

## Press Release...For Immediate Release

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### **CCOC Hosts National Association of Women In Construction Magic Camp**

This week, Central County Occupational Center (CCOC) hosted National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) Chapter 99's first ever summer Magic Camp for female high school students in Santa Clara County.

Magic (Mentoring a Girl in Construction) Camp is a free one-week day camp designed to open the doors to high school girls to the world of construction. One of the many goals of the camp is to provide a gender neutral environment for girls to learn and practice various construction techniques. Among the activities scheduled include three different hands-on projects, to learn about the various careers in construction, and to introduce girls to various female role models in construction.

The camp concludes on Friday, August 7, with a field trip to Peterson Equipment Company and an award ceremony at CCOC in front of their parents and community members.

"It has been so rewarding to see the excitement in the girls faces," NAWIC Chapter 99 Magic Camp director, Tracy Cheffer, said. "The hands-on projects give the girls a real feeling of accomplishment." Cheffer and co-Camp Director, Jennifer Krencik decided to start a Magic Camp in their NAWIC chapter after learning about it at a NAWIC meeting. Krencik, who works for Turner Construction, said that there is a need to expose more girls to the construction field, which is mainly a male dominated field.

Nearly 10 girls, wearing pink hard hats, completed three projects during the week: a toolbox, a lamp, and a welded butterfly. CCOC donated the classroom space and CCOC's Carpentry teacher, Kurt Cheetsos; Electrical and Maintenance teacher, Scott Hall; and Welding instructor, Pat Haney donated their time and knowledge and ran the daily projects. The entire camp, including meals, supplies, and a t-shirt is available to the girls at no charge due to donations from various local businesses. Female mentors from the construction industry assisted participants each day along with classroom volunteers.

Krencik said the girls have been asking all week where they can purchase a pink hammer, like the one they used during the camp. Krecik and Cheffer plan to surprise the girls at the awards ceremony with their own pink tool belt, complete with all the basic pink colored tools it can hold—a perfect addition to the toolboxes the girls belt themselves during the week. The Magic

Camp directors and several camp participants are already looking forward to coming back to Magic Camp again next year!

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MetroED is the largest career-oriented organization in Santa Clara County comprised of high school and adult career-technical, academic and community programs, which include Central County Occupational Center (CCOC) and the Metropolitan Adult Education Program (MAEP).

MetroED annually provides more than 30,000 diverse students with the skills to help them be productive, income earning and tax paying contributors to Silicon Valley.