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Forum lure for female tradies

South Western Times, Bunbury

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OLIVER LANE

Bunbury has hosted a Women in Trades workshop aimed at getting more females into a traditionally male-dominated sector.

The two-hour workshop was hosted by MEGT and Bunnings and featured talks and a panel discussion from women in the industry.

About 70 people attended at the Master Builders Association building. The workshop aimed to inform potential apprentices, students and employers about the industry.

Women make up 15 per cent of the construction and just 3 per cent of the entire trade sector in Australia.

MEGT mentoring manager Jodi Stevens said the event was about empowering women and girls.

"It is really about for us, the program's about building awareness of women in trades for people that potentially want to come into the workforce, and they're not sure what's available for them," she said.

"We talk about all the challenges as well, so we do the good, the bad and the ugly of being an apprentice as a female and what that looks like or how you can get through it as well."

Since starting work with the program at the beginning of the year, Ms Stevens said she has met some inspiring examples of women breaking through in the

industry. We've met some amazing females along the way in our journey in these events that have done some phenomenal jobs and taken on apprenticeships that you think 'wow how can you do that?' so they prove that you can do it," she said.

"It's all about you can do it."

One member of the panel discussion was Empowered Women in Trades head of commercial Hannah Keirl who said there were plenty of opportunities for women to get into the industry.

"Jobs don't have genders, so there is absolutely no reason women can't do trades," she said.

"I also think, we're not as attuned to hundreds of types of trades that are out there, that can be jobs that can be career pathways and that can take you incredible places. Who's going to build the submarines for AUKUS right? It's going to be tradies that are building a lot of that stuff.

"You need welders for that and female welders . . . to have the precise thickness, the tidiness of welds . . . women are far better at that, it's been shown."



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