

Presented by:

NLCA
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION



Join Us



Forum & Board Chair
VALERIE PENNEY



NLCA President/COO
RHONDA NEARY

WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FORUM

**RISE UP • LEAD FORWARD
THRIVE TOGETHER**

2026

This event empowers, educates and connects women in the construction industry.

November 6, 2026

Starting At 8:00am

The Jag Hotel, 115 George Street, St. John's

**REGISTER:
709-753-8920
WWW.NLCA.CA**

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AGENDA

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FORUM AGENDA AT A GLANCE



FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6

8:00 –
8:30 AM

Sponsored by:
Locke's
Electrical Ltd.

8:30 –
8:50 AM

9:00 –
10:00 AM

10:00 –
11:00 AM

Sponsored by:
Newcrete
Investments

11:00 –
11:15 AM

11:15 AM –
12:15 PM

Sponsored by:
Homework
Modular Homes
& Renovations

12:30 PM –
2:00 PM

Sponsored by:
RCS Construction

2:00 –
3:15 PM

3:15 –
4:15 PM

Sponsored by:

4:15 –
4:30 PM

4:30 –
5:30 PM

Common Ground: Connections that Build Careers **Welcome Coffee with Exhibitors**

Join us for a 30 min coffee networking with exhibitors before the formal program begins. Great careers aren't built alone, they are built through the people we meet, the conversations we have and the connections we nurture.

Greetings & Welcoming Remarks

Welcome from Valerie Penney, NLCA Board Chair & Event Chair, Rhonda Neary, NLCA President/COO, Nicole Emmett, Canadian Construction Association and Chantal Gosse, Locke's Electrical Ltd.

Just Around the Corner: Building the Life You Were Meant to Live

Guest Speaker: **Yvonne Jones**, Author, Former Parliamentarian, and Former Political Leader

Your Career Your Way: Owning the Journey Through Every Season of Life

Panelists:

Stephanie Wallace, Assistant Executive Director & Director of Membership, Ottawa Construction Association

Jennifer Collins, Industry Professional

Melody Hillman, Vice-President, Member Engagement & Development, Construction Association of Nova Scotia

Nutrition Break with Exhibitors

Sponsored by: Dewcor

Stop Waiting to Be Chosen: Leading from Within

Moderator: **Tzu-Hao Hsu**, Operations Supervisor United Rentals

Panelists: **Katrina Hickey**, OHS Faculty Coordinator, Keyin College

Amanda McCallum, Executive Director, Mining Industry NL

Jennifer Aspell, Chief Executive Officer, NLCSA

Lorna Harnum, International Representative at International Union of Operating Engineers

Business Luncheon

The People Who Helped Build Me

Moderator & Panelist: **Candace Dominix**, Project Manager, ALLNORTH

Panelists: **Holly Hicks**, Director, Cost & Project Mgmt., Vigilant Management

Julia Byrne, Director of Finance, Locke's Electrical Ltd.

Miranda Brazil, Manager, Safety, Newfoundland Power Inc.

Dayle Biggin, Lead Safety Advisor, Lindsay Construction Limited

Afternoon Business Session One

Breaking In: How to Build Your Own Path

Keynote Speaker: **Alicia Woods**, CEO & Founder of Covergalls Inc.

Sponsored by: Mark's Commercial

Afternoon Business Session Two

Beyond the Hustle: Helping Women Balance Ambition with Well-Being

Join Rhonda Neary, NLCA President/COO for an inspiring and interactive session that challenges the belief that doing more is the only path to achieving more.

Closing Remarks

Concluding Networking Reception (Live Entertainment)

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WELCOME

MESSAGE FROM OUR EVENT & BOARD CHAIR

VALERIE PENNEY



As Chair of the Women in Construction Professional Development Forum and Board Chair, it is my pleasure to welcome you to a day dedicated to leadership, learning, and celebrating the remarkable women who continue to shape Newfoundland and Labrador's construction industry.

Today's forum is more than a professional development event, it is an opportunity to invest in yourself, build meaningful connections, and be inspired by the experiences, insights, and achievements of women across our industry.

Throughout the day, you'll explore topics that encourage us to embrace opportunity, navigate career transitions with confidence, lead with purpose, strengthen relationships, and prioritize well-being alongside ambition. Whether you are beginning your career, advancing into leadership, or mentoring others, each session has been designed to provide practical insights and lasting inspiration.

Construction is built on strong foundations, and so are successful careers. Together, we are helping to create an industry where diverse perspectives are valued, every voice matters, and women have the opportunity to thrive and lead.

Thank you for joining us and for investing in your personal and professional growth. I encourage you to engage fully throughout the day, ask questions, share your experiences, make new connections, and take advantage of every opportunity to learn.

On behalf of myself and our Board of Directors, welcome to the Women in Construction Professional Development Forum. We hope you leave feeling inspired, empowered, and ready to embrace whatever comes next in your journey.

Warm Regards,

Presented by:

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CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION



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MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT/COO



RHONDA NEARY

As President & COO of the Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Association, I am delighted to welcome you to a day created to inspire, challenge, and empower.

Our industry continues to evolve because of the talented individuals who are willing to lead, embrace new opportunities, and support those around them. This forum is an opportunity to step away from the demands of everyday work, invest in your own growth, and gain fresh perspectives that will strengthen both your career and our industry.

Throughout the day, you'll hear authentic stories of resilience, discover practical leadership strategies, explore the value of mentorship and community, and reflect on how to build a successful career while maintaining balance and purpose. Whether you are entering the industry, advancing into new roles, or helping shape the next generation of leaders, I hope you leave with renewed confidence, meaningful connections, and ideas you can put into action.

One of the greatest strengths of the construction industry is its people. When we share our experiences, encourage one another, and celebrate each other's successes, we create workplaces where everyone has the opportunity to contribute, lead, and succeed.

Thank you for choosing to be part of this forum and for your commitment to lifelong learning and professional excellence. I encourage you to participate fully, connect with new colleagues, and take advantage of every conversation and learning opportunity throughout the day.

On behalf of myself and the NLCA team, thank you for joining us. I hope this forum leaves you feeling energized, inspired, and ready to take the next step in your journey.

Best Regards,

WELCOME

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DELEGATE REGISTRATION 8:00 - 8:30 A.M.

Pre-function Area (Outside Studio A, B & C)

COMMON GROUND: CONNECTIONS THAT BUILD CAREERS WELCOME COFFEE WITH EXHIBITORS 8:00 - 8:30 A.M.

Pre-function Area (Outside Studio A, B & C)

Join us for a 30 min coffee networking before the formal program begins. Great careers aren't built alone - they are built through the people we meet, the conversations we have and the connections we nurture.

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GREETINGS & OPENING REMARKS 8:30 - 8:50 A.M.

Studio A, B & C (Jag Soundhouse)



Valerie Penney,
NLCA Board Chair



Rhonda Neary,
NLCA President/COO



Nicole Emmett
Vice-President, Communications,
Marketing and Member Services
Canadian Construction Association



Chantal Gosse
Commercial & Brand Manager
Locke's Electrical Ltd.

Join NLCA Form & Board Chair, Valerie Penney and NLCA President/COO, Rhonda Neary, along with Nicole Emmett, Vice-President, Communications, Marketing and Member Services, Canadian Construction Association and Chantal Gosse, Locke's Electrical Ltd. as they welcome all delegates to the event.

**PLEASE VISIT NLCA.CA TO VIEW THE AVAILABLE
EVENT SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES
OR CONTACT THE NLCA OFFICE AT 709-753-8920.**

JUST AROUND THE CORNER: BUILDING THE LIFE YOU WERE MEANT TO LIVE BUILT TO LAST - LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP, RESILIENCE AND COURAGE 9:00 - 10:00 A.M.

Studio A, B & C (Jag Soundhouse)

Guest Speaker: Yvonne Jones,

Author, Former Parliamentarian, and Former Political Leader

What if the opportunity that changes your life is just around the corner?



Join Yvonne Jones for an inspiring and deeply personal conversation as she shares excerpts from her book and reflects on a remarkable journey of leadership, resilience, and courage. From breaking barriers in public service to navigating challenges with determination and purpose, Yvonne's story is a powerful reminder that success is rarely a straight path.

Through candid storytelling, attendees will gain insight into the lessons she has learned throughout her career—embracing uncertainty, saying yes to opportunity, leading through adversity, and staying true to one's values. Her experiences demonstrate that some of life's greatest achievements often emerge from the moments we least expect.

YOUR CAREER YOUR WAY: OWNING THE JOURNEY THROUGH EVERY SEASON OF LIFE 10:00 - 11:00 A.M.

Studio A, B & C (Jag Soundhouse)

PANELISTS



Stephanie Wallace
Assistant Executive
Director & Director of
Membership, Ottawa
Construction Association



Jennifer Collin
Industry
Professional



Melody Hillman
Vice-President,
Member Engagement &
Development,
Construction Association
of Nova Scotia

Every career tells a different story, and no two journeys look the same. Join three inspiring women as they share honest conversations about navigating career changes, choosing family, embracing new leadership opportunities, and overcoming unexpected challenges. This fireside chat is a reminder that success isn't defined by a straight path, it's about having the courage to adapt, redefine your goals, and create a career that works for you. You'll leave feeling empowered to embrace whatever chapter comes next.

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NUTRITION BREAK WITH EXHIBITORS 11:00 - 11:15 A.M.

Pre-function Area
(Outside Studio A, B & C)

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STOP WAITING TO BE CHOSEN: LEADING FROM WITHIN 11:15 A.M. - 12:15 P.M.

Studio A, B & C (Jag Soundhouse)

PANELISTS



Katrina Hickey
OHS Faculty
Coordinator,
Keyin College



Amanda McCallum
Executive Director,
Mining Industry NL



Jennifer Aspell
Chief Executive
Officer, NLCSA

PANELIST



Lorna Harnum,
International Representative
at International Union of
Operating Engineers

MODERATOR



Tzu Hao Tsu
Operations Supervisor,
United Rentals

Many women are conditioned to wait until they're more qualified, more confident, promoted, invited, or validated before stepping into leadership. But meaningful leadership doesn't begin with permission; it begins with the decision to lead.

This inspiring session explores how to move beyond self-doubt, perfectionism, and the need for external approval to embrace confidence rooted in purpose, values, and lived experience. Participants will discover practical strategies to recognize the leader they already are, create opportunities instead of waiting for them, and lead with authenticity and impact. **The ability to lead is rooted within you. Leadership isn't something you're given! It's something you choose!**

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BUSINESS LUNCHEON THE PEOPLE WHO HELPED BUILD ME 12:30 - 2:00 P.M.

Studio A, B & C (Jag Soundhouse)

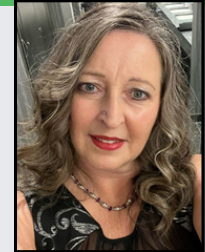
PANELISTS



Julia Byrne
Director of Finance,
Locke's Electrical
Ltd.



Miranda Brazil
Manager, Safety,
Newfoundland
Power Inc.



Dayle Biggin
Lead Safety Advisor,
Lindsay Construction
Limited

PANELIST



Holly Hicks
Director - Cost & Project
Management,
Vigilant Management

PANELIST/MODERATOR



Candace Dominix
Project Manager,
ALLNORTH

Behind every successful career is a community of people who offered encouragement, challenged assumptions, opened doors and inspired confidence. In this candid conversation, focused on the importance of mentorship and community, panelists will share their honest stories of set-backs, growth, resilience.

Attendees will gain practical strategies for building confidence, strengthening relationships, and creating opportunities for themselves and others.

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AFTERNOON BUSINESS SESSION ONE BREAKING IN: HOW TO BUILD YOUR OWN PATH 2:00 - 3:15 P.M.

Studio A, B & C (Jag Soundhouse)

This keynote is for anyone who's ever walked into a room where they weren't expected.



Keynote Speaker:
Alicia Woods,
CEO & Founder of Covergalls Inc.

At 21, Alicia Woods walked into mining equipment sales knowing she'd have to prove herself. She worked three times the hours, learned every technical term, took night courses — whatever it took to be taken seriously in an industry that questioned whether she belonged there at all.

Through sharing her story, Woods illustrates what it takes to break into spaces that weren't built for you: getting comfortable with being uncomfortable, finding mentors who see your potential, and going all in. She reveals how she turned "that silly idea with no market" into a thriving business, and why you'll never see your true potential until you commit 110%. Audiences will leave with practical insights on overcoming self-doubt, navigating skepticism, and refusing to let other people's limitations become your own.

About Our Keynote Speaker: Alicia Woods

Award-Winning Entrepreneur | CEO, Covergalls Workwear

Alicia Woods is an award-winning entrepreneur and dynamic keynote speaker who transforms audiences' understanding of innovation, resilience, and inclusive leadership. As the founder and CEO of Covergalls Workwear — a venture she successfully pitched on CBC's Dragons' Den — Woods has spent more than 20 years breaking barriers in the mining industry. Her keynotes challenge audiences to see beyond the status quo and transform overlooked problems into breakthrough opportunities. When Woods entered mining equipment sales at 21, she discovered an industry unprepared for women: no underground facilities, no properly fitting safety gear. Rather than accept these limitations, she designed a solution — the covergall, a female-specific coverall that addressed a need the entire industry had overlooked. Covergalls has since evolved into a thriving business built on three pillars: health and safety, diversity and inclusion, and education and advocacy.

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AFTERNOON BUSINESS SESSION TWO BEYOND THE HUSSLE: HELPING WOMEN BALANCE AMBITION WITH WELL-BEING 3:15 - 4:15 P.M.

Studio A, B & C (Jag Soundhouse)



Join Rhonda Neary, NLCA President/COO for an inspiring and interactive session that challenges the belief that doing more is the only path to achieving more. Success does not have to be at the expense of yourself.

Beyond the Hussle is an inspiring session designed to help women redefine success, create balance, and pursue their goals with intention and purpose.

Through meaningful reflection, practical strategies, and engaging conversations, you will discover how to pursue your ambitions while protecting energy, setting healthy boundaries, and creating a life that feels as successful as it looks.

This interactive workshop will help you reflect on where you are today, celebrate how far you've come and intentionally design the next season of life you want to step into with confidence and clarity. Leave inspired to create a version of success that allows you to achieve your goals while living a more balanced fulfilling life.

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CLOSING REMARKS 4:15 - 4:30 P.M.



CONCULding NETWORKING RECEPTION WITH EXHIBITORS 4:30 - 5:30 P.M.

Live Music By: Linda Mansfield Trio



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