



Holly Baril

She's not just breaking barriers, she's cutting steel, pouring concrete and empowering the future. Women in the trades aren't just part of the workforce, they're reshaping it one jobsite, one blueprint, one breakthrough at a time.

Welcome to "Forging New Paths: Where Grit Meets Greatness". I'm your host, Holly Baril, and this is the show that spotlights the bold, skilled, and unstoppable women who are building, welding, wiring and leading real change in the trades. Whether you've got boots on the ground or are just thinking about picking up the tools, you are in the right place.

Announcer

It's time for the *IHSA Safety Podcast*.

Holly:

My guests today. Four powerful tradeswomen who are paving the way for what's next. Before we get started, I'd like you all to please introduce yourselves to our listeners. So we'll start with you, Gabrielle.

Gabrielle:

Hey, my name is Gabrielle. I'm 22 years old and I am a second-year carpenter apprentice.

Holly:

Perfect. Thank you. Kenedi?

Kenedi:

Hi, my name is Kenedi and I'm a third-year heavy equipment operator.

Holly:

Awesome. Thank you, Kenedi. Kenya?

Kenya:

Hello, my name is Kenya, and I've been in the union for about a year now, and I'm in my second year as a carpenter.

Holly:

And Catrina.

Catrina:

Hi, my name's Catrina and I have been an electrical apprentice for four-and-a-half years and I'm about to go to level three of trade school.

Holly:

Right on. Good. So this is great because we're all at different levels and different trades, so it's going to be really good to hear your different perspectives on all of these questions that I prepared for you to answer. So as we're going along, if there's something you want to jump in or add, feel free. Like I said, we're just going to have a conversation about the trades and how can we promote this to other young women and make this a choice or something they can choose as a career path.

All right, so first thing, speaking of career path and motivation, I'm going to ask each of you, what inspired you to pursue a career in the trades? So let's start with you Kenya.

Kenya:

Ever since I was little, I've always been super curious about buildings and creativity, about all structures, and I've always been wanting to know about everything. And a lot of my family members are part of the trades, and they really inspired me to join them.

Holly:

Awesome.

Holly:

Gab?

Gabrielle:

I was first inspired to pursue a career in carpentry probably in my first year of high school. We had a woodshop class and I really enjoyed it way more than my other classes. And I also had some family who would do some side jobs and I would give them a hand, and love the creativity that you kind of have to think and...I don't know, I just like how it's something new every day.

Holly:

Yeah, perfect. Kind of hands-on, right?

Gabrielle:

Yeah.

Holly:

Good. Catrina?

Catrina:

In high school I would always fidget in class. I couldn't sit down for too long, and I knew that I needed to work with my hands and I was always in the garage with my dad and helping him with anything that he needed help with, and that's where I was like, "Okay, where I want to go into is into the trades."

Holly:

Awesome. Right on. And Kenedi, what inspired you to become an operator?

Kenedi:

I grew up around a family that is entirely in trades. My brother is a millwright, my dad's a miner, he's an operator underground. And right away, as young as I could remember, I wanted to be an operator and I wanted to go into the trades. I just didn't know what, and it was the same sense with me. I have ADHD to the max and I knew I needed to do something that I could contain myself in.

Holly:

Okay, awesome. Sounds like all of our family members kind of convinced us that this is the path that we want to take for the future. So that's good to know. So how did you get started in your trades? So basically what I'm saying is, I know some of you are still in trade school, again, was it family? So maybe just a little bit about that. Catrina?

Catrina:

I started my very first co-op in Grade 11, and it kind of just went on from there. I loved it the second that I was on the jobsite, and I had amazing mentors and they made it super fun. And then here I am 4 ½ years later, so.

Holly:

Good. Right on Gabrielle?

Gabrielle:

I first started in ninth grade, I had my first woodshop class and like I said, I super enjoyed it, loved the hands-on. And then in 11th grade I also had a co-op placement and I super enjoyed it. That was probably my favourite part of the day, was getting to leave school and work hands-on and just get to see it visually.

Holly:

Right on. Kenya?

Kenya:

So how I first got started into building, I've always been working on little projects with my grandfather when I was young. I've always been super interested in that stuff. And then when I got into high school, I also joined the carpentry class and my teacher was super sweet with me. He taught me everything I had to know during that time and I also took a co-op and I was helping them build kitchen cabinets and stuff like that. So my backdoor neighbor heard about all that and he was like, "Why don't you give carpentry a try?" So I've been in the union ever since.

Holly:

Good. Right on. And Kenedi?

Kenedi?

I did the process of elimination through high school, I and I tried carpentry, I tried roofing. I actually was doing an apprenticeship in bodywork when I decided. My brother had to do his foundation on his house. So they let me run the skid steer and I fell in love and I applied to the Local 793 operators union and I got the call back and from there I went away to Warsburg for three months and I didn't look back. I loved every second of it.

Holly:

Oh, that's awesome. That's great to hear. These are good, inspiring stories. Sometimes we do things and we don't realize that it's actually going to be shaping our future until we realize, like I'm listening to Gabrielle talk about Grade 9 and then Grade 11, loved it so much and this is great. So the high schools really are helping with this trade for our women. That's awesome. Now if you can say one thing, what is one thing that you enjoy the most about your work? Catrina?

Catrina:

I love that when you're done and you look at a panel and it's nice and straight and looks proper, I'm like, "wow."

Holly:

And it works.

Catrina:

Yeah, and it works and it's like, "Wow, you can't even see it, you can't see electricity, but it looks beautiful."

Holly:

Good. Right on. Gabrielle?

Gabrielle:

Probably something super similar to that, but I also love the team effort and coming together as a group and problem solving and then again taking a step back and just be like, "Oh my god, everything's straight, all our cuts are straight, everything's plum." It's a nice accomplishment to look back.

Holly:

Good. Kenedi, one thing?

Kenedi:

Is it wrong if I say all of it? I love looking at it from the front to the beginning. You look at a bush and then next thing you know it's a building. It's just so satisfying to watch.

Holly:

Kenya?

Kenya:

I really enjoy learning about the new things. Since I'm only 18 and just getting started, I love learning about the do's and don'ts, and the how's, and I also enjoy the social aspect of it, working with your coworkers, building relationships.

Holly:

Awesome, thank you very much. Now let's get into a little bit of workplace experience. So my first question is, do you feel respected and valued by your coworkers and your supervisors? So let me ask you, Kenedi.

Kenedi:

Yeah, I do, for the most part. It definitely still comes with the struggles that being a girl in the field I'm in, a lot of people underestimate you.

Holly:

Gabby, do you feel respected and valued by your coworkers and supervisors?

Gabrielle:

I do at times, but I do believe that it also is different on every jobsite and depending on your coworkers and your supervisors, and just what kind of people they are. But in the end I think most people are trying to respect women in the trades more and more.

Holly:

Thank you. Kenya?

Kenya:

Throughout the time I've spent at my first job site that I'm still working on, I think all the opportunities are pretty even, honestly, my coworkers are pretty good to me. They always respect my opinion and they're not afraid to give theirs. And although sometimes they think they're looking out for you, and one time someone said something to me and everyone was laughing, I thought it was funny, and one person didn't think it was so funny and went and reported it. And I was like, I get they're looking out for me. But it's like, if I felt uncomfortable, I could have also stood up for myself and went and talked to my boss myself.

I don't want people to underestimate me and think I get "butt-hurt" over a small comment when really it doesn't really bother me at all.

Holly:

Okay. All right, perfect. Have any of you faced any challenges because you're a woman in the trade? Kenya?

Kenya:

No. Honestly, everyone treats me the same as if I was a guy. If I struggle with something, if something's too heavy for me and, say I don't understand it, they don't judge me and they do their best to try to help me just as if I was anyone else.

Holly:

Okay, good. Kenedi, any challenges?

Kenedi:

Yeah, I find at least in the field that I'm in, girls are held to a different standard in a way. Guys are meant to be operators. It's a guy field that I'm in, and I've had it happen where it's like, "Oh, you can't do that." And not in a way people are trying to bring you down, but people don't think you're generally capable, because you need to be able to prove yourself.

And it's terrible that it has to be like that, but it's the reality of it. And some people are just old-fashioned and some people aren't willing to accept the fact that women are coming into this field, and it's okay with them though. I work with a lot of old men, some of them are just like turn the cold shoulders to you. And then there's other ones that just open arms and welcome you and want to show you everything.

Holly:

Good. Thanks for that, Kenedi. Gabrielle?

Gabrielle:

Yeah, I agree with that. And again, it depends on the jobsite and who you're working with. There is a lot of people who are still old-fashioned and they don't believe that women should be in the trade. And I do

find a lot of men find it surprising that a woman can do what they do, and sometimes we even do it better and I think it might hurt them sometimes.

Holly:

Okay. That's too bad. What about you, Catrina?

Catrina:

I think that men are physically stronger and they are bigger than us and they can lift more than us, but there's always a way that we can do it. And if you don't know a way, you got to find a way to do it. And I always say, "Think smarter, not harder." And that's just got me through it and I've never really had too many problems with something that they do that I can't do.

Holly:

Yeah, for sure. Yeah, and there's nothing wrong with asking for help. Don't think that the men don't ask for help either sometimes if they can't lift or move something or they don't ask, like Kenya was saying, "Well what if I don't know?" Ask, right? It's okay. All of you are in your learning stages and you're going to learn forever throughout your career, so you're not alone.

But certainly these are some challenges, and it's too bad that they're still around. I mean, I've been in the construction industry for, oh my goodness, I don't know if I want to say it out loud, but yeah, right? She laughs. I'm sure it's 30 years. We'll leave it at that. And it was a struggle back then. And to hear you say some struggles, it's kind of sad, but I think that you're right, Gabrielle, when you said it depends on the coworkers and the supervisors, 100 per cent. They will make or break your experience in your trade, and you need to be surrounded by people who elevate you while you're going through this journey, because I think it's so important for you.

Let's move into a little bit of talk about your training that you're doing for your course and stuff like that. Did you find that you have support during your apprenticeship? So Kenya, I'll start with you.

Kenya:

Yeah. Ever since I first started my first level of schooling last summer, my teachers were amazing. I had good friends in that class. My family was super supportive. And then once I got onto the jobsite, as someone who never got the actual worksite experience, my bosses were super kind to me. I was helped in any way, shape or form and I had a really good foreman when I first started and they really gave me a good boost to once I got to work with everyone and do the same thing as they all do. They all support any kind of work I do. And even if it's not a hundred percent good, they still gave me motivation to make it better.

Holly:

Good, thank you. Gabby?

Gabrielle:

Yeah, I would say I had a pretty good support system ever since my first woodshop class. My parents were very encouraging on you know what, maybe trying out a trade. And my other family members, they were super supportive, my teachers. And at the time society is kind of pushing for women, so there was a lot of social media encouragement, and just everybody was kind of pushing towards it, and I just leaned into it, and so far it's been good.

Holly:

Yeah. Kenedi?

Kenedi:

I guess I kind of had the opposite in a sense. I did, but in my schooling, my first time I went, we did three different pieces of equipment. So you get three different teachers and my first one was amazing and I just wanted to do great. And my second one was a menace, and I hated him, and he made me want to go home and I was homesick and I hated it. I didn't want to be out of town anymore. And there was definitely multiple times I wanted to quit and just give up and go home.

And it was actually the people I went to school with that were like, "No, you need to do this." But again, I was the only girl in the small town of Morrisburg all by myself coming from small town of Sudbury. So it was weird and it was my first time ever going away. So yeah, I had the support, but it definitely became difficult when I did get certain teachers that just made me want to give up. It wasn't very encouraging all the time.

Holly:

Okay, thank you. And then I don't know if it's relevant or not, but I'm just thinking about equal opportunities for promotion or advancement. So Catrina?

Catrina:

I think our company, everyone that's at the same level gets the same opportunities as each other. There's no favouritism because I'm a woman. There's none of that with the company I work for, and I'm thankful for that also. But yeah.

Holly:

Okay. No, good. Gabrielle?

Gabrielle:

Again, I have to say it depends on the jobsite. The jobsite that I'm currently at is awesome. I feel equal and I feel trusted with what they're asking me to do, compared to a couple of my other jobs, I feel like they wouldn't put me in a higher position sometimes because you need more trust and they don't trust me as much as more of a buddy or one of their guy friends.

Holly:

Okay, good. So I'm going to ask you a little bit, I hope we're okay and comfortable speaking about this, but I just want to know a little bit about the culture in maybe your current workplace that you're in. So have you experienced or witnessed any type of harassment or discrimination? So this is a question I want to hear from all of you. So we'll start with Kenya.

Kenya:

So at my workplace, from what I know, everyone I've worked with is very kind towards either women or other people who identify, and other kind of ethnicities or races. And we've had multiple different cultured people and female and male, and I've seen all my foremen treat women very kindly towards each other, and everyone on site is treated very kindly, I find.

Holly:

Okay, good, good. Thank you. Catrina?

Catrina:

Unfortunately, I have witnessed this and it has happened to me, and it sucks, and you got to have a big backbone and just take it kind of. There is definitely a limit that you shouldn't take, but I belong here, whether that person likes it or not, I'm here and I'm not going anywhere. So I just think you have to have a big backbone and kind of brush the little stuff off and there's going to be people with opinions whether you like it or not.

Holly:

Right, yeah, okay. Unfortunately. But okay. Gabrielle?

Gabrielle:

Yeah, I strongly agree with that. There's definitely some days that are worse than others, but I feel like whether you're a different ethnicity or a man or oldism, like I've kind of seen it all where everybody makes comments to each other, but you just can't really take anything seriously and you kind of deal with it how you want. And again, to a certain extent, but, yeah, you have to have a big backbone.

Holly:

So the next couple of questions I want to ask you, and this is my biggest pet peeve when I go to a job site, is the bathrooms. Honestly, it's a thing, the washrooms have got to be clean. So I'm curious to know, what are your washrooms like, what are the change rooms like? Let's talk a little bit about that. So let's start with Gabby.

Gabrielle:

Currently, jobsite that I'm on, girls have their own washroom. It's beautiful. We have our own products. We got some scented products. It's clean. We have a cleaner once a week. I'm so grateful because this is rare. I'm used to, sometimes, it is getting better over time, but most of the time we share a Port-a-Potty,

that's the worst, is a porta potty. And we share that with 15 to 30 to 40 other men, and I'll let you guys imagine that, but sometimes it's horrible, horrible, horrible.

Holly:

Catrina.

Catrina:

Unfortunately, I've never got to experience just a female's bathroom. But yeah, the Port-a-Potties are disgusting, and I don't smoke cigarettes and some people do inside of there and it is disgusting. And you run out of toilet paper in a day. I don't know what those men are eating, but there's something wrong there, but it's gross.

Holly:

See, this is a problem. This is actual health. We talk about health and safety, this is your health part of it. How are we allowing this? I almost want to say, "Go buy a Port-a-Potty and just trailer it around with you." You know what I mean? And then it's yours. Yeah, that's bad. Okay, so Kenya, do you want to pipe in or how is your bathroom?

Kenya:

So me and Gabby share the same bathroom, but we're spoiled and we get them cleaned every week and we always, like she said, get our products refilled all the time. And we also have a lock on it and only the females that are on site are allowed to have them.

Holly:

Yeah. Oh yeah, because you were on the same site as those two. Yeah. So you got a nice bathroom there.

Kenya:

Yeah. I think I'll be there tomorrow. So I'm really hoping that I'm going back.

Holly:

Okay. Now my next question, and I'm almost afraid to ask you, but talking about PPE. So let's talk about your clothing, your glasses, your gloves, and yeah, let's talk about this. Kenedi, what do you got for me on PPE?

Kenedi:

A hard hat.

Holly:

Yeah. And does it fit?

Kenedi:

Yes. I actually stole my brother's. And I took the insert out of the one that they gave me at this job, so I made it work. But as for the sense of clothing and my vests, there's no such thing as a vest that fits me. It does not work like that. Even in detour, I was tripping over my pants and everything they gave me, and they accommodate for a sizing of men. So there's never... Even when you do start at a job place and they're like, "Oh, we're going to hire a woman." I don't know why they don't expect you to either be small or really tall, but they never accommodate for a girl.

Holly:

Okay, that's good to know. Gabrielle?

Gabrielle:

Yeah, I'd say our PPE is very limited. A lot of the time if we have to wear coveralls, which is most of the time, I am wearing doubles, sometimes triple, which causes a hazard, like I'm tripping over my own legs and my sleeves are a foot longer than my arm. Also, sometimes glasses fit, hard hats fit, but harnesses a lot of the times, we do a lot of scaffolding as carpenters. Scaffolding, you're in a harness a 100 per cent of the time, you're working at heights, and you're wearing a male's harness where it doesn't fit properly, it's uncomfortable. And then if you fall, it's better off maybe not wearing a harness at times.

Holly:

And then, Catrina, do you want to answer that because you're at a whole different trade as well?

Catrina:

Yeah, so I've never actually had to experience an arc flash suit, thank God. But they are like one giant suit, and I just know that the legs are meant for tall men and guys with beer bellies, and not little tiny women like us. And those don't fit ever. And then I find it hard to find work pants, because we're always on our knees doing plugs, doing whatever, and even the double lined Carharts, they within less than a year, they're garbage. So it's kind of hit or miss with clothing. But for PPE, my hard hat and my harnesses, they usually always are adjustable and stuff, so they've been pretty good.

But our shop is really good with high-vis vests. Kayla's really good with getting extra small stuff and making sure that I'm all good at the job, and yeah, she's great.

Holly:

Gabby, did you want to add?

Gabrielle:

Yeah, also I've noticed that if I do go to Mark's or a store to buy my own PPE, I've noticed that with the women's the price is way more expensive and there's a way less selection, and it's super unfortunate.

Holly:

Yeah, I guess I wasn't aware that it's more expensive for... What's the difference? It's a high-vis shirt, pants?

Gabrielle:

It's the same thing.

Holly:

It's the same thing. Exactly. Why are we paying more for our safety on the jobsite than anyone else, right? Yeah, I guess so, right? Now there's a number of different women brands out there. I'm sure you know that. Or if you don't, I mean Coveralls is one company that makes women's clothing and I think they're also now in Mark's Work Wearhouse as well. But again, like you said, if you're paying double or more, how fair is that? So that's not good in the sense.

Now saying that and talking about that, I'm curious to know if any of you feel isolation at all, because you've all said this is pretty much a male dominant trade, so I'm curious to know if you feel isolated at all. Catrina?

Catrina:

I've never really felt isolated. Right now we're working out of town, so I'm with the same crew of guys 24/7, night and day. And they're always inclusive, they're always good. And it's like you're almost like their little sister kind of, with most of them.

Holly:

Okay, that's good.

Catrina:

The company that I'm with is, all the guys are great and I wouldn't trade it for the world.

Holly:

Good. It's like they're looking out for you, right?

Catrina:

Yeah, exactly.

Holly:

Now, to go along with that question, just curious to know—mental health is a big thing, and here we are talking about, have you had or dealt with any harassment or anything like that? How's the bathrooms, how's your clothing? Oh my goodness, how's your mental health? How are you guys doing every day? So I'm just curious to know, do you feel that it's supported at all in your, let's just say your workplace, even

if you've been to a couple of different workplaces or even just the industry that you're in. So Kenya, what do you think about that?

Kenya:

Honestly, ever since I've started, my mental health hasn't really changed. Even before I started working, I'd still wake up at 5 a.m., go to my previous job. And doing it every day still hasn't really affected me. I'm not very tired. There's some days that are a bit more draining and maybe you're not getting very along with your partner you're with, but good communication and meeting each other on the same level always helps.

But we have a good support group, I find as females in the work, in the trades, and a lot of us are here for each other, and I'm not afraid to talk about how I'm feeling to one of my coworkers. You're with them 24/7, really, you get comfortable with them as time. And there's mental health promotion signs all over the trailers or in the bathroom. So I don't feel much of a... I feel good.

Holly:

Okay, good. Gabrielle?

Gabrielle:

I believe that my mental health has been pretty similar from before and after or during. I do believe if I were to mention my problems to my coworkers, I feel like they would listen and pretty much just got to advocate for yourself and I feel like our brothers would be there to listen.

Holly:

Okay. Well that's good to know.

Something that we want to talk about, how do we get ladies into the trade? So what would make it easier for women like yourselves to enter and stay into this trade? Gabrielle?

Gabrielle:

I would say have some more role models, like some more women empowerment, maybe some ads, open houses, mentorship events, accessible training, have a lot of training for women, proper facilities, proper PPE?

Holly:

All those things we mentioned that weren't there, right?

Gabrielle:

Yeah.

Holly:

Now let's talk about support for all of you. Is there anything that you would need? So I know Gab, you mentioned mentorship, so that's good. Is there anything else that would make a difference for you, Catrina?

Catrina:

I'd say the same thing probably. It'd be so cool to have a female mentor and them kind of get what you're going through, kind of, not going through, but-

Holly:

Sure. Experiencing sometimes.

Catrina:

Experiencing. Yeah. But I agree with that one for sure.

Holly:

Awesome. Good. Here's a question now I have for you, and it's kind of, I'll say sad if you say yes, but have you ever considered leaving your trade, Catrina?

Catrina:

I definitely have. On the tough days I'm like, "Man, a "pink-collar" job where I don't got to go to work until 10 a.m. sounds so nice," but there's a million other jobs I could be doing, and I love this job and I remember why I'm here and why I go. And I'm so upset sometimes because I want it so bad. But yeah, I definitely have thought about it.

Holly:

Kenya?

Kenya:

So I've also thought of leaving the trades. When I first started, I was just doing a simple task, but for two months straight and I was losing my mind and I thought about it, I was like, "Oh, I'm still really young, I want to go to school." And then you have yourself a good day and a good week or a good month, and then you learn to appreciate the good times you have. And then you realize you are just doing what you love and you're making a good living doing it.

Holly:

Gabrielle?

Gabrielle:

I definitely can say that I've thought about leaving. There's definitely tougher days than others.

Holly:

But you're still there.

Gabrielle:

But I'm still here and throughout everything I'm happy that I stuck through and it's worth it. I wouldn't let one bad day dictate my whole future.

Holly:

Every job has their bad days.

Gabrielle:

Yeah. And I definitely thought about it on the 5 a.m. mornings, or you wake up and there's snow outside, like five feet in your driveway and you still have to go. And when you get to work, you have to go work in that snow and all of the weather conditions, and it's honestly all part of the fun.

Holly:

Yeah, for sure. Okay, awesome. Couple of questions I have left for you, and I would like all of your opinions on this. So is there any advice that you would give to other women who are considering a career in the trades? So Gabrielle?

Gabrielle:

Some advice I'd give to women considering the trades is every single day believe in yourself, believe in your skills and believe in your value because you have to believe that because you have to show others that and you have to believe it before they believe it.

Holly:

Awesome. Thank you. That's good. Kenya?

Kenya:

Advice I'd give to other women would be, honestly, just keep your head up. Even if you are having a miserable day, you always have a helping hand with you. And even if it's hard to smile, just think about what you're going to be going home to. You have go rest, you have your dinner and then you try again the other day, and the other day.

Holly:

Perfect. Good. Don't give up. Okay, Kenedi, any advice to women considering entering the trades?

Kenedi:

I would honestly just say don't let anybody beat you down, and the only person that knows your capabilities is you. And people are going to say their own opinion and people are going to turn around and be like, "Wow, she sucks at this." Or, "Wow, she can't really do that." But you need to start somewhere. And if you can't do it now, well you're going to be able to do it, but you need to learn and you need to grasp onto the people...I find a lot of older people are willing to teach you. And a lot of, anybody your dad's age, mostly anybody your dad's age is willing to help you and they're sweet.

They'll take you in as one of your own, and just stick to the people that give you good vibes and good energy and those people are going to carry you into your career and make you successful.

Holly:

Take all of the "you can't do this, you can't do that" as motivation, right? It's like, "Yeah, watch me."

Kenedi:

Yes.

Holly:

And Catrina, any advice?

Catrina:

I would say before even going into the trades, make sure you can take a joke and that you have some support behind you as well. And there will not always be nice people around you and there's going to be people that have an opinion about what you're doing, or if you're good enough, but you have to believe in yourself that you're good enough. And I remember my first journeyman, he told me, "The guys can't always do it for you, you got to learn how to do it." And he also told me, "Get good and then get fast." And those two things stuck with me like glue. And I'm so thankful for him because they made me the electrician that I am today and, yeah.

Holly:

Yeah, that's great. That's great advice for sure. Okay, awesome. Thank you. I'm sure you have other advice as well, which is great. But one more thing, one last question here is, what changes would you like to see maybe specifically in your trade or your workplace? So I don't know if there's maybe just one or two things that pop in your head right away, let's share that as well. So Kenya?

Kenya:

I want to see more women. I want to see more women on the jobsites. I want to see more women in office. I like to see strong women and have them in power and not care what anyone has to say or all that. And lastly, proper PPE, please.

Holly:

Okay. Yes, I'm with you. Amen. Okay. Gabrielle?

Gabrielle:

I'd have to say definitely proper PPE, clean washrooms, maybe a change room if we're lucky. Encouragement from everybody and just more women out there.

Holly:

Good. Kenedi, any changes?

Kenedi:

I'm pretty much on the same page as the girls. More women. I've been with the same company for almost a year and a couple months, and last month we got our first girl other than me. Not even our office people are girls. I literally am the only girl in the entire company.

Holly:

Oh wow.

Kenedi:

Now I'm not. So it would be nice to see more females.

Holly:

Okay.

Kenedi:

But PPE is a big one for me too. And just general acceptance... The mental health thing is, I am fully on board with, we have all the support and everything we need, but having male leadership roles, a lot of times girls get upset and we have hard days and we get in our head and we're feeling off. And guys don't understand that, guys are supposed to be at their tip-top shape every day. And I feel like I want to normalize the fact that I'm not saying my mental health is bad, but when I'm grumpy, I want to be allowed to be grumpy and have a bad day, I'm still a girl.

Holly:

Yeah, yeah, right? I have feelings.

Kenedi:

Yeah.

Holly:

Okay. Catrina?

Catrina:

I would love to see more girls and more role models that are women and I'm with them on that, definitely.

Holly:

Okay, perfect. I like that. Those are great changes and I think those are changes there that can happen, 100 per cent. Definitely more women in the trades, that I think everybody's working on that. Washrooms, I mean, it is legislated that washrooms be clean and be available. You know, PPE, like safety associations like IHSA, everybody's working hard to make this a reality for you in the workplace so that we can attract more women to the trades.

So then you feel supported and you have that person Kenedi wants to talk to because she's having a bad day. So this is great. I want to thank you all for working with me on this important topic. I know it was maybe challenging to go through the questions and think about the answers, and I appreciate you taking the time to do this podcast. Again, I think it's an important, excellent topic and let's cross our fingers that we hit a lot of listeners, get this out there.

So I wish you all the best and what the future has in store for you and in your careers. Thank you for listening to our podcast on Women in Skilled Trades. Be sure to subscribe and like us on your podcast channel and visit us at IHSA.ca for a wealth of health and safety resources and information.

Announcer:

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