



**TRADES: Women encouraged to look at technology and gaming as career option**

# Diversity on the job

**Julianne McKeon**

BPW Coffs Harbour strongly supports the push for women and girls to challenge traditional male and female roles in employment.

Accordingly, we are enthusiastic about Women in Technology which encourages women to be creators of technology as well as consumers, ensuring that new technology accurately reflects the needs of the "other" 50% of the population.

For example, girls can be gamers too, but they won't if all of the games reflect only male interests.

Not to mention the number of women with smartphones using apps.

To ensure gender bias is minimised it is imperative to have females employed in the technology industry.

Also, we are supportive of women going into non-traditional occupations in the trades such as carpentry, metalwork, automotive and engineering.

This does require employers thinking differently about how a woman may work in a trade.

Some women have been excluded in the past because they may have been physically unable to lift heavy objects.

That is now covered by new Work, Health and Safety regulations for all employees, with the use of lifters and pulleys.

Melissa Spillet, who teaches Industrial Arts at Woolgoolga High School, is passionate about encouraging

our school girls to pursue trades.

While there can be barriers, the pay and freedom to follow their passion can be rewarding both personally and financially.

Organisations such as Trade Up, and the Australian Mines and Metals Association (AMMA) in the mining and engineering fields, are trying to encourage gender diversity, and for employers, managers and colleagues to step up.

In reality, physical constraints are minimal, and employing women in these non-traditional fields is proving to

be most rewarding and enlightening as different perspectives are welcomed into the work environment.

Unfortunately, the number of women employed in the resources sector declined 1.6% in the year ending May, to 13.9%, despite specific programs.

For more contact us at [coffsharbour@bpw.com.au](mailto:coffsharbour@bpw.com.au) or check us out on Facebook/BPW Coffs Harbour.

Our next function is a great fun fundraiser

for our projects.

We are having a Halloween Ball on Saturday, November 1. Partners and friends are very welcome. To find out more, email us, check Facebook or phone Kim Connolly on 0405 790 215.





**FUTURE FOCUS: Ellen Dalrymple and Melsissa Spillet at BPW's Equal Pay Day.**