**What’s the value of the Trades Women Build Nations conference for local unions?**

* This will be the fifteenth national multi-craft, union-sponsored conference held in the U.S. The official conference sponsor is North America’s Building Trades Unions (NABTU). In addition, several international unions are making donations to support the conference.
* This national conference grew out of the Women Building California conference, which started in 2002. Last year’s conference brought together over 5000 tradeswomen for three spirited and educational days of workshops and networking.
* It is often difficult for women to work in the trades because they find they are the only woman (or one of a very few) women out on the jobsite. Being in a room with 5,000+ other tradeswomen who have a similar experience, is key to helping women break the isolation they may feel at work.
* The conference has several workshop tracks. Examples from past conferences include: **Just coming in** —for pre-apprentices and new apprentices; **Staying strong** —including women’s committees, mentoring, safety and health, dealing with sexual harassment and bullying and more; **Growing leaders—**understanding how unions work, public speaking, parliamentary procedure; **Policy impacting tradeswomen—**PLAs, local and federal legislation; **Career ladders—**in the union as a contractor, higher education; and **Nourishing Extras—**union history, writing, social media, fitness….and much more. The goal of the workshops is to stay positive and look for solutions rather than griping about the present.
* The conference costs are kept extremely low to enable as many women as possible to attend. The sponsoring organizations underwrite significant costs of this event. The hotel rate is kept low through negotiations. In addition, the event is held on the weekend to avoid the need to pay lost wages for those who attend.
* This conference inspires the tradeswomen sent by Local Unions to feel even more positive about their Local Unions, to advocate for the building trades and to take more responsibility—on the job and in their unions. Each union has a Caucus time during the conference when women members can talk to their International leadership and network with each other.
* The Tradeswomen Banner Parade shows union pride to the surrounding community as well as to the many Social Media posts it generates.
* Male allies are also welcome to attend, and typically there are workshops offered that are specific to men.