goals, content, schedule and expectations. The program wraps up with an introduction to the tradeswomen and apprenticeship programs/employers, after which attendees are invited to sign up for an assessment session.

The second half of the event is a career fair, intended to provide women with the opportunity to explore various career options and address any specific questions they might have to apprenticeship programs, employers and tradeswomen staffing the booths.

Below is a sample checklist to aid in planning and preparation

Six to eight weeks prior to the event

- Design flyer and send to the printer
- Compile mailing (and/or email) lists for social service partners, sign in sheets from job fairs, information and other presentations, past participants, tradeswomen, apprenticeship



programs, alderman, women's organizations, one-stops, unemployment offices, DHS offices, community organizations, contractors, funders etc

- Send invitation letters/announcements to employers, apprenticeship programs and tradeswomen volunteers
- Start social media campaign - post on facebook and other event sites and job boards

Four to six weeks prior to the event

- Select speakers and mail out confirmation letters
- Coordinate mailing/emailing of flyers
- Send flyers to the Apprenticeship information Center for mailing to female applicants
- Recruit volunteers

Two to four weeks prior to the event

- Begin circulation of flyers - including enlisting staff and volunteers in posting in their communities and requesting partner organizations post the information. Additionally, e-mail partner and service related contacts and ask them to print and post and share with their networks.
- Follow up with phone calls to confirm attendance of employers, apprenticeship programs and tradeswomen.
- Send two week ads to local newspapers with targeted demographics to best get the information in from of female readership.
- Send out Public Service Announcements to a media list of radio and television stations.
- Provide speakers with outlines and assistance in preparing their remarks.
- Send mass e-mail invitation to past attendees of info sessions or job fairs
- Re-post on Facebook, Twitter, other relevant social media and track response
- Orient and assign staff and volunteer roles
 - Sign-in Table
 - Assessment Sign-Up
 - Food & Beverage setup

Week of the event

- Complete confirmation of employers, apprenticeship programs, and tradeswomen
- Create and print program in-house, sign-in sheets, assessment and documentation reminders
- Order food for employers and volunteers and purchase dinnerware, beverages, and ice
- Copy Apprenticeship information for participating apprenticeship programs.



- Create table tents/signage for each apprenticeship and employer table
- Give a final “reminder” on Facebook, Twitter, other social media. Send out one last mass e-mail to Outreach contacts and ask staff to do the same.

Things to bring to the event

- Programs
- Sign-in sheets
- Assessment and documentation reminders
- Apprenticeship program information
- Table tents/signage
- Banner, display pictures, etc.
- Tee Shirts, Hard Hats, cash box, petty cash
- Business Cards
- Tee Shirt Order Forms
- Pens

