

## Women's trade summit set for 1999 at York U A13

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OTTAWA — Canada will be the host for a women's trade summit at York University in 1999 to try to help businesswomen increase their exports.

Trade Minister Sergio Marchi announced plans for the Canada-U.S. women's trade summit, to be held in May, 1999, at the end of the federal government's first all-women trade mission to Washington, D.C.

The summit "will bring together women business leaders from our two countries to identify — and recommend ways to eliminate — the barriers that inhibit businesswomen from entering international markets," Marchi said in a speech at a lunch for William Daley, the U.S. commerce secretary.

Although women own or run a third of all Canadian businesses, they are under-represented among the ranks of companies that export.

Marchi hopes the summit and a co-operation agreement between the Women Entrepreneurs of Canada and the National Foundation of Women Business Owners, a U.S. group, will help increase business between the two countries.

By the end of the Washington trade mission, the government announced that five Canadian firms that participated had signed agreements or strategic alliances with U.S. companies worth about \$10.2 million in total.

Among them was Mississauga-based TRI-AD International, which signed a partnership agreement with Surfair of Atlanta to promote TRI-AD freight services in the United States. The contract could be worth \$4 million, the government said in a news release.