

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## CALGARY'S YWCA IS REDEFINING WOMEN-IN-LABOUR

### New Training Centre Teaches Women Carpentry Skills

Calgary, Alberta – Friday, April 11, 2008 The new Vermilion/YWCA Sills Training Centre officially opened in S.E. Calgary today. The Centre is offering pre-apprenticeship and pre-employment carpentry training for women and others, (including youth, visible minorities and aboriginals) who are employed or underemployed and are not able to support themselves in the current market.

YWCA Calgary CEO Jill Wyatt says, "The facility is designed to offer programs which equip women with the tools they need to break the cycle of poverty and gain marketable skills for a career in Calgary's high demand construction industry."

The program based out of a leased facility at 4086 Ogden Rd. S.E., include career path mentorship and workplace culture adaptation. YWCA Director of integrated services Carolyn Goard adds, "These supports also include assistance in finding safe and suitable housing and child care."

The provincially approved program involving a 16-week course ensures graduates have the necessary life and job specific skills to be employment ready at the end of the program. The Centre will also ensure graduates are placed in sustainable employment situations in high demand fields that provide living wages.

The pilot program has already graduated women who are now earning a sustainable living in the construction industry, not a minimum wage job!

The Skills centre is jointly funded by the Federal and Provincial Governments. Secretary of State (Small Business and Tourism) and Member of Parliament for Calgary-Nose Hill says, "The Government of Canada is committed to creating the best educated, most skilled and most flexible work force in the world," adding, "Not only will our \$419,917 investment help more than 54 young people in the Calgary area find and keep quality jobs, but it will also benefit local employers facing labour shortages and will be good for the local economy."

Calgary based Vermilion Energy Trust is giving a generous 2.5 million dollar three year gift and is responsible for raising an additional 1.5 million dollars for the Skills training centre. Vermilion Energy Trust President and CEO Lorenzo Donadeo says, "We are very excited to be partnering with the YWCA on the Skills Training Centre! We feel this program equips people, especially women facing barriers, with the tools that will allow them to be successful." Donadeo goes on to challenge other Calgary companies to get involved in the project, "We know the Skills Training Centre cannot be sustained on our funds alone. It is our hope others will also step up and share in this opportunity for success."

Women interested in participating in the program are encouraged to contact the Vermilion/YWCA Skills Training Centre by calling (403) 705-7526.

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