

TrustPower's Alissa Quinn is breaking new ground in the electricity supply industry. As the company's only female trainee, she is also well on track to becoming one of New Zealand's first ever trainees to qualify as an electrical fitter on the new Electrician Pathway.

Alissa joined TrustPower four years ago as a trainee electrical fitter after completing a year studying electrical engineering at Bay of Plenty Polytechnic with the support of an ESITO Scholarship. She says she's always been interested in electricity generation and her job at TrustPower's Matahina hydro dam on the Rangitaiki River in the Bay of Plenty throws up new challenges every day.

"That's why I like it so much. Each day is different. You can't wake up in the morning and predict what's going to happen. You may be faced with things like clearing logs from the turbine intakes or operating the station crane to manually run the machines. That's what makes it interesting and fun."

Highlights of the job, says Alissa, are working with other trades people from within the industry and learning about how everything works.

"They share with you other ways of doing things that you may not have thought about yourself. There's also the satisfaction of knowing that you have maintained the plant so well that it is extremely reliable."

TrustPower Production Engineer Edwin Samson says despite the obvious challenges of working in a traditionally male-dominated industry, Alissa is a valued team member who has great potential to progress in her career in the ever-changing environment of hydro generation.

Runner-up in the 2008 ESITO Generation Trainee of the Year, he says Alissa takes advantage of every opportunity to learn new skills and knowledge to advance her training in the electricity supply industry.

"Her level of commitment not only involves frequent outwork placements to gain necessary skills seldom practised on site, but participation in other general engineering and drafting papers which will lead to her being one of New Zealand's first trainees qualified as an electrical fitter on the new Electrician Pathway."



*Alissa Quinn*

