

March 8, 2018 is International Women's Day. It is a global day that celebrates the achievements of women. Last year, ontrac Employment organized a Women in Business event in Arnprior, and I was a keynote speaker. What struck me from that event was how important it is for women to be visible for their peers. We can learn from each other, and our shared experiences can often be what propels us forward in the face of challenges. So here are some ideas of what your organization could do to mark International Women's Day:

**Municipal Council Initiative**

2018 is a municipal election year. According to the Status of Women Canada, in 2015 women made up 28 per cent of municipal councillors and 18 per cent of mayors. In Renfrew County, women comprised 26 per cent of municipal councils but 33 per cent of mayors. There is still a long way to go towards even participation. March is a great time to host a municipal information session where



# Celebrate March 8th

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women can be invited to learn about running for council. The Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs has resources available.

**Leadership Panel**

Host a lunch that features women business leaders in the community. It's a great chance for women to talk about the challenges of leadership in today's society. Connect up with Algonquin College or another organization and host it with them. This is a low cost event with plenty of value in support of a message for women in leadership.

**Women In...**

Hold a lunch or seminar to celebrate women in your industry. Then, invite other women who are not in your industry to attend. Have women talk about what they do and why they do it. Past local examples that I'm aware of include Women in Nuclear held by (then) Atomic Energy of Canada (AECL) and Women in Aviation hosted by the Pembroke & Area Airport.

**Women Authors**

Is there a woman author in the community? Maybe your local library has connections to local

authors who could talk about their book, or the process of writing it.

**Start Something**

Use International Women's Day to start a get-together or group that will meet regularly. It could be anything from a group getting together for a women's lunch to a women's aspect of your organization. You can meet monthly, quarterly or whenever you want. It's a great way to keep the momentum going.

There are some great online resources through Status of Women Canada and through International Women's Day that can help you plan your event: [www.swc-cfc.gc.ca](http://www.swc-cfc.gc.ca) and [www.internationalwomensday.com](http://www.internationalwomensday.com)

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Sometimes looking at things from a different perspective can make a difference.

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