

# **Gail Smyth, CAE**

*Executive Director, Skills Canada – Ontario*

## **Biography**

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Gail Smyth is the Executive Director of Skills Canada – Ontario, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of skilled trades and technologies as viable first choice career options to young people in Ontario.

Gail first became involved with Skills Canada - Ontario as a volunteer in 1990, immersing herself in numerous roles and responsibilities. She was promoted to Executive Director, a full-time position, in 1997. Gail and her staff organize provincial events to encourage elementary and high school students to consider careers in skilled trades and technologies. These programs include: in-school presentations, young women's conferences, summer camps, cardboard boat races, teachers' conferences, career showcase, Mentor Build, Qualifying Competitions and the Ontario Technological Skills Competitions (the largest skills competition in Canada).

A member of the Minister of Education's Curriculum Council in Ontario and the Advisory Board for the new College of Trades in Ontario, Gail is a strong advocate for young people pursuing a career in the skilled trades as a preferred post secondary option.

Gail's career in the community college system began in 1985 at Conestoga College in Stratford, where she worked as a Community Liaison Officer. In 1995, Gail became the Co-op advisor at Conestoga College for students in Robotics, Woodworking and Food and Beverage Management. Gail, working with local business leaders, placed over 300 Conestoga students a year in co-op positions throughout the province.