



# Women in Construction



This year, March 6th-12th marks the annual Women in Construction (WIC) Week. Founded by the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC), WIC Week strives to strengthen and highlight the accomplishments of women in the construction industry. The WIC Week theme of 2022 is “Envision Equity” which aims to raise awareness and opportunities for women in our industry. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, women only represent 10.9% of the construction workforce. Despite making up for about half of our national labor force, the construction industry continues to significantly lack female representation. As our nation confronts labor shortages across virtually all industries, it will be essential for the construction industry to focus on broadening their efforts in recruiting more women.

A model developed by the Associated Builders and Contractors reported that the construction industry will need to attract approximately 650,000 additional workers on top of the normal pace of hiring in 2022 to meet the demand for labor. The immense need for skilled and motivated workers in our industry has become increasingly apparent as countless contractors struggle to recruit qualified workers. The message is clear; for the construction industry to remain competitive in our global economy, we'll need to rebuild our workforce.



While the costs of higher education continue to escalate, apprenticeship programs provide alternative career pathways--regardless of gender--that lead to rewarding occupations in construction without the burden of student loans. Despite all of the incentives and benefits that apprenticeships offer, the substantial gender gap persists. That being said, women represent an untapped resource. It would serve the future of our industry well to focus greater efforts on recruiting women to our labor force. So, how do we bridge the gender gap?

One effective strategy is tailoring our messaging. Construction has long been a male-dominated industry. It's critical that we begin to eliminate the misconception that women aren't able to have successful careers in our industry. Visiting schools and raising awareness of all the different roles in construction is a great way to connect with young prospects. Developing mentorship opportunities and supportive resources for women entering construction would encourage more to join the industry. We need to change the perception of what it means to work in construction and empower women to succeed.

Though Women in Construction Week is an annual event, our aim towards diversifying our workforce should be an ongoing pursuit. With our female CEO and staff, SCGMA strives to create more representation in our industry. Providing support, expanding resources, and creating a welcoming environment for women will strengthen our industry as we face the growing demand of the 21st century.

