

In conversation with Progressive TSL's female-led finance team:

# Diversity in Energy & Technology

Progressive TSL will be key sponsors of the Diversity in Energy Summit 2019. We are looking forward to exploring with fellow delegates the challenges for increasing and maintaining diversity in the energy sector, including the empowerment of women.

## A BETTER BALANCE FOR ALL

At Progressive TSL, we recognise the value in having a balanced, inclusive and diverse workforce. Across our three offices in the UK and Nigeria, over half of our leadership team are women.

Marianne Walcot (MW), our Chief Operating Officer, has been working within the oil and gas industry for over 30 years, commencing her career in the 1980s at Enterprise Oil (acquired by Shell in 2002). Progressive TSL's Finance Lead, Alexandra Taylor's (AT) career started in Financial Services before moving into the Energy Sector. We caught up with Marianne and Alexandra to discuss inclusivity and diversity in energy technology.

## Diversity in African Energy

Progressive TSL have seen a growing optimism surrounding diversity in the industry worldwide. Petrofund and Field Ready provide examples of two pioneering organisations addressing diversity in African energy.

The Government of the Republic of Namibia established the Petroleum Training and Education Fund (PETROFUND) in recognition of the scarcity of skilled personnel in the petroleum exploration and production industry in Namibia. They are championing the training and education of Namibian women to help close the skills gap in technical roles.

Field Ready develops employable people. They bridge the gap between education and employment by producing graduates from state education institutions who are ready to work in the industrial sector. Field Ready programmes are active in Ghana and Mozambique and will launch in Nigeria and the UK in 2020. They are working towards 50% female participation in each country they operate.

We look forward to hearing more positive stories about the empowerment of women and young people worldwide at the Diversity in Energy Summit.

## Connectivity for everyone

Progressive TSL are proud to be sponsoring WiFi at the summit. As a technology solutions provider, we develop innovative ways to keep everyone connected to their crucial business data, so they can continue to work effectively, no matter where they are in the world.

## About Progressive TSL

Progressive TSL is dedicated to delivering best-of-breed finance, supply chain and asset management systems to the energy industry. They are Infor Gold Channel Partners (SunSystems, Infor EAM) and IBM Silver Business Partners (Maximo). Progressive TSL has offices in London, Aberdeen and Lagos.



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## What was the landscape like for women in energy and finance when you first started work?

**MW:** As a young woman, at Enterprise Oil in London, I had a very positive experience, my manager really championed women.

**AT:** I've also never personally found that being a woman has held me back. I think that if you're good at what you do and the company recognises that, they will offer you opportunities to grow in your career.

## Do you feel that oil and gas finance has changed with more women taking on senior roles?

**AT:** I travel a lot to visit Progressive TSL's upstream oil and gas clients across the globe. During my travels, I've seen a range of positive opportunities for women in the industry. I have not personally experienced any discrimination as a woman in a leadership role.

**MW:** Yes, energy companies are championing some amazing women. I've had the pleasure to work with many strong, knowledgeable women and I'm seeing more rising up through the ranks.

## What kinds of challenges do women in energy technology face?

**MW:** Some of our African E&P clients have struggled to find women to fill engineering roles - fieldwork is still male-dominated, and STEM courses and career paths do not attract as many women, but I think things are changing for women in engineering.

**AT:** When it comes to financial technology roles, which is the path Marianne and I have followed, I think it's maybe a bit easier to be a woman.



Both Marianne and I have families. Marianne and her husband Chris (Progressive's CEO) are parents to teenage triplet girls. I recently returned to work full time after having a family. Life is certainly busy, but Progressive TSL have offered flexible working arrangements enabling me to work around family life. They understand that all their staff have differing needs and will always try to support this. This flexibility has meant that having children has not been detrimental to my career.

## What is Progressive TSL doing that's positive for young people in energy technology?

**MW:** We recognise there is an age gap in the industry, partly because careers in energy don't appear to be promoted in schools and universities. This will lead to a future skills shortage. To address this, we are currently discussing a new graduate recruitment program for Progressive TSL. We will aim to identify and nurture talented and committed young people, giving them the training and opportunities to develop as I was all those years ago at Enterprise. We are also exploring an opportunity to provide sponsorship to a university in Nigeria.

## Do you feel that there will be more career opportunities for women in energy technology in the future?

**MW:** I think if anyone's fantastic at their job - that should be recognised. At Progressive TSL, we have a great team, and we've picked those people on their skills and their dedication - regardless of who they are. I would hope that's something happening at other companies too.

**AT:** Yes, definitely, here we recognise talent - whatever their gender.

For operations and finance oil and gas solutions that are tailor-made to work for you and your oil and gas ventures, contact Progressive TSL.

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