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Top Executives Release Second Research Report Aiming to Increase the Number of Women in STEM

OTTAWA & WASHINGTON, D.C.; March 8, 2018 -- The Canada-U.S. Council for Advancement of Women Entrepreneurs and Business Leaders (the Council) has announced recommendations for the second pillar of their groundbreaking bilateral initiative. Linamar Corporation CEO Linda Hasenfratz and General Motors Chairman and CEO Mary Barra are leading this effort, which aims to expand the number of women and girls studying and pursuing careers in science, technology, engineering and math, collectively known as STEM.

“In the U.S., 50 percent of middle school girls say they’re interested in computer science. But by high school, less than two percent of young women plan to major in computer science,” says Mary Barra, chairman and CEO, General Motors Company. “These girls need a path, they need support, they need more role models. As industries continue to transform, improving access to STEM education is not only crucial to our ability to innovate, it helps communities attract and keep good jobs that will drive the future.”

“Increasing the Number of Women in STEM” is the second of five pillar reports to be released by the Council. The recommendations of the Council aim to increase the number of female business leaders and entrepreneurs, as well as contribute to the economic development and competitiveness of the Canadian and U.S. economies.

“Further increasing women in STEM studies and careers is critical to fully harness the potential of 100% of our population,” says Linda Hasenfratz, CEO of Linamar Corporation. “STEM grads have proven to be great entrepreneurs, starting businesses that employ thousands of people which every economy needs more of. STEM grads are also desperately needed in many existing organizations as well as they transition through innovation to increasingly sophisticated technical solutions to many tasks.”

An education in STEM is one of the most effective tools for launching new businesses, and extensive research has proven the economic advantage of a diverse workforce. While more women are studying and launching successful careers in STEM fields, they are still not yet at parity with their male counterparts in many areas. Key barriers affecting women’s interest in and pursuit of STEM careers include: conscious and unconscious biases; lack of awareness regarding STEM programs and opportunities; and limited access to female STEM role models and professional mentors.

To overcome these hurdles, the Council has made recommendations across four categories of action:

- First – across all four categories – the Council recommends that the Canadian and U.S. governments develop a public-private partnership to create an online STEM portal for teachers, students, parents and businesses that hosts information on STEM career paths, programs, and learning tools and features role models and successful case studies to inspire and motivate.
- The four recommendation categories include:
 - Communicate and educate
 - Identify and share tools
 - Identify and promote programs
 - Mentor and empower women in STEM

Within these four categories, the Council’s research-based recommendations include:

- Expand school curricula to include more STEM topics in courses designed to be engaging and build confidence and increase academic outreach to women
- Rethink the approach to post-secondary STEM education through program design, faculty makeup, admission requirements and recruitment efforts
- Encourage companies to develop STEM outreach programs and partnerships with academic institutions

- Recommend that STEM-centered organizations set participation goals for under-represented minorities broadly and that corporate partners request this information
- Strengthen training to address conscious and unconscious biases
- Develop formal corporate and academic mentorship, role model, and retention programs

For further information on the second pillar recommendations visit

<https://advancingwomeninbusiness.com/pillar-two/>

The Council is delivering these recommendations to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and President Donald J. Trump as well as the private sector to help reduce the barriers limiting women's participation in STEM and supporting their educational and professional advancement.

The Council will release the remaining three pillar reports in intervals through July 2018. The reports will focus on attracting female entrepreneurs; increasing women's access to capital; and advancing women as leaders in the private sector.

The Canada-United States Council for Advancement of Women Entrepreneurs and Business Leaders is comprised of ten of the top female business executives in the United States and Canada. Their mandate is to develop recommendations that can reduce barriers that limit women's participation in business, support and develop women's professional advancement, and assist women in starting and scaling their businesses. Their mission is to increase the number of women business leaders and entrepreneurs, and contribute to the economic growth, and competitiveness of the Canadian and US economies. The Council is an independent and autonomous group that makes recommendations to inform the governments as appropriate. The Council is co-chaired by Linda Hasenfratz, Chief Executive Officer of Linamar Corp and Julie Sweet, Chief Executive Officer – North America of Accenture. www.advancingwomeninbusiness.com

Linda Hasenfratz is the Chief Executive Officer of Linamar Corporation. Since her tenure as CEO started in 2002, Hasenfratz has grown the company from an \$800 million enterprise to over a \$6.5 billion company. Hasenfratz sits on various boards including CIBC, the Business Council of Canada, Faurecia and Catalyst Canada. Throughout her career she has been honoured through various awards including the 2014 National Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award for Canada. In May of 2016 Linda Hasenfratz, along with her father Frank Hasenfratz, was inducted into the Canadian Business Hall of Fame.

Mary Barra is Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of General Motors Company. She was elected Chairman of the GM Board of Directors on January 4, 2016 and has served as CEO since January 15, 2014. Under Barra's leadership, GM envisions a world with zero crashes, zero emissions, and zero congestion. Barra is a member of the Stanford University Board of Trustees and the Stanford Graduate School of Business Advisory Council. She also serves on the Board of Directors of the Walt Disney Company. More details on Barra's career and related activities can be found via [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).

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