

Angela carves a new career in carpentry

A single mother of two has shown that women can get ahead in traditionally male-dominated jobs by training to be a carpenter.

Angela enrolled on a course run by Port Talbot-based training company Unit 19 and Chwarae Teg's Ready SET Go, a project aimed at helping women get training and careers in non-traditional sectors.

Ready SET Go has been praised for highlighting what the UK is doing to create a fairer and more equal society in the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All.

Angela lives in Swansea with her two daughters, one of whom is disabled. "Don't ever underestimate how much children change your life!" she warns.

Now both are at school, Angela was keen to take on a new career challenge, which would make use of her creative skills but would be flexible enough to allow her to attend hospital appointments with her daughter.

After seeing a small advert in the local newspaper she decided to commit to the one day-a-week Unit 19/Ready SET Go carpentry course.

"The course was excellent", she said, "The tutors were helpful, instructive and very supportive of any ideas we wanted to develop. We were shown how to use the machines safely, and then allowed to get on with it, I learnt so much."

"I would never have enrolled on a City & Guilds in Furniture Craft and Design before going on the Ready SET Go course, I didn't have the guts. I didn't want to show myself up with not knowing anything in front of a class full of men".

The project received a grant from the European Union's Objective One Programme through the Welsh Assembly Government with match-funding from the Department of Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills and Careers Wales



“The table I made at Unit 19 was inspired by one I saw costing over £700; I only paid for the handles on mine. The wood was an off-cut, but the man couldn’t believe what I wanted to do with it so he gave it to me for free!”

Angela completed her course in furniture craft and design and has now started a City & Guilds course in woodwork.

Her next project has been inspired by a trip to Lapland to visit Father Christmas.

“He had a beautiful antique bench and I loved it, I knew it would be perfect at home so I made a quick sketch while I was there and hope to make it soon”.

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Ready SET Go supports women to access training and careers in a range of non-traditional sectors, including building restoration, practical conservation, basic electronics, digital installation and fire fighting. The project was part financed by European Structural Funds, Careers Wales and Welsh Assembly Government.

Notes for Editors

1. Chwarae Teg (Fair Play) has been supporting, developing and expanding the role of women in the Welsh economy, since 1992. It works to promote women's economic development, challenge stereotypes in employment and education, close the gender pay gap, support women in enterprise and business. Chwarae Teg is currently responsible for rolling out the Welsh Assembly Government's Work Life Balance programme across Wales, championing flexible working. For more information on Chwarae Teg and Ready SET Go, go to www.chwaraeteg.com

2. Based in Port Talbot, Unit 19 is a NIACE (National Institute of Adult Continuing Education) 2004 national award-winning training provider specialising in carpentry skills.

3. The European Year of Equal Opportunities for All is a pan European Union project, funded by the European Commission. The Department for Work and Pensions, the CEHR and other partners in England, Scotland and Wales are working in collaboration to mark the Year. For further information visit <http://www.cehr.org.uk/content/european.rhtm> and http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/eyeq/index.cfm?language=EN

4. The European Year of Equal Opportunities for All is based around four themes:

- a. Rights – raising awareness of the right to equality and nondiscrimination, and the problem of multiple discrimination
- b. Representation – stimulating the debate on ways to increase the participation of under-represented groups in society, in particular groups that are victims of discrimination
- c. Recognition – celebrating and accommodating diversity and equality
- d. Respect – promoting a more cohesive society

5. The CEHR is a statutory body established under the Equality Act 2006. It assumes its full powers from October 2007, including taking over the

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responsibilities of Commission for Racial Equality, Disability Rights Commission and Equal Opportunities Commission.

6. The CEHR is the independent advocate for equality and human rights in Britain. It aims to reduce inequality, eliminate discrimination, strengthen good relations between people, and promote and protect human rights.

7. The CEHR will enforce equality legislation on age, disability and health, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or transgender status, and encourage compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998. It will also give advice and guidance to businesses, the voluntary and public sectors, and to individuals.

For more information visit www.cehr.org.uk.