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WHITEHORSE: (SANDI COLEMAN) Construction of Canada Winter Games' facilities, talk of mines reopening and a pipeline being built. If the projects all go ahead it will take a lot of skilled labour but will we make use of Yukoners or end up bringing those tradespeople in. Dr. Marsha Braundy(sp) believes what we do now will set the trend for years to come. A journey level carpenter for 25 years she recently received her doctorate in technology studies and she was also the founding national coordinator for Women, Trades and Technology Network. She'll also be teaching the new gender in workplace issues component of the Women Exploring Trades course at Yukon College next spring. We've reached her at home in BC.

COLEMAN: Now we've recently carried stories here on a New Day about a jump in enrolment in trades training at Yukon College but why is just putting those courses in place not enough?

BRAUNDY: Well, I mean, I think that the jump in enrolment is very, very exciting at Yukon College and it shows that they're creating an environment there that women want to attend to and I think that - I mean, you have the courses to prepare the women and men for trades in technical training but in terms of what actually happens to them on the job you have to prepare the workplace as well.

COLEMAN: In what way?

BRAUNDY: Well, when we have tried in the past to do the integrational efforts those that actually pursued a workshop on harassment, workshops on integration of women and aboriginal people onto the worksite they worked a lot better.

COLEMAN: Dr. Braundy, I understand your thesis dealt with gender stereotypes in the workplace. It still truly is a problem out there.

BRAUNDY: Oh, it certainly is. I actually attended a showing of my - the DVD of my play, Men and Women In Tools last night and I heard more stories but, yes, while much has changed, you know, women are much more accepted today perhaps than they were 25 years ago but we still hear the stories of those women's experiences are not as we would like them to be. They are not welcomed. They are not encouraged and some of them have had some pretty horrendous experiences.

COLEMAN: They're telling you their stories but are we still not talking about this enough or why has it not changed?

BRAUNDY: Well, interestingly listening to those women last night women are afraid to make waves because they want those jobs and so sometimes they don't speak up. They're socialization, how they've been trained, tells them not to speak up and take a stand against the sorts of things that are happening to them. Really women need to take a stand and the men also need - not all the men appreciate the kinds of remarks and actions of their brothers on worksite but they don't always call it when they see it.

COLEMAN: Well, you consulted on projects across the country, more failures than successes

when it comes to employment equity it seems but where has it worked and why do you think it worked in the example?

BRAUNDY: Well, I think a really good example is the Island Highway in BC. They're building a three or 3.5 year project building the Route 1 Island Highway up the island, Vancouver Island from Victoria up past Nanaimo. I'm not sure exactly how far it went but quite a ways past Nanaimo and what they did on that project was very exciting because they were training road builders and they took the trainees and they actually built roads on the native reserves that mimed the highway in many places and so those reserves go fairly high quality roads because the trainees of course were well supervised and then the trainees got to go out and work on the regular jobs on the highway too. So it was a win-win for everyone and by the time they finished for the last year and a half or so they had about 22 per cent equity hours worked on that project. It was a good job for everybody who was there but, again, they had harassment training. They had integration training for all of the workers, right, so everybody had to take it and some grumbling takes place, of course, but in fact a lot of people got to learn and they got to have an opportunity to talk about issues that they normally don't talk in public.

COLEMAN: And is that what you found in your research is that those conversations that aren't taking place even in the workplace now?

BRAUNDY: Well, they fester. I mean, I think the wonderful thing that happened in my research - I interviewed 19 people and equity consultants, tradesmen, tradeswomen and instructors and that sort of thing but it was in one particular group interview that I did with four tradesmen and myself where perhaps because I'm a journey level carpenter and I was willing - you know, and they know me as that, right, I'm one of them. They were willing to be very frank and talked about - expressed themselves very frankly during the interview and I turned it into a poker game and it came out so that other people can hear what they're saying and some of those issues they include issues of competency. The introductory training, the skills training, the assertiveness training, preparation for the worksite is really, really important because competency is a number one issue for the men. Another issue very interestingly, and you don't hear this talked about so much, is there's some concern about sexuality. Men don't know how to act. You know, their traditionally they relate to women in a certain way and we're not talking about all men here but I did talk to particularly men in technical fields. They don't know how to handle the sexuality. Somehow they think sexuality only is on the workplace when women come on but, you know, that sexuality is there all the time and the language and the ways in which women are talked about. Hey, we talk about jobs, cars and women, is one of the quotes and with women around we can't do that.

COLEMAN: Well, obviously a lot that still needs to be talked about in the workplace but you were recently in our territory visiting with government leaders and bureaucrats and I'd like to know what was your sense of their understanding of the importance of this issue as we move into this potential for a real construction boom?

BRAUNDY: Well, I think that the awareness of the skill shortage is that all of Canada is facing, but particularly in the north with all of these big projects coming up they're talking about, you know, needing a thousand workers just in the mining industry. So there's a recognition that

training needs to happen. There's a recognition that possibly women might fill those, although the needs of preparation of the workplace and the people themselves has not been completely thought through but they are beginning to think about it and I was excited by that. People were very willing to meeting and talk about it.

COLEMAN: Thank you so much for talking to us about this morning.