
Building EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

**Six Affirmative Action Programs
for Women Construction Workers**




Building EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

**Six Affirmative Action Programs
for Women Construction Workers**

Laurie Wessman LeBreton
Sara Segal Loevy
Lauren Sugerman

© December 1995
Chicago Women In Trades





The research in **Building Equal Opportunity**
was made possible by the support of the
John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur
Foundation, the Chicago Foundation for
Women and the Woods Fund of Chicago.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	4
Background.....	5
Methods.....	7
Findings.....	8
Quantitative Outcomes.....	8
The Affirmative Action Process	17
Chicago, Illinois	18
Cook County Jail.....	19
Juvenile Detention Center	21
U.S. Post Office	22
McCormick Place Expansion.....	24
Cleveland, Ohio	
Gateway Stadium and Arena	27
Portland, Maine	
Portland Bridge Project.....	30
Focus Groups for Tradeswomen.....	33
Discussion	35
Conclusion	38
Recommendations.....	39

Executive Summary

Chicago Women in Trades (CWIT) evaluated six construction sites with affirmative action programs for women construction workers. All of the projects had the same goal: increased numbers of women workers working under equitable conditions.

CWIT worked on four sites in Chicago: the Cook County Jail, the U.S. Post Office, the McCormick Place Expansion, and the Cook County Juvenile Detention Center. The two additional sites are the Gateway Stadium and Arena in Cleveland, Ohio, a project run by Hard Hatted Women, a tradeswomen's organization, and the Portland, Maine Bridge Project, a project of the Maine Department of Transportation, which works closely with a tradeswomen's organization.

Following are the key findings:

Goals

The projects set goals for hours to be worked by women that ranged from 5% to 15%; women actually worked from 5% to 8.9% of the hours on these projects. It appears that higher goals lead to higher achievement. Although only the two projects with the lowest goals of 5% met or exceeded their goals, three projects that did not meet their higher goals exceeded the achievement of the two projects with lower goals.

Tradeswomen's advocates increased the numbers of hours worked by women through aggressive efforts that included insisting that contractors comply with goals throughout the life of a project. This is a very different policy than the more traditional approach of penalizing contractors for non-compliance at the end of a project.

The projects did not employ women equally across all trades. Instead, tradeswomen worked a large proportion of their total hours in just a few trades including carpenters, electricians and laborers.

Process

All projects had a broad vision of affirmative action that includes an equitable workplace, free of sexual harassment and gender-based discrimination in hiring and training assignments. Addressing these forms of discrimination was an ongoing struggle.

Projects ran most smoothly when they were planned well in advance of actual construction, when systems were already in place to insure both compliance with goals and equitable worksites, and when the area had a history of affirmative action on construction sites.

The backing of someone with the power to enforce compliance with goals was critical to the success of each program. In some cases, this person was a public official with jurisdiction over the project, in others the owner's representative or the general contractor. Concurrent penalties for non-compliance were also very useful, even if they were not used.

Project Teams

All projects used a team consisting of community-based organizations, government agencies, contractors, owners, and others whose responsibility was monitoring and enforcing numerical goals and other project activities. An important function for tradeswomen's organizations on these teams was to educate team members about their power and their responsibility to insist that goals be met. Tradeswomen's advocates either collaborated with community-based organizations working for minority males or did monitoring and compliance for minority men as well as women.

Services available to tradeswomen on sites varied, depending on funding available. Projects with limited funding offered only monitoring of achievement and site walks; others had on-site staff and child care.

Conclusion

While data on similar projects without affirmative action efforts is not available, it appears that many more women worked on these six projects than would have without affirmative action. However, even with affirmative action, women's participation in these well-paying jobs has been very limited.

This inequity must be addressed. Since data suggests that higher goals lead to higher achievement, goals for tradeswomen must be raised. When these goals have been raised, affirmative action teams must make aggressive efforts to meet them. Only then will women earn the high wages of construction work and so begin to achieve economic equity.

Background

Affirmative Action for Women Construction Workers

Affirmative action is clearly necessary for women construction workers. In 1995 women make up only 2.1% of the well-paid construction workforce. Instead, most women are segregated into just 20 of 440 occupations, most of them low-paid "pink-collar" jobs such as secretary, factory assembly worker or waitress.¹ Moreover, those women who manage to enter the construction industry encounter widespread discrimination within it. Tradeswomen report difficult working conditions, including sexual harassment, unequal training, and isolation from other women.

They also report discrimination in hiring and layoffs, discrimination which affects them economically. In Chicago tradeswomen earn only 61% of what their male counterparts earn.² In Maine, tradeswomen earn 61.2% of their male counterparts' wages.³

As low as these numbers appear, they are an improvement over those of earlier years. Prior to 1980, women made up less than 1% of the construction workforce. Although the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited discrimination in hiring, women did not begin to enter the trades until 1978, when affirmative action was expanded to include women working in construction. Two sets of federal regulations form the foundation of this affirmative action.

The first, Executive Order 11246, set goals of 6.9% women workers on federally funded construction projects and required contractors to make efforts to meet these goals. The second, Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 30, required apprenticeship programs to set goals for women apprentices and to improve recruitment of women.

The numeric goal set in Executive Order 11246 was based on 1970 census data and was intended to be an interim goal. In fact, this goal has not been revised

since 1981. Early in 1994, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance (OFCCP), the federal agency responsible for enforcing Executive Order 11246, held hearings on raising goals in New York, Chicago and San Francisco. Advocates requested that new goals be set to reflect current workforce statistics, and that these goals be revised regularly.

However, the political climate after the elections in the fall of 1994 made raising the goals impossible. Attacks on affirmative action through local and federal legislation, ballot initiatives, court decisions and administrative decrees make simply preserving current goals a challenge.

Strengthening affirmative action, however, is both just and necessary. Women must have access to jobs that pay well to achieve economic equity. Businesses also need affirmative action. Labor force statistics show that by the year 2000 two-thirds of all new entrants in the labor force will be women and minorities. For the construction industry to prosper, women and minorities will have to be included.

Chicago Women in Trades

Chicago Women in Trades (CWIT) is a grass-roots organization providing support, training and advocacy for women in the construction trades and in other fields dominated by men since 1981. CWIT published the results of its first research work in 1992. **Breaking New Ground: WORKSITE 2000**⁴ is a study of the conditions women workers encounter in the construction industry. It documented for the first time what tradeswomen and tradeswomen's advocates were already well aware of: women in the construction industry face discrimination in hiring and layoffs, encounter sexual harassment, struggle to get proper training and often work isolated from other women.

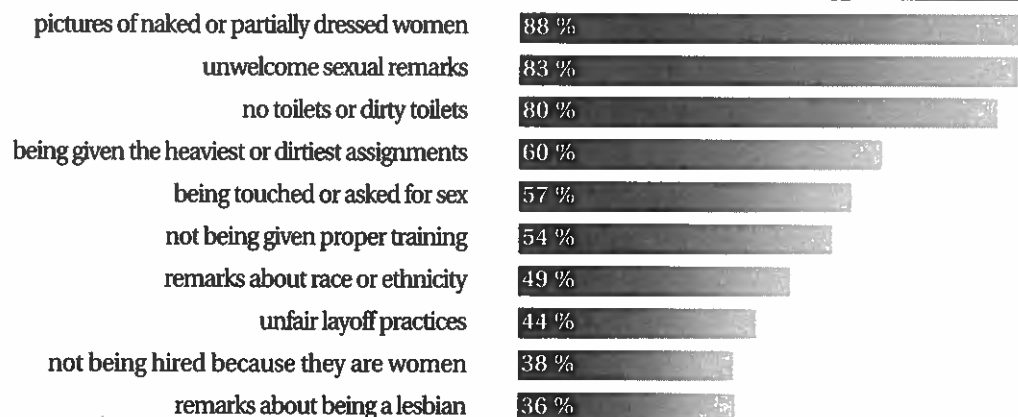
1 U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, 1990.

2 *Two Sides to the Coin*, Women Employed Institute, Chicago, Illinois, 1995.

3 —Stephanie Sequino, *Living on the Edge: Women Working and Providing for Families in the Maine Economy, 1979-1993*, University of Maine, January 1995.

4 *Breaking New Ground: WORKSITE 2000*, Chicago Women in Trades, 1992.

Tradeswomen reported the following on-the-job experiences:



Breaking New Ground also put forth a vision of WORKSITE 2000, a construction industry with increased numbers of women working under equitable conditions. To achieve this vision CWIT made recommendations for all sectors of the industry, including construction sites. Recommendations for a model construction site, a WORKSITE 2000, include:

- *setting high goals for women workers,*
- *providing pre-construction training for supervisors and workers in creating equitable workplaces with fair training assignments,*
- *creating teams to promote recruitment and integration of women on the site consisting of the project sponsor, contractor, affirmative action specialists and tradeswomen's organizations,*
- *maintaining separate and clean toilets and changing areas,*
- *publishing workforce projections for coming months, and*
- *integrating WORKSITE 2000 policies into contractors' bids.*

Since **Breaking New Ground** was published in 1992, CWIT has worked on four construction sites where some of these recommendations have been adopted. These sites are:

- 1) *the construction of the Cook County Jail (1/93 - 1994),*
- 2) *the renovation of the Cook County Juvenile Detention Center (1/94 - 7/95),*

3) *the construction of the United States Post Office (8/92 - present), and*

4) *the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority addition to McCormick Place and the retrofit (1/93 - present).*

Two of these projects, the Cook County Jail and the U.S. Post Office, were designated WORKSITE 2000 sites. Although the sites did not have all of the elements of a model site listed above, CWIT wanted to make the project and the agency visible. The other two sites, the McCormick Place expansion and the renovation of the Cook County Juvenile Detention Center, were designated by the developer, Stein and Company, as Female Employment Initiative sites.

CWIT has also been in close contact with two groups working on model construction sites outside of Chicago. These sites are:

5) *the construction of the Gateway Stadium and Arena, Cleveland, Ohio (1/92 - 5/94), and*

6) *the construction of Portland Bridge Project, Portland, Maine (6/94 - present).*

In 1994, CWIT began an internal evaluation of the four construction sites in Chicago. CWIT then expanded the evaluation to include the Cleveland and Portland sites. This report details first the methods used to evaluate the sites. Second, it examines the history, activities and achievement at each site. The third part is a discussion of conclusions, and the fourth contains recommendations for affirmative action programs for women in the construction industry.

Methods

In January of 1994 CWIT began to evaluate its work on the four Chicago sites. The WORKSITE 2000 evaluation team consisted of the CWIT staff members working on each site, a team coordinator, a research consultant and a policy consultant. The team developed a uniform reporting tool, a template with goals and objectives, using the criteria for a model worksite from **Breaking New Ground: WORKSITE 2000**. The staff member responsible for each site filled out the template, which the WORKSITE 2000 team discussed. The team then met monthly to review the numbers of women working on the sites, to develop strategies to increase these numbers, and to make plans to resolve any problems on the sites.

In late November and early December of 1994, CWIT took two additional steps. CWIT invited representatives of Hard Hatted Women (HHW) and the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) to meet to discuss their affirmative action programs. Prior to the meetings, HHW and MDOT filled out the template CWIT developed to evaluate its own programs.

Using the template as a basis of the discussion, all three groups examined their models for worksite intervention, the results of these interventions, and the relative value of different strategies. At the end of two days they set up criteria for the ideal affirmative action program for women in the construction industry.

To evaluate its work from the point of view of tradeswomen, CWIT ran focus groups for women working on the two projects that were then well underway, the Cook County Jail and the U.S. Post Office. CWIT also asked these tradeswomen to fill out questionnaires.

Finally, CWIT analyzed employment data derived from certified payroll reports that documented the number of hours worked by all workers and by women from all the sites. CWIT calculated the percentage of hours worked by tradeswomen on the site, the percentages of women within individual trades, the trades representing the greatest number of hours for both men and women, and the percentage of total hours for women by trade.



Findings

The six construction projects studied all share a critical commitment to comprehensive affirmative action for women construction workers. This is affirmative action with the two goals, increasing numbers of women workers and insuring equitable working conditions for them.

The six construction projects studied all share a critical commitment to comprehensive affirmative action for women construction workers. This is affirmative action with the two goals, increasing numbers of women workers and insuring equitable working conditions for them.

Accomplishing these goals was an enormous challenge at all sites. Increasing the women's hours on a site, for example, requires knowing the current level, advocating for improving it, and monitoring changes. However, getting information about women's hours was not easy. In some cases it took four to six months to get these numbers; in others it was an ongoing struggle.

Making sites equitable for women was as big a challenge as increasing their numbers. Advocates found that keeping a site free of sexual harassment, establishing fair layoff policies and creating fair training assignments required constant vigilance.

Although the sites' goals were the same, their experiences differ. Previous experience with affirmative action, planning time for the project, funding for staffing, enforcement systems already in place, specific services offered and the structure of the affirmative action teams vary from site to site. These elements are explained in detail in sections dealing with the individual sites.

Quantitative Outcomes

The data provided by the construction sites allows four views of tradeswomen activity.⁵ In the first view, the goals for each site are reviewed and then compared to the hours actually worked by tradeswomen, both on the site overall and then by trade. Second, the data analysis show the relative importance of each trade to the project overall and reveal the trades with the greatest potential work hours for women. Third, data analysis show the relative importance of each trade for women. Fourth, the actual hours worked are translated into years of employment for both tradeswomen and tradesmen.

These numbers tell us little about availability of tradeswomen. Availability depends on a number of factors, including the timing and frequency of openings in apprenticeship programs, sponsorship requirements, testing methods, recruitment, training and retention after women have entered a trade. The numbers do indicate where women have made inroads in the construction industry.

⁵ Data comes from the following sources:

U.S. Post Office: Hyman/Power EEO Summary Report, 9/7/95

McCormick Place Expansion: Mc3D Minority and Female Employee Tracking System, Form 257 Data, 4/1/93 - 9/30/95

Division 11 Jail: EEO Update from Mitch Rabin, Administrative Assistant, project start to 6/30/95

Portland Bridge Project: Annual Report for 6/1/94 - 8/31/95

Gateway Stadium and Arena: EEO Aggregate Report for Arena, 1/1/92 - 5/31/94; EEO Report for Stadium - Donley's, Inc., 1/1/92 - 2/28/94

Juvenile Detention Center: Stein and Company Minority and Female Employee Tracking System, 8/31/95 - 7/31/95

Goals and Achievement

Project goals ranged from 5% to 15%, with most goals between 5% and 7% (Table One). The hours achieved, however, range between 5% and 8.9%, with five of the six projects achieving 5% to 6%. The two projects with goals of 5%, the lowest goals, were able to exceed them. The remaining four projects, which have higher goals, did not meet them. However, three of these projects have achieved more hours worked by women than the projects that exceeded their lower goals. The Portland Bridge Project, for example, has the highest achievement (8.9%) of all six projects but has not yet met its goal of 15%. It would appear that the higher the goals, the higher the achievement.⁶

Table 1: Goals and Achievement

	Post Office*	JD Center	McCormick Place*	Jail	Gateway	Bridge*
Total Project Hours	1,793,328	291,175	2,214,832	937,835	1,593,697	311,114
Total Hours for Tradeswomen	89,957	15,518	125,434	51,244	93,428	27,589
Hours for Tradeswomen						
Goals	6.9%	5.0%	7% skilled 10% unskilled	5.0%	6.9%	15.0%
Achievement	5.0%	5.3%	5.7% aggregate 5.5% skilled 6.9% unskilled	5.5%	5.9%	8.9%
* project not complete						

⁶ Research on the effect of goals in other industries supports this point of view. Jonathan S. Leonard reports that in federal contracts, "goals set ... have a measurable and significant correlation with the employment of minorities and females... the establishments that promise to employ more actually do employ more." "What Was Affirmative Action," AEA Papers and Proceedings, May 1986, p. 361.

Achievement by Trade

Five sites provided trade-specific information on the percentage of hours worked by tradeswomen (Table Two). These percentages were compared to the overall achievement for women on the site, the project average. Several trades met or exceeded the project average for tradeswomen consistently across sites. Tradeswomen hours as carpenters, laborers and sheet metal workers exceeded the project average at four out of five sites. Similarly, tradeswomen hours as electricians, pipe fitters and sprinkler fitters exceeded the average in three out of five sites. Two additional trades, insulators and welders, met or exceeded the average in both the sites where these trades worked.

Table 2: Proportion of Hours Worked by Women by Trade

	Post Office*	JD Center	McCormick Place*	Jail	Gateway	Bridge*
Goals for Tradeswomen	6.9%	5.0%	7.0% skilled 10% unskilled	5.0%	6.9%	15.0%
Total Hours Worked by Tradeswomen	5.0%	5.3%	5.5% skilled 6.9% unskilled 5.7% aggregate	5.5%	5.9%	8.9%
% of Trade-Specific Hours						
Asbestos Workers	3.2				0.5	
Bricklayers	6.4		4.8		5.5	
Carpenters	4.5	6.5	6.8	N	6.5	8.4
Concrete Finishers	4.6	0.0	6.3	O	4.9	2.3
Divers						11.5
Electricians	6.1	6.1	8.1	D	3.6	0.3
Elevator Constructors	3.5	0.2	7.0	A	2.8	
Glaziers	3.5	3.1	6.3	T	0.0	
Insulators	5.9	6.3		A		
Ironworkers	2.6	0.0	2.9		1.1	2.5
Laborers	6.2	4.8	6.9		8.7	16.9
Masons		8.3				0.0
Operating Engineers	2.9	0.0	7.4		12.6	5.0
Painters	7.1	0.0	5.4		8.6	
Pile Drivers			0.5		3.0	10.0
Pipe Fitters	4.4	0.0	5.6		7.0	100
Plasterers	0.0	0.0	0.0	N	22.7	
Plumbers	2.5	21.7	1.8	O	7.4	
Roofers	3.8	0.0	5.6		9.5	
Sheet Metal Workers	7.8	5.8	6.2	D	6.1	
Sprinkler Fitters	10.3	3.3	7.5	A	6.0	
Steel Rod				T		5.6
Structural Steel				A		0.5
Tapers		0.0	0.7			
Tile Layers	9.6	6.4	5.7		5.1	
Truck Drivers					4.8	17.7
Waterproofers	4.4	0.0	7.4			
Welders			15.7			60.1

* Project is incomplete.

Shaded areas indicate trades that have not yet or will not work on the project.

Overall Achievement for All Trades

Overall, 28 different trades worked on the five projects for which there is data. Most sites required about 20 different trades (Table Three). Between 40% and 50% of the trades working on each site, or between seven and eleven trades, met or exceeded the project average. The remaining trades fell below the project average. For most sites, only a few trades had no women workers at all. On the Juvenile Detention Center, however, no tradeswomen worked in nine different trades, including several trades in which other Chicago area projects employed women. These trades include concrete finishers, pipe finishers and ironworkers.

Table 3: Overall Achievement for All Trades +

	Post Office*	JD Center	McCormick Place*	Jail	Gateway	Bridge*
Total Number of Trades	20	20	21	no data	20	14
Trades Meeting or Exceeding Project Average	8	7	12	"	10	6
Trades Not Meeting Project Average	11	4	8	"	9	7
Trades With No Women	1	9	1	"	1	1
+ trades accounting for 1% or more of total project hours						
* project not complete						



Achievement by Skill Level

Two sites have provided data on tradeswomen by apprentice and journey level by trade (Table Four). The information indicates that apprentice hours contribute heavily to the total hours worked by women. Without more information on the availability of tradeswomen by skill level it is difficult to determine whether women are more likely to be hired at the lower-paying level within a trade, whether these proportions represent availability, or whether an entirely different set of factors is involved.

Table 4: Proportion of Hours Worked by Women in the Skilled Trades* by Skill Level

	Juvenile Detention Center			McCormick Place Expansion+		
	Apprentice	Journey Level	Aggregate, Apprentice and Journey Level	Apprentice	Journey Level	Aggregate, Apprentice and Journey Level
Project as a whole	21.3%	3.2%	5.4%	19.0%	3.7%	5.7%
Carpenters	80.1%	2.6%	6.5%	30.6%	4.2%	6.8%
Cement Finishers	n/a	n/a	n/a	94.0%	1.4%	6.3%
Electricians	8.4%	5.7%	6.1%	13.4%	7.2%	8.1%
Elevator Constructors	0.0%	0.2%	0.2%	0.0%	8.0%	7.0%
Glaziers	24.9%	0.0%	3.1%	0.0%	7.4%	6.3%
Insulators	0.0%	12.6%	6.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Ironworkers	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	14.7%	1.7%	2.9%
Masons	57.9%	0.0%	8.3%	29.2%	1.0%	4.8%
Operating Engineers	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	34.6%	4.7%	7.4%
Painters	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	56.1%	2.7%	5.4%
Pile Drivers	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%
Pipe Fitters	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	15.7%	3.7%	5.6%
Plumbers	26.8%	0.0%	21.7%	9.6%	0.6%	1.8%
Roofers	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.4%	0.0%	5.6%
Sprinkler Fitters	0.0%	3.4%	3.3%	0.0%	9.0%	7.5%
Sheet Metal Workers	n/a	5.8%	5.8%	33.5%	4.0%	6.2%
Tapers	n/a	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.7%
Tile Setters	100.0%	0.0%	6.4%	13.7%	0.0%	5.7%
Waterproofers	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	19.3%	0.0%	7.4%

* Including trades with 1% or more of total project hours, not including trades with no women workers.

+ Project not complete

Cells marked n/a indicate 1) trade has not yet worked or will not work on project, or 2) there were no hours for men or women in this skill category.

Trades with the Highest Number of Hours

The relative importance of individual trades changes somewhat according to site and to the point-in-time of a project. However, even with several projects at different stages, it is clear that a few trades dominate the available work hours (Table Five). The five trades with the greatest proportion of hours tend to be the same across sites, and they account for 69-77% of the total hours. Carpenters and laborers are dominant trades in all five sites, while electricians are dominant in four sites. Other key trades include ironworkers and operating engineers (three sites) and sheet metal workers (two sites).

Table 5: Five Trades with the Greatest Number of Hours

	Post Office*	JD Center	McCormick Place*	Jail	Gateway	Bridge*
Total Hours (Men and Women)	1,793,328 100%	291,175 100%	2,214,832 100%	937,835 100%	1,593,687 100%	311,114 100%
Electricians	369,170 21%	69,615 24%	28,312 13%		199,527 13%	
Laborers	281,720 16%	38,857 13%	377,482 17%	N	287,225 18%	66,218 21%
Ironworkers	274,134 15%		448,228 20%	O	239,089 15%	
Carpenters	206,667 12%	44,430 15%	297,203 13%		310,655 19%	87,912 28%
Operating Engineers	112,531 6%		141,153 6%	D		34,920 11%
Sheet Metal Workers		30,036 10%		A	88,779 6%	
Pipe Fitters		20,503 7%		T		
Concrete Finishers				A		21,351 7%
Steel Rod						12,783 4%

* Project is not complete

Women's Participation in Dominant Trades

Although tradeswomen should have equal access to all trades, the dominant ones have greater overall employment potential. This suggests that advocating for women in the dominant trades will result in more work hours for women than would advocating for women evenly across all trades. For example, tradeswomen are already working at least 6% of the electrician, laborer and carpenter hours at most sites (Table Six). Because these three trades account for almost half of the hours on most sites, increasing the percentage of hours worked by women by even a few points would create a substantial increase in their employment.

Table 6: Proportion of Women in the Dominant Trades

	Post Office*		JD Center		McCormick Place*		Jail		Gateway		Bridge*	
	% of total hours (men and women)	% of women in trade	% of total hours (men and women)	% of women in trade	% of total hours (men and women)	% of women in trade	% of total hours (men and women)	% of women in trade	% of total hours (men and women)	% of women in trade	% of total hours (men and women)	% of women in trade
Electricians	21%	6.1%	24%	6.1%	13%	8.1%			13%	3.6%		
Laborers	16%	6.2%	13%	4.8%	17%	6.9%	N	N	18%	8.7%	21%	16.9%
Ironworkers	15%	2.6%			20%	2.9%	O	O	15%	1.1%		
Carpenters	12%	4.5%	15%	6.5%	13%	6.8%			19%	6.5%	28%	8.4%
Operating Engineers	6%	2.9%			6%	7.4%	D	D			11%	5%
Sheet Metal Workers			10%	5.8%			A	A	6%	6.1%		
Pipe Fitters			7%	0%			T	T				
Concrete Finishers							A	A			7%	2.3%
Steel Rod											4%	5.6%

* project is not complete

The Most Important Trades for Women

Carpenters, electricians and laborers account for most of the hours worked by women. These three trades make up 55% - 69% of women's hours on the five sites for which there is data.

TABLE 7: Percent of Total Hours Worked by Women by Trade

	Post Office*	JD Center	McCormick Place*	Jail	Gateway	Bridge*
Total Hours Worked by Tradeswomen	89,956 100%	15,518 100%	125,434 100%	51,244 100%	93,438 100%	27,589 100%
Asbestos Workers	0.3%				0.0%	
Bricklayers	7.7%		3.9%		4.0%	
Carpenters	10.4%	18.7%	16.1%	N	21.7%	26.8%
Concrete Finishers	1.8%	0.0%	2.9%	O	2.3%	0.2%
Divers						1.1%
Electricians	25.1%	27.5%	22.6%	D	7.6%	0.0%
Elevator Constructors	1.6%	0.0%	1.2%	A	0.4%	
Glaziers	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	T	0.0%	
Insulators	1.5%	0.9%		A		
Iron Workers	8.1%	0.0%	10.2%		2.7%	0.8%
Laborers	19.3%	12.0%	20.6%		26.8%	40.1%
Masons		7.9%				0.0%
Operating Engineers	3.7%	0.0%	8.4%		5.9%	6.3%
Painters	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%		3.5%	
Pile Drivers			0.0%		0.2%	1.1%
Pipe Fitters	4.5%	0.0%	3.4%	N	3.0%	0.2%
Plasterers	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	O	3.8%	
Plumbers	1.6%	16.5%	1.3%		5.5%	
Roofers	0.7%	0.0%	1.3%	D	2.4%	
Sheet Metal Workers	8.6%	11.2%	4.0%	A	5.8%	
Sprinkler Fitters	3.1%	4.1%	3.0%	T	2.1%	
Steel Rod				A		2.6%
Structural Steel						0.1%
Tapers		0.0%	0.0%			
Tile Layers	0.2%	0.8%	0.0%		1.6%	
Truck Drivers					0.5%	5.6%
Waterproofers	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%			
Welders			0.0%			7.9%

* Project is incomplete.

Shaded areas indicate trades that have not yet worked or will not work on the project.

Employment Impact for Men and Women

To assess the employment impact of these sites to date, numbers of hours worked were translated into work years, based on a work year of 40 hours a week for 50 weeks. Three sites have already provided more than 700 years of employment to men and women in the construction trades (Table Eight). For every one year of wages provided to a woman on the large sites (the Post Office, McCormick Place, Gateway), equivalent wages have gone to 16 to 19 men.

Table 8: Male and Female Employment Years+ by Project

JOB SITE	Employment Years		Ratio of Men's Years to Women's
	Men	Women	
Post Office*	852	45	19:1
JD Center	138	8	17:1
McCormick Place*	1045	63	17:1
Jail	443	26	17:1
Gateway	750	47	16:1
Bridge*	142	14	10:1
+ based on a work year of 50 weeks, 40 hours per week = 2000 hours			
* project is not complete			

The Affirmative Action Process

Table Nine provides an overview of some of the elements of the affirmative action programs studied. These elements are discussed in detail in sections outlining the affirmative action process at each site.

Table 9: Services Offered by Site

	Post Office	JD Center	McCormick Place	Jail	Gateway	Bridge
Affirmative action in pre-bid documents	no	no	yes	no	no	yes
Staff on site	no	no	1 part-time	no	1 full-time	1 full-time equivalent
Involvement of tradeswomen's organizations	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Training programs to prepare women for trades	no	no	yes	no	no	yes
Training for sub-contractors	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes
Child care	no	no	no	no	no	yes
Other services on site	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes



CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Chicago has a fairly long history of affirmative action for women and minorities in construction, work begun by community-based organizations and continued by the city and by developers.

Chicago has a fairly long history of affirmative action for women and minorities in construction, work begun by community-based organizations and continued by the city and by developers. The Chicago Urban League began to advocate for employment of city residents and minorities on city construction projects in the late 1970's; CWIT joined them in this work in the early 1980's. In 1984 the city, under the leadership of Mayor Harold Washington, passed the McLaughlin Ordinance, which set goals for females, minorities and city residents on construction projects funded by the city. Stein & Company, a Chicago developer, began work to increase women's participation on its projects in 1988, when it established the Female Employment Initiative at the construction of the Metcalfe Federal Building.

In spite of this history of work to increase women's participation in construction work, tradeswomen still make up only 1.4% of the city's construction workforce.⁷ This low figure does not reflect women's interest in entering fields dominated by men, including the construction workforce. The Apprentice Information Center of the Illinois Department of Employment Security reports that 19% of the applicants to construction apprenticeships are women. Women accounted for 18% of recent applicants for firefighters' positions in the city of Chicago and 25% of the applicants for laborers' positions at the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District.



⁷ Two Sides of the Coin, Women Employed Institute, 1995.

COOK COUNTY JAIL

Ms. Decker's enthusiasm for the project was pivotal. She left the meeting where she learned of the recommendations for a WORKSITE 2000 and had them handwritten into contractors' bid documents.

The construction of the Cook County Jail (the Division Eleven Maximum Security Detention Facility), which began in January of 1993 and was completed in 1994, was CWIT's first model site. When planning for the jail began, CWIT had written its recommendations but had not begun to look for its first site. Mary Decker, the County's Director of Capital Planning, learned of CWIT's recommendations through her work on the board of directors of the Woods Fund of Chicago, one of CWIT's funders.

Ms. Decker's enthusiasm for the project was pivotal. She left the meeting where she learned of the recommendations for a WORKSITE 2000 and had them handwritten into contractors' bid documents. She also asked that the site be designated a WORKSITE 2000. The Cook County Board of Commissioners, whose Affirmative Action Committee was headed by an African-American woman, Commissioner Bobbie Steele, also supported the project. A goal of 5% women workers was set.

When discussions with the County began, CWIT was to be the only community-based organization working on the site. Later the County decided to expand WORKSITE 2000 to include monitoring for minorities, and two community-based organizations were added to the project. Resources for affirmative action, however, did not increase.

Goals and Achievement for Women Workers

The total hours worked on the Cook County Jail was 937,835. The goal of 5% women workers for the project was exceeded; women worked a total of 51,244 hours, 5.5% of the hours on the project. In the earliest months the most basic information for the team, the numbers of women working, was not reported in a timely manner. Eventually CWIT was able to get this information fairly easily, although it was reported by contractor rather than by trade. Reporting by trade is now standard practice, and software has been developed that makes this reporting fairly simple. Because this was an early project, however, data by trade is not available.

The Project Team

The three community-based organizations making up the WORKSITE 2000 team were CWIT, the Chicago Urban League and the Hispanic-American Construction Industry Association. Other team members were the affirmative action officer from the County and the affirmative action officer for the general contractor, Morse Diesel. The team met monthly to review the numbers of women and minorities working on the site and to develop strategies to increase these numbers and make the worksite equitable.

CWIT had to orient other team members to demanding ongoing compliance from contractors, rather than imposing penalties for non-compliance at the end of the project.

At the beginning of the project CWIT was the team member most comfortable in the very necessary role as enforcer of affirmative action. The other team members either lacked experience in employment monitoring, were used to monitoring with much larger budgets or were unfamiliar with the pro-active, team approach to monitoring CWIT feels is effective. CWIT had to orient other team members to demanding ongoing compliance from contractors, rather than imposing penalties for non-compliance at the end of the project.

Services Provided

When the County made the decision to divide the monitoring contract among three organizations, CWIT was forced to cut back services it had hoped to offer on the site. CWIT staff made monthly site walks to make sure that there was no sexual graffiti or pictures, that there were separate and clean toilet facilities for women and that the general tenor of the site was acceptable. CWIT held one orientation session for women interested in the trades and two training for contractors in preventing sexual harassment. CWIT also held several support group sessions for women at lunch and after work.

To make the maximum impact with available funds, CWIT targeted three trades on the site: laborers, carpenters and bricklayers. These trades had very low numbers of women working on the site in spite of a relatively large pool of available women. CWIT also continued to advise the County about the general direction of the project.

Lessons from the Cook County Jail Project

CWIT established a good working relationship with the County, with both CWIT and WORKSITE 2000 becoming a visible presence on and off site.

The program was a success in spite of several problems. First, limited funding prevented CWIT from implementing many key WORKSITE 2000 elements. Second, the County budgeted for only one year of a two-year project. Additional time would have strengthened it considerably. Third, the County assigned affirmative action responsibility to the general contractor after the contract had been signed, so that project was not part of the negotiated contract, but rather an afterthought. Fourth, getting adequate, timely reports on the numbers of women workers was a problem.

However, in spite of these problems, CWIT believes that many more women worked on the project than would have otherwise. In addition, CWIT established a good working relationship with the County, with both CWIT and WORKSITE 2000 becoming a visible presence on and off site.

JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER

The most critical responsibility, monitoring the number of women workers, was not included in the contract.

The County, pleased with the achievement at the Jail, asked CWIT to work on the renovation of the Juvenile Detention Center, which began in January of 1994 and finished in July of 1995. The contract called for a more limited scope of services than CWIT had proposed to the County. The most critical responsibility, monitoring the number of women workers, was not included in the contract. CWIT decided to remain on the project, with reservations, in order to maintain a working relationship with the County.

Goals and Achievement for Women Workers

The total trade hours worked on the Juvenile Detention Center was 291,175. The goal of 5% women workers on the project was exceeded. Women worked a total of 15,518 hours, or 5.3% of the hours on the project.

The Project Team

On the site CWIT worked with a team that consisted of representatives of Stein & Company, the Chicago Urban League, the Hispanic-American Construction Industry Association and the affirmative action officer for Cook County. Team meetings were only fairly useful. Getting timely information about the hours worked by women was a persistent problem.

Services Provided

CWIT facilitated the monthly team meetings, walked the site once a month, helped develop sexual harassment policies and procedures and held one orientation session for people interested in the trades.

Lessons from the Juvenile Detention Center Project

Through the Juvenile Detention Center Project CWIT learned to delineate clearly the responsibilities it must have and the information it needs in order to take part in a project.

CWIT did not ask to renew its contract on the Juvenile Detention Center when the year was complete. The most important reason for the decision was that the contract did not include monitoring the number of hours worked by women, which is always CWIT's primary focus. Through the Juvenile Detention Center Project CWIT learned to delineate clearly the responsibilities it must have and the information it needs in order to take part in a project.

U.S. POST OFFICE

The construction of the U.S. Post Office started in August, 1992 and is still in progress. It is CWIT's most comprehensive affirmative action project to date. CWIT was asked to be a member of an Affirmative Action Committee established by U.S. Congressman Charles Hayes before construction began. CWIT presented the WORKSITE 2000 model to this committee, and its members, including the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor and the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), asked that the Post Office be designated a WORKSITE 2000. One year after ground-breaking the general contractor, Hyman/Power, contracted with CWIT to work on the site.

Goals and Achievement for Women Workers

The total number of hours worked on the U.S. Post Office to date is 1,793,328. Because this is a federal project, the federal goal of 6.9% women workers applies. To date, women have worked 5% of the total hours on the project.

The Project Team

Because this is its third site, CWIT understands what actions by team members result in increased work for women, and it encourages team members to carry these out.

The WORKSITE 2000 team at the Post Office meets monthly. It includes a CWIT staff member, a staff member from the OFCCP as well as staff from Turner Construction (the owners' representative), from Target (the for-profit affirmative action consultant for the project) and from Hyman/Power (the general contractor). Team responsibilities are to review numbers of women workers, to make plans to increase these numbers and to solve any problems women encounter on the site.

While the team was not strong initially and had difficulty both getting reports on hours worked by women and increasing those numbers, it is now an effective advocate for women on the site. Because this is its third site, CWIT understands what actions by team members result in increased work for women, and it encourages team members to carry these out.

When a review of numbers shows that a sub-contractor is not meeting goals, team members react according to their own strengths. The OFCCP sends letters requesting compliance; this always results in an increase in women workers. The General Contractor sends letters threatening to withhold payment to sub-contractors who do not report the numbers of women workers or meet goals for women workers; these letters also result in improvements. The site superintendent, the representative of the General Contractor, emphasizes compliance with goals at his weekly meetings with sub-contractors; at his invitation CWIT attends these meetings once a month to provide referrals, answer questions and to make the project visible.

Services On Site

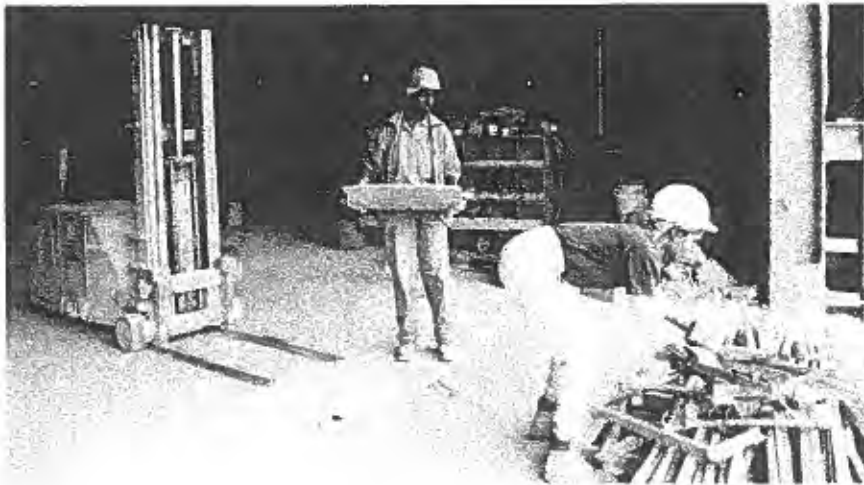
A woman laborer for the general contractor has served as unofficial WORKSITE 2000 ambassador for more than two years. She has talked to many women about WORKSITE 2000, advocated for better safety for all workers, and worked for clean, separate sanitary facilities for women.

CWIT has monthly meetings with contractors, superintendents and foremen to conduct sexual harassment training. CWIT has intervened in several sexual harassment cases, but not always successfully. Tradeswomen have left the site in three of these cases. There is a sexual harassment policy, but clear procedures for investigations have not yet been established.

CWIT walks the site once a month. It also sponsors support group meetings for women and group meetings between women and supervisors. Tradeswomen have been strong advocates for themselves at the Post Office, which is greatly needed since CWIT does not have full-time staff on site. A woman laborer for the general contractor has served as unofficial WORKSITE 2000 ambassador for more than two years. She has talked to many women about WORKSITE 2000, advocated for better safety for all workers, and worked for clean, separate sanitary facilities for women. In May of 1995 she received a "Tradeswoman of the Year" award from the Tradeswomen's Advocacy Coalition for her efforts.

Lessons from the U.S. Post Office Project

Through work on the Post Office CWIT has learned the value of persistence. CWIT worked for two years to get a contract for this site, and it spent most of the early part of this contract educating other team members about their responsibilities and the best ways to carry them out. This tenacity has been fruitful; the project now runs smoothly. Numbers are reported in a timely manner. When sub-contractors do not meet goals, the team knows what it must do to pressure them to do so.



McCORMICK PLACE EXPANSION

A number of community groups representing all races and ethnic groups participated in a task force that advised MPEA on the project; this advisory group still meets once a month to review progress on affirmative action.

The McCormick Place Expansion, the enlargement of an exposition center near Chicago's downtown area, began in January of 1993 and is still in progress. CWIT has a contract with Mc3D, a consortium of the developers of the site, to promote hiring and integrating women on the site. Mc3D reports on affirmative action to the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority (MPEA), the governing body for the project. CWIT works closely with the owner's representative, Stein & Company, a partner in several previous projects.

State legislation authorizing funding for the expansion also mandated affirmative action. This mandate was the result of several factors, including the influence of black legislators who wanted good representation of minorities in both contracts and employment. A number of community groups representing all races and ethnic groups participated in a task force that advised MPEA on the project; this advisory group still meets once a month to review progress on affirmative action. CWIT began its work on the project before contracts were awarded, helping to develop reporting forms, sexual harassment training and a pre-apprenticeship training program to prepare women and minorities for trades with low numbers of women and minorities. Unions also participated in planning; they agreed to help the project meet goals by facilitating hiring of women and minorities.

Goals and Achievement for Women Workers

Getting information about the number of hours worked by women was difficult initially. Numbers were available, but they were reported by project section and had to be manipulated to be useful. They are now available in a form that is easy to use.

The total number of hours worked on the McCormick Place Expansion to date is 2,214,832. Goals for women on the project, which were set by the same legislation that provided funding, are 7% skilled and 10% unskilled. To date women have worked 125,434 hours, for an overall project average of 5.7%. They have worked 5.5% of the skilled hours and 6.9% of the unskilled hours.

Getting information about the number of hours worked by women was difficult initially. Numbers were available, but they were reported by project section and had to be manipulated to be useful. They are now available in a convenient form. Compliance has been relatively good for many reasons which are discussed below. Among these reasons is that Stein & Company, the partner responsible for affirmative action, threatens to hold checks if contractors are not meeting goals.

CWIT is concerned that the project is not meeting its goals of 10% laborers, even though there are large numbers of women laborers available. CWIT also finds it difficult to place carpenters and electricians with individual contractors who have met their goals, even though the overall project goal has not been met. CWIT would also like to see women who have been laid off by one contractor be given priority in working for other contractors on the site.

An advocacy organization recognizes the need to advocate for women wherever it is necessary, in this case with the federal government. It is also willing to take on this time-consuming task.

There have also been problems with placing women ironworkers. In June of 1994 a woman graduate of Mc3D's pre-apprenticeship training program started work as an ornamental ironworker on the site. After working only a week, the apprenticeship program told her that they could not take her because another woman was ahead of her on the list. The contractor said that he was willing to hire both women. However, the apprenticeship program denied them apprenticeships, saying that the U.S. Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training (BAT) refused to certify these women as apprentices because there were men ahead of them on the list of potential members. As a result, the woman already working as an ironworker on the site lost her job, and the other woman was never hired.

In July of 1994 BAT released Circular 94-5, which stated that neither BAT nor State Apprenticeship Councils could give blanket approval to apprentice selection procedures which give preference on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin. Instead, the circular stated, preferences must be supported by the facts of each situation. The ruling was rescinded in the fall of 1994, following pressure from a coalition formed by CWIT that challenged its consistency with other federal regulations. At this point, however, most of the ironwork was finished. As a result, women made up only 2.9% of the ironworkers on the project, a trade employing 25% of the workers on the site to date.⁸

CWIT's work to have the ruling rescinded shows the value of having a tradeswoman's advocacy organization on a project. An advocacy organization recognizes the need to advocate for women wherever it is necessary, in this case with the federal government. It is also willing to take on this time-consuming task. Project sponsors and for-profit affirmative action companies may agree that this kind of advocacy is necessary, but may not be able to take it on.

The Project Team

The project team consists of representatives from CWIT, Stein & Company, Target (a for-profit affirmative action consulting company) and two community-based organizations with training programs, the Midwest Women's Center and Chicago Coalition for United Community Action. The project team meets monthly to review numbers and develop strategies to improve them.

8 Figures are combined totals for the Structural and Ornamental Ironworkers.

The project benefits from both CWIT's and Stein's experience and from their previous partnerships. Stein is comfortable with its role as enforcer, and CWIT has encouraged Stein to play this role publicly.

Services on Site

The project benefits from both CWIT's and Stein's experience and from their previous partnerships. Stein is comfortable with its role as enforcer, and CWIT has encouraged Stein to play this role publicly. For example, early in the project Stein did not report the number of hours worked by women in team meetings. At CWIT's insistence, this information became the basis for team meetings, and Stein set up a better tracking system. CWIT is a consistent advocate for tradeswomen on the team and often serves as the liaison between the tradeswomen on the site and Stein.

The team does sexual harassment prevention training for contractors quarterly and for new crews as they begin work. CWIT walks the site twice a month and does additional sexual harassment prevention training for contractors' crews as requested. Unfortunately, this usually happens after an allegation of sexual harassment. CWIT would prefer to train crews as they arrive on site and thereby prevent sexual harassment. Problems with sexual graffiti and with maintaining clean, separate bathrooms on the site persist in spite of these measures, and the team is working to respond more quickly to complaints.

There are after-work support group sessions for women every six months and counseling as women request it. There is a trailer on site that women use for lunch, for meetings and as a place to change clothes. All women who leave the site are interviewed by a team member.

Lessons from the McCormick Place Expansion

Since it appears that higher goals lead to higher achievement, setting high goals on all projects and raising federal goals is critical to increasing tradeswomen's participation in construction.

The McCormick Place Expansion has many advantages: early planning, principles of affirmative action written into contract language, a clear commitment from project leadership, public accountability and training for an equitable worksite that is supported by the highest level of management.

The McCormick Place Expansion also has the highest goals for women workers of the Chicago and Cleveland projects as well as the highest achievement of these projects. Since it appears that higher goals lead to higher achievement, setting high goals on all projects and raising federal goals is critical to increasing tradeswomen's participation in construction.

CLEVELAND, OHIO

THE GATEWAY STADIUM AND ARENA

The Cleveland media questioned the value of such an expensive project at a time of economic difficulty and continued to question it as the price went up. To counter this questioning, the Gateway Economic Development Corporation promoted hiring women and minorities on the project and hired HHW to help accomplish this.

The Gateway Stadium and Arena project, two sports facilities, was a public/private venture overseen by the Gateway Economic Development Corporation. Hard Hatted Women (HHW), a tradeswomen's advocacy organization, advocated with Gateway for more than a year to win a contract to monitor women's employment. Groundbreaking for the Gateway Stadium and Arena Project was in 1991. The project was finished in 1994.

Of all the projects in this study, Gateway was the most challenging. Cleveland has the least favorable climate for women in construction of the three cities involved. Until Gateway, there had been neither affirmative action for women nor any work by a community-based organization on behalf of women or minorities. Although women construction workers were accepted grudgingly in Chicago and taken for granted in Maine, they were a completely new idea for Cleveland in 1991. The project was a major challenge for HHW as an organization as well. When the Gateway project began, HHW was still a small organization with only two staff members.

At the time of groundbreaking for Gateway, Cleveland had a very high unemployment rate. The Gateway project was originally estimated to cost \$320 million, but it became more and more expensive as work progressed. The Cleveland media questioned the value of such an expensive project at a time of economic difficulty and continued to question it as the price went up. To counter this questioning, the Gateway Economic Development Corporation promoted hiring women and minorities on the project and hired HHW to help accomplish this. Another important impetus for bringing HHW on to the project was the support of one of the County Commissioners.

HHW's Board of Directors began to discuss pursuing a contract with the Gateway Economic Development Corporation in 1988. Kathy Augustine, HHW's Executive Director, started to meet with the Gateway Commission in 1990. HHW started work on the project in May of 1992, six months after ground-breaking. There were no tradeswomen on the project for the first six months.

Goals and Achievement for Women Workers

The total number of hours worked on the Gateway Stadium and Arena was 1,593,697. Women worked 93,428 hours, 5.9%, short of the federal goal of 6.9%. Getting good reports of numbers of women workers was a struggle, and for many months HHW was able to get information only on aggregate hours for women workers, instead of the numbers of women by trade. Under the contract, sub-contractors were supposed to supply day sheets listing all employees working for them, but HHW did not receive these regularly. In the end, HHW used data from Gateway (from certified payrolls) and their own visual count.

The Project Team

At Gateway's insistence HHW and BTC were legal partners in a joint venture, and they shared a trailer on the site. They divided the contractors between them, and both advocated for women and minorities.

The primary affirmative action partners on the project were the Gateway affirmative action manager, the project construction manager, two representatives of HHW and two representatives of the Black Trades Council (BTC), a group that promoted hiring of minority males. Both HHW and BTC had full-time staff working from a trailer on the site.

The team met once a month. Their responsibilities were to review compliance with goals for women and minorities and to develop strategies for getting more women and minorities on the site. A secondary team which also met monthly consisted of the staff on site from HHW and BTC, the prime contractors and the Gateway affirmative action manager.

At Gateway's insistence HHW and BTC were legal partners in a joint venture, and they shared a trailer on the site. They divided the contractors between them, and both advocated for women and minorities. The partnership was not a voluntary one, and was strained from time to time. However, the two staff members worked together well.

Services Provided

Fairly early in the project HHW held two support group meetings on the site, but decided not continue them as they were not well attended. Some women reported that supervisors told them not to go to meetings.

HHW decided at the beginning of contract negotiations that they would insist on having a full-time staff person working from a trailer on the site. They offered a package of services to Gateway, but their final contract was for monitoring only. HHW did provide many other services. The staff person walked the site every day and dealt with problems brought to her by tradeswomen, including sexual harassment and safety issues. She worked to increase the numbers of women on the site through meetings with sub-contractors and with unions and did job placements with sub-contractors with low numbers of women. She also kept the toilet for women next to the trailer clean.

Fairly early in the project HHW held two support group meetings on the site, but decided not continue them as they were not well attended. Some women reported that supervisors told them not to go to meetings.

HHW worked constantly to get women into apprenticeship programs, particularly the Ironworkers and the Elevator Constructors, neither of which had female apprentices. For one year HHW coordinated pressure from the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, from the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor and from the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training to get women into these unions. Eventually three women became ironworkers and two women became elevator constructors.

The media played an important role in HHW's success on the Stadium. HHW used media coverage as a selling point. During contract negotiations Augustine told Gateway, "We can make you look good." She also used the media as a "constant coercion tactic." Politicians promoting the Stadium had promised to put women and minorities to work, and HHW used the media to insist that they make good on their promises. Augustine did not have to seek out journalists. They called her for stories and were receptive to her point of view.

Lessons from the Gateway Stadium and Arena

Gateway posed the most challenges of the six sites. According to Augustine, it took six months before anyone would take the staff person on site seriously, and the battle continued through the life of the project. In spite of these difficulties, women made up 5.9% of the workers on the site.

Gateway, unfortunately, was only a temporary solution for Cleveland's tradeswomen. As of October of 1995, HHW does not yet have another construction site contract. HHW has not been able to do formal monitoring of other sites to determine the numbers of women working, but tradeswomen report problems in getting hired. Augustine is particularly disturbed that on one project, the recently completed Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, there were rumors that there were few women on the site because women weren't looking for work. HHW knows from its members that many women are looking for work.

The importance of projects like Gateway is made very clear by the experiences of the women HHW was able to get into the apprentice programs mentioned above. As of April, 1995, only one of the three women ironworkers still works in her trade. The other two left because of problems with the apprenticeship program and with getting jobs, and because they no longer have the support of a program like HHW's Gateway program. The two women elevator constructors have not worked on a construction job since Gateway.

HHW is actively seeking its next project, although this has been made more difficult by the current climate threatens affirmative action. With its next contract HHW plans several changes, including contracting to cover both women and minorities and sub-contracting out minority recruitment, rather than work in a joint venture with a group selected by another agency. HHW would also work to attract more political allies to the cause and have attorneys on call to give advice on legal matters and to proceed with any litigation. HHW would like to provide additional services, including on-site orientations for tradeswomen, support groups and sexual harassment prevention training.

According to Augustine, it took six months before anyone would take the staff person on site seriously, and the battle continued through the life of the project.

PORTLAND, MAINE

THE PORTLAND BRIDGE PROJECT

According to Gilbert, the project came about and works well for very simple reasons: people in power are supporting the project, and experienced and capable people are carrying it out.

... ISTEA funding requires contractors to provide on-the-job training to meet goals for women and minorities, and the Federal Highways Administration in the region enforces this requirement.

The Portland Bridge Project is a \$157 million drawbridge funded by the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA). Work began on the bridge in December of 1994. It is scheduled to be completed in the summer of 1998.

Because Maine is a small state and this is a very large project, the bridge will have six prime contractors before the project is finished. Four have worked on it as of March, 1995. The Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) has set project goals of 15% women workers and 4% minorities and has designed a program of recruitment, training and monitoring to make sure these goals are met. Recruiting and training for women are funded through the .5% of the project budget which the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) allows for this purpose; compliance monitoring is funded by construction dollars.

The project's ambitious goals and the plans to accomplish them are the result of years of preparation. MDOT has worked with (and funded) tradeswomen's groups for many years, and there is strong trust between them. Jane Gilbert, Director of Equal Opportunity Employment/Employee Relations for MDOT, is a strong advocate of women in non-traditional occupations. She is the leading force behind the project. Ronnie Sandler, a carpenter and former executive director of Northern New England Tradeswoman, a non-profit tradeswomen's organization, has been hired through her company, Compliance U.S.A., to do compliance monitoring. Gilbert and Sandler have a very straightforward philosophy about their work: "We don't call it intervention; we call it the law."

According to Gilbert, the project came about and works well for very simple reasons: people in power are supporting the project, and experienced and capable people are carrying it out. In addition, several other factors support promoting women and minorities in the trades. The skilled workforce of Maine (and the entire United States) is aging, and it is clear to many in the industry, including contractors, that women and minorities must be included. Meeting goals for minorities has not been difficult. Minorities make up 2% of Maine's population and 7% of the workforce on the bridge, so concentrating on meeting goals for women is appropriate. Incorporating trainees on the project is also fairly easy. Since Maine is an open-shop state, almost all the contractors on the project are non-union and so are able to hire any new workers they wish. In addition, ISTEA funding requires contractors to provide on-the-job training to meet goals for women and minorities, and the Federal Highways Administration in the region enforces this requirement.

Finally, the affirmative action part of the Portland Bridge Project was planned well in advance of construction. The state of Maine decided in the very early stages that large numbers of women and minorities would be recruited to work on it. As a result of this early planning, all contractors bidding on the job were aware of these provisions.

Goals and Achievement for Women Workers

The goal for women workers on the project is 15%. Women have worked 27,589 hours, 8.9% of the total of 311,114 hours.⁹ Contractors report monthly, providing information on the current workforce, projected hires, new hires and training. In the beginning this information was hard to interpret. Compliance U.S.A. has now developed a more convenient form. There are penalties for not meeting employment goals, but it has not been necessary to use them, as MDOT requires compliance at all times and does not need to impose after-the-fact penalties.

The Project Team

The partners dealing with the bridge on a day-to-day basis are MDOT, Women Unlimited (a tradeswomen's support and advocacy organization), and contractors on the site. MDOT is represented on the site by Compliance U.S.A. and Sandler. Sandler is responsible for compliance for women and minorities, disadvantaged business enterprise goals, training, employment goals, community outreach, child care liaison and compliance reviews.

Women Unlimited is responsible for recruitment, a job bank and training. Two other community-based organizations also work on the project. The Training Resource Center assists with training, and the Coalition for Women in Trades and Technical Careers assists with training and recruitment. Communication among team members is fairly informal. There are no regularly scheduled meetings as there are in Chicago and Cleveland.

The Federal Highways Administration also requires another ongoing partnership. This group of partners includes engineers, the design team, sub-contractors, MDOT and community-based organizations. They meet every three months to review various project goals, including schedules, safety, quality, environmental impact, affirmative action, disadvantaged business enterprise and equal employment opportunity goals.

Services Provided

Offering child care has more than the obvious practical value to women. It is an important symbol, what Gilbert calls a "flashing 'women are welcome' sign."

Sandler and an assistant are on site twenty hours a week, monitoring compliance and providing support services to tradeswomen. Sandler refers women to sub-contractors and follows up on these referrals. She also follows up with the Equal Employment Opportunity officer, project managers and supervisors. She intervenes when necessary in training disputes, when, for example, a sub-contractor wanted to hire a laborer as a trainee at a lower wage. Sandler also does outreach to community groups in the area.

There is child care close to the site, thanks to the advocacy of one local FHWA official. It is funded not through the .5% ISTEA funding allowed for recruitment of women ("women's funding"), but rather through construc-

⁹ The U.S. Department of Transportation requires reporting on a category not included in this study, construction clerk. If hours for women as construction clerks were included, the total would be 10.7% women workers.

Hiring trainees is a bid item in contracts; approximately 1000 trainee hours are required per \$1 million in the contract.

tion funds, another example of MDOT's extraordinary commitment to meeting women's needs. It costs workers 15% of their salaries, with a minimum of \$50 a week and a maximum of \$115. The amount is deducted from payroll before taxes. The child care is open to anyone working on MDOT projects in the Portland area and is available for all hours that construction is going on.

Offering child care has more than the obvious practical value to women. It is an important symbol, what Gilbert calls a "flashing 'women are welcome' sign." Children enjoy the program; they call themselves "the bridge kids." Child care has also generated very positive press coverage.

MDOT would like to run support groups for women. However, the site is spread out, on both sides of the river, and workers work different shifts. MDOT is considering a general newsletter about the bridge that includes articles about women construction workers as an alternative to support groups.

Effective systems to prevent sexual harassment and to deal with it if it occurs were already in place before this project began. Maine law requires businesses to do sexual harassment prevention training with all new supervisors and all new employees. Since there are stiff fines if they don't do training, and stiffer fines if sexual harassment occurs and they haven't done training, contractors comply. Exact statistics on incidents of sexual harassment are not available, but it appears that it is much less common on the Portland Bridge Project than on construction projects in Chicago or in Cleveland.

Systems for training entrants into the trades are also built into the project through the training program required by FHWA. Hiring trainees is a bid item in contracts; approximately 1000 trainee hours are required per \$1 million in the contract. Trainees are paid a minimum of 60% of the prevailing wage at the beginning of their training. Halfway through their training, they receive a minimum of 75% of the prevailing wage. Three-quarters of the way through training, they are paid 90% of the prevailing wage.

Lessons from the Portland Bridge Project

The Portland Bridge Project is clearly the most effective and the smoothest-running of the six projects studied.

The Portland Bridge Project is clearly the most effective and the smoothest-running of the six projects studied. It has benefitted from several elements:

- *planning that began well in advance of construction,*
- *a political climate that accepts women in non-traditional work,*
- *a long-term relationship between tradeswomen's groups and MDOT,*
- *the support of the highest levels of MDOT, and*
- *high goals for women.*

MDOT is still improving the project. Project staff would like better workforce projections that would allow them to prepare for upcoming workforce needs; knowing that a trade will be hiring large numbers of workers in six months would give them time to recruit and train workers. MDOT is now adding a welding training program.

Focus Groups for Tradeswomen

In November of 1994 CWIT conducted two focus groups to hear tradeswomen's views on affirmative action efforts at worksites, one for women who worked at the Cook County Jail and one for women who worked at the Post Office. CWIT chose these two projects because they were finished (the Cook County Jail) or well underway (the Post Office). Sixty-one women who were currently working or had worked at the Post Office were invited to the focus group; nine women participated in a session held on site after work. Twenty-nine women were invited to the Jail focus group; five of them participated in a meeting which was held at the CWIT offices in the evening. At the end of the discussion participants were asked to fill out a questionnaire about their experiences.

Results from the Focus Groups

Focus group participants emphasized that a sub-contractor, a foreman or a supervisor can set the tone of a crew. They also said that working for a company that supports women can make a site a good place to work.

Women in both focus groups reported that issues affecting both tradesmen and tradeswomen influence whether they consider a site a good one. They were pleased, for example, at having parking available and restaurants nearby. Women at the Post Office, where there was a fatal accident in the fall of 1994, talked about the importance of high safety standards. They also talked about how difficult it can be to work at a site with low morale or poor management.

In their comments about work conditions, tradeswomen brought up all the problems resulting from gender-based discrimination that CWIT documented in previous CWIT research: poor training, partners who don't teach them, being shifted from job to job to meet quotas, sexually explicit pictures, unfair policies in hiring, layoffs and overtime, and menial assignments.

Focus group participants emphasized that a sub-contractor, a foreman or a supervisor can set the tone of a crew. They also said that working for a company that supports women can make a site a good place to work. On large sites, however, where CWIT is most likely to have contracts, they feel that an individual sub-contractor or supervisor has less influence than he or she has on a small site.

Some women reported that the stage of a construction project affects their experience on the site. For example, an ironworker spoke of feeling very conspicuous at the early stages of a project because no walls had been constructed and everyone could see what was going at the site. The stage of a project also affected whether CWIT was actually on site. For example, CWIT began at the Post Office one full year after groundbreaking.

It appears that women want acceptable bathrooms for more than the obvious practical reasons. It is clear that bathrooms also have symbolic value as indicators of the level of acceptance of women on a site.

Tradeswomen were unanimous and very vocal about wanting clean, separate bathrooms. They did not want them heated, however, as they were at an early Stein & Company project, the USG building, because many men complained that women were getting special treatment. Some tradeswomen at the Post Office are very proud of a bathroom where they have sanitary supplies, packaged towelettes, etc. for everyone to use. However, all the women in the focus group did not know about the bathroom. It appears that women want acceptable bathrooms for more than the obvious practical reasons. It is clear that bathrooms also have symbolic value as indicators of the level of acceptance of women on a site.

In general the women in both focus groups were less vocal about sexual harassment than those in focus groups held for earlier CWIT research. However, there are still problems. An electrician working at the jail fought to have an offensive calendar removed. Although she was successful, she was ostracized after the incident and finally left the site.

When asked how CWIT can improve its work on site, focus group participants made the following suggestions:

- 1. CWIT needs to be more visible. Tradeswomen suggested one large sign at the entrance, or many smaller ones scattered over the site. They recommended having a central contact point where CWIT has a trailer and can leave literature or have a bulletin board.*
- 2. Because CWIT works on large sites, it should deal as much as possible with individual sub-contractors. Some women said that the tone set by individual companies strongly influences the atmosphere of the site.*
- 3. Tradeswomen have varying opinions about having CWIT staff "walk the site." Most women thought site walks were useful, although some felt that it made them too conspicuous. An ironworker said site walks made her very self-conscious, but that it could be because she worked at the very beginning of a project when the site wasn't built up at all and workers were aware of everything that was going on.*
- 4. Most women did not want to be singled out for special favors. They mentioned in particular meetings for women held during lunch hours that run longer than the usual lunch time. One woman said that her foreman did not like her taking time off from work for these lunches, adding, "when my foreman has a problem, I have a problem." Most women were willing to come to meetings after work or in the evening.*
- 5. Women requested more consistent training for supervisors in recognizing and preventing sexual harassment.*

Discussion

All three groups, Chicago Women in Trades, Hard Hatted Women in Cleveland and the Maine Department of Transportation, dealt with similar issues. Among the most important are:

- *tapping into the support of someone in authority,*
- *creating effective partnerships,*
- *making sites equitable for women,*
- *getting adequate reports on the hours worked by women, and*
- *placing women workers across all trades.*

The Importance of Authority

All three groups emphasized the need for power to make an affirmative action program for women in the construction industry work. The industry has been dominated by men for years, and women will not be included in significant numbers unless someone in authority is committed to change. All groups agree that someone with control of the funding of a project and with the power to withhold paychecks and assess penalties must be prepared to insist that women be included.

In Maine the government agency responsible for the project, MDOT, has both the commitment to hiring women and the power to make it happen, perhaps the best situation.

CWIT's experiences with authority are more complex. CWIT's first project, the Cook County Jail, was possible because of the enthusiastic support of the County. Because the work was new, however, CWIT had not learned that ongoing advocacy with those in authority is necessary. As a result, CWIT accepted both a one-year contract on a two-year project as well as a decrease in funding that limited what it could offer. At the rehabilitation of the Juvenile Detention Center, CWIT's second project, the County, while clearly committed to affirmative action, did not give CWIT the critical responsibility of monitoring compliance with goals for women.

At the Post Office, the third project, the general contractor and the OFCCP are both primary sources of

the authority that makes affirmative action successful. At the McCormick Place Expansion there are many sources of authority, including the legislation which established it. The many community groups that monitor affirmative action, either through the project team or a city-wide advisory committee, are another important source of authority. Finally, Stein and Company, the owners' representative on the project, is experienced and committed.

In HHW's case, county politicians supported hiring women and kept to that commitment, although they had to be pressured to do so from time to time. HHW also had the option to use the media to pressure politicians to support them.

Creating Effective Partnerships

All three groups found that creating an effective compliance team is critical. The composition of the teams varies from site to site. Team members include community-based organizations, for-profit affirmative action firms, contractors, project sponsors and local and federal government agencies. Creating an effective team is an ongoing process. Some team members have more experience in compliance monitoring than others, and some are more comfortable as enforcers than others. Few are familiar with the pro-active, up-front compliance monitoring that requires contractors to be in compliance at all times. Continuous education, strong leadership and time are all necessary to build a strong team.

Maine's DOT has had the best experience with partners. Women Unlimited, their primary training resource, is a well-established, effective tradeswomen's organization with whom they have a long-standing relationship. Chicago's and Cleveland's experience with partners are mixed. Both groups have been asked to work with community-based organizations with less expertise in compliance work, so much of the early work on a project focused on educating partners in the necessary skills. One very profitable CWIT partnership is with the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), which participates on the Post Office team.

Voluntary partnerships tend to be more successful than forced ones. In Cleveland and on two Chicago projects partnerships with community-based organizations advocating for minority males were set up after contracts were signed. HHW has decided to offer monitoring for both women and minority males in its next contract but to sub-contract out recruitment of minority males. MDOT decided early in the planning stages to combine monitoring and compliance for minorities and women and finds that this arrangement is working well in a state with a low proportion of minorities.

Making Sites Equitable for Women

The culture of traditional worksites is overwhelmingly male, and CWIT's previous research shows that it can be hostile to women.¹⁰ Increasing the numbers of women working on a site is critical to making the atmosphere more equitable, but the culture can be changed in other ways as well. The sites studied here used a variety of methods to do this. The amount of funding available dictated what could be done. For example, the well-funded Portland Bridge Project provides child care, while other projects have fewer resources.

All advocates agree that a visible presence on the site is critical. The ideal is a full-time staff person working from a trailer on site. When this is not possible, other methods have been used to create a presence. Periodic site walks, signs, bulletin boards with information about reaching advocacy organizations and occasional support groups are all useful. Advocates found that not all women are interested in participating in group activities.

Training for sub-contractors and their crews in making worksites equitable is also critical, particularly in the area of preventing sexual harassment. Setting up systems to deal with problems quickly is also important.

Advocates also found that advocating for clean, separate, locked bathrooms for women is critical. The bathrooms have more than practical value. They are symbols of the acceptance of women on a site.

Getting Adequate Reports

All three groups had problems getting consistent and useful reports about the workforce, even though this information is critical to meeting goals. For effective monitoring, advocates need the following monthly reports:

- 1) a report for the preceding month, with hours worked by women (rather than numbers of women) for each trade,*
- 2) a cumulative report for the project to date, with hours worked by women for each trade, and*
- 3) the names of workers who have been terminated or hired.*

Contractors who do not provide information about hours worked by women must be pressured to do so by the compliance team. CWIT has had to advocate for this information at each project, sometimes for months. HHW had the same experience in Cleveland. MDOT also had difficulties, but these were due more to the need to develop a good reporting form than to resistance from contractors.

Advocates also need workforce projections. When they know the workforce needs of particular contractors in advance they can place women before work begins. CWIT has not received adequate workforce projections on any of its projects, and HHW did not get good projections on Gateway. MDOT does get workforce projections, but more accurate ones would be useful.

¹⁰ Breaking New Ground: WORKSITE 2000, Chicago Women in Trades, 1992.

Placing Women Workers Across All Trades

None of the six projects has been able to place women equally across all trades. Instead, they report a heavy concentration of women as carpenters, electricians and laborers. These trades account for more than half the hours for men and women combined on most projects, so they are major sources of employment for women. However, other important trades, including ironworkers, have high proportions of hours on a site but have few women. In addition, there are many trades accounting for smaller numbers of workers when considered individually, but which in total are a source of considerable employment.

All advocates agree that for true equity, projects should meet goals in all trades. Accomplishing this, however, is difficult. In some cases, women workers are available but are not being hired; in others women are not available. Unions do not generally release information on the numbers of women members. However, advocates generally know when women are available for work. In trades where women are available, the project sponsor, tradeswomen's advocates and government agencies can pressure sub-contractors to hire them.

In some trades very few women are available, for a variety of reasons. This does not, however, absolve sub-contractors from meeting project goals in these trades. Instead, sub-contractors should recruit women, run training programs to prepare them to enter these trades, make arrangements for them to enter the unions and hire them. Sub-contractors and project sponsors should also be aware that women in trades with very low numbers of women are likely to experience isolation and harassment; sub-contractors should train their employees and supervisors in running equitable worksites.



Conclusion

The statistics on women and poverty are grim:

- *on average, American women earn 70 cents for every dollar earned by men,*
- *43% of all working women live below the poverty level,*
- *nearly 4.5 million families (36%) with female heads of household were below the poverty level in 1993, and*
- *the median family income of households maintained by women is only 66% of the income of households maintained by men.¹¹*

The ultimate aim of affirmative action is to address these inequities. The goal of the six affirmative action projects studied here was to allow more women to work in the well-paid construction industry. The projects were successful; women worked from 5.0% to 9.7% of the total hours.

The success, however, remains limited. While more women worked on these projects than would have without affirmative action, women did not come near to achieving economic equity. In spite of aggressive efforts by tradeswomen's advocates and the support of project sponsors and developers, on five of the projects for every one year worked by tradeswomen, tradesmen worked fifteen years or more (Table Eight). Only the Maine project was able to change that ratio substantially.

It is clear that more forceful affirmative action is needed. Only through higher goals for women workers and more aggressive enforcement of compliance with these goals will women achieve economic equity in the construction industry and in the United States.



11 "Facts on Working Women," U.S. Department of Labor, May 1995.

Recommendations

For Affirmative Action Projects for Women in Construction

All levels of government, national, state and local, should require affirmative action for women workers on publicly funded construction projects. The private sector should promote hiring of women workers as well, thereby benefitting from a new base of workers and preparing for the workforce of the future. Affirmative action programs of both the public and private sectors should be broad in scope, with the elements outlined below.

1. Advance planning

When possible, planning for affirmative action should begin in the earliest phases of a construction project and should involve all the players who will be involved—contractors, unions, community groups and tradeswomen's organizations. As a minimum of advance planning, goals for women workers and penalties for non-compliance should be written into bid documents.

2. Involvement of tradeswomen's organizations

Tradeswomen's advocacy groups offer knowledge about women's experiences in construction as well as access to women workers. They are an essential part of affirmative action programs for women in the industry.

3. Goals for women workers

The following goals should be set:

- *Unskilled workers (laborers): 30%.*
- *Skilled workers:*
 - entry level (apprentices): 25%*
 - journey level: 10%*

These goals are not ceilings; sub-contractors should be encouraged to continue to hire women after goals have been met. Goals should be revised regularly to reflect increasing numbers of available women.

4. Systems to insure adequate numbers of women workers

These systems should include:

- a) aggressive recruitment strategies,*
- b) a database of available women,*
- c) targeted pre-apprenticeship training programs to prepare women for trades with low numbers of women,*
- d) equitable entry routes to trades, and*
- e) equitable hiring criteria.*

5. Systems to insure an equitable workplace

These should include:

- a) strong sexual harassment policies and training for all site personnel in preventing sexual harassment,*
- b) training for supervisors in running equitable worksites, including fair training and advancement policies,*
- c) clean, separate and locked toilets, handwashing facilities and changing facilities,*
- d) visibility for the project on site, through staff, signs, posters, bulletin boards, newsletters, etc.*
- e) on-site services for tradeswomen, including mediation, counseling, support groups, child care, etc.*
- f) women in leadership positions, as project superintendents, engineers, foremen and crew leaders,*
- g) regular meetings of tradeswomen's advocates with representatives of sub-contractors, and*
- h) personnel policies that meet the needs of women and families.*

6. Resources for on-site staff and services

Funding for full-time staff on site with appropriate off-site staff support is ideal.

7. A team approach to monitoring and compliance

A team responsible for monitoring compliance with goals and equitable conditions for women should meet at least once a month. Tradeswomen's organizations, other community-based organizations, government agencies, sub-contractors, affirmative action specialists and the project owner or developer are appropriate members of this team.

8. Monitoring to ensure that goals are met

Contractors and sub-contractors should provide weekly reports that include the following information:

- a) hours worked by women, by trade, for the preceding month and for the project to date, as compared to total hours,*
- b) the names of women workers who have been terminated or hired, and*
- c) projections of workforce needs. Workforce projections at the start of construction are also necessary.*

9. Pro-active strategies to bring about compliance with goals

Affirmative action programs should require sub-contractors to hire acceptable numbers of women and so remain in compliance at all times. Penalizing sub-contractors for non-compliance at the end of a project does not increase the number of women working on it. Instead penalties should be assessed when efforts are not being made to meet goals. These penalties should include withholding payment for work. Incentives such as achievement awards, public recognition and monetary awards should be given to contractors exceeding goals.



CHICAGO WOMEN IN TRADES

2444 W. 16th Street, #3E
Chicago, IL 60608
312/942-1444