



2023 LEVEE

giving voice to your passion

10 amazing women share with us their year of success in leadership and motivate us to take our dreams and passions to reality





AGENDA

your host

Kathleen Vaughan Zwicker

RESPECTING NATIONAL RIBBON SKIRT DAY

featuring **THE HONOURABLE JENICA ATWIN, MP**

Member of Parliament for Fredericton

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

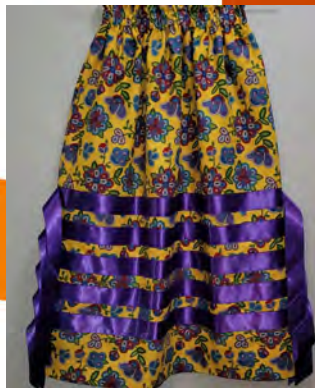
- 1. THE HONOURABLE BRENDA MURPHY, ONB**
The Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick
- 2. SUSAN HOLT**
Leader of the Liberal Party of New Brunswick
- 3. NAOMI DRUMMOND-LESLIE**
Black Activist Fighting for Equality in New Brunswick
- 4. NATHALIE MICHAUD**
**Director of Operations for the Municipality of Vallee-des-Rivieres,
Wildlife Federation President, Becoming an Outdoors Woman
Coordinator**
- 5. MELISSA MARTIN**
Firefighter and Champion for Women in Non-traditional Careers

BREAK

- 6. BRIANA COWIE**
Executive Director of Eastern Charlotte Waterways
- 7. ARDITH SHIRLEY**
**Executive Director of New Brunswick Teachers Association,
Founding Member of Chipman Communities in Bloom**
- 8. TERRI PEACE**
**Wellness Practitioner and Environmental Educator,
Founder of "A Time To Be...Connecting Wellness, Nature and You"**
- 9. SANDI MACKINNON**
Executive Director of Greater Fredericton Social Innovation
- 10. DIANI BLANCO**
**Host of Real with Diani Blanco, Dating Abuse Educator, and Co-creator
of Queens of Heart**

CLOSING REMARKS

respecting
NATIONAL RIBBON SKIRT



celebrating **DAY — JANUARY 4, 2023**



The Honourable Jenica Atwin, MP Member of Parliament for Fredericton

Throughout Canada, in each and every year, the fourth day of January shall be known as “National Ribbon Skirt Day.”

I had the incredible honour of sponsoring Bill 219 to bring the voice of Isabella Kulak and her family into the House of Commons.

Ribbon skirts represent cultural and spiritual protection, like armour; they are meaningful and beautiful, carrying teachings and stories.

The story of this legislation is one of fighting against injustice, celebrating Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse people, and creating an inclusive society where they can grow up and be their true self, happy and proud of who they are.

The ribbon skirts pictured are the creation of craftswoman Tara Brooks of Sitsansk First Nation (St. Mary's First Nation), Fredericton, NB.

The honourable

BRENDA MURPHY, ONB



The Honourable Brenda Murphy is the former Executive Director of the Saint John Women's Empowerment Network, an organization she led for more than twenty years. Ms. Murphy is committed to ending poverty and family violence, and to advancing women's equality. She was nominated as a member of the Gender Equality Network Canada — a network of diverse women leaders from across the country. She was also a member of the National Advisory Council on Poverty and the New Brunswick Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

Ms. Murphy served three terms as a municipal councillor for the town of Grand Bay-Westfield, New Brunswick. In addition, Ms. Murphy has volunteered with a variety of organizations, including the Hestia House shelter for women, the Saint John Legal Centre, the Coverdale Centre for Women, and the Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation of New Brunswick.

Ms. Murphy lives at Government House in Fredericton with her partner Linda Boyle.

L'Honourable Brenda Murphy est l'ancienne directrice générale du Saint John Women's Empowerment Network, une organisation qu'elle a dirigée pendant plus de 20 ans. Mme Murphy se consacre à l'élimination de la pauvreté et de la violence familiale ainsi qu'à l'avancement de l'égalité des sexes. Elle a été membre du Réseau de l'égalité des genres Canada, qui réunit une diversité de dirigeantes de partout au pays, ainsi que du Conseil consultatif national sur la pauvreté et du Conseil consultatif sur la condition de la femme au Nouveau-Brunswick.

Mme Murphy a exercé trois mandats en tant que conseillère municipale de la ville de Grand Bay-Westfield, au Nouveau-Brunswick. De plus, Mme Murphy a travaillé comme bénévole dans une variété d'organisations, notamment la maison de refuge pour femmes Hestia House, le Saint John Legal Centre, le Coverdale Centre for Women et la Société d'inclusion économique et sociale du Nouveau-Brunswick.

Mme Murphy vit à la Résidence de la gouverneure à Fredericton avec sa partenaire Linda Boyle.

SUSAN HOLT

Leader of the New Brunswick Liberal Party

Susan Holt has never been one to colour inside the lines. As an experienced, bilingual New Brunswick leader, Susan has connections to all corners of the province through roles that she's done her own way; each has been an example of her dedication to make our province an even better place to call home. Susan will continue that work as the new leader of the New Brunswick Liberal Party.

Susan is no stranger to public speaking, winning second place in the province for her grade 6 oratorical speech (in French) back in 1989. She has since held the microphone as a young performer in Characters Incorporated, in student politics, and as a commentator on provincial affairs while leading the local Chamber of Commerce and Business Council. She is excited to join the Changemakers Toastmasters Levee!



NAOMI DRUMMOND-LESLIE



Black Activist Fighting for Equality in New Brunswick

Naomi Drummond-Leslie is a born activist. She is a direct descendant of a Black Loyalist who helped build Saint John, NB.

From a young age she grew up hearing stories of her amazing grandfather fighting for equality in NB. Naomi was born to continue in the same fight. She is mother to a beautiful son and will continue the good fight, so he grows up knowing Black history is Canadian history. Naomi has been a youth care worker for the past 17 years, working with exceptionally challenged youths, the last three of which as a program manager. Naomi is passionate about helping others. She is intentional to be the face in spaces that her ancestors may not have been in.

Presently the secretary of the Women's Auxiliary of the Black Community, active in school PTA, and on the board of directors of Carleton Community Centre.

NATHALIE MICHAUD

Director of Operations for the Municipality of Vallee-des-Rivieres, Wildlife Federation President, Becoming an Outdoors Woman Coordinator

Nathalie empowers others. She loves to see women rise and take on new jobs, challenges, and adventures.

She is the director of Public Works for Vallee-des-Rivieres, NB. A former construction worker, Nathalie encountered and enthusiastically overcame many challenges of working in a male-dominated field.

She has been the president of the New Brunswick Wildlife Federation since 2019, and is on the board of directors of the Canadian Wildlife Federation. She is a certified firearms safety and hunter instructor for the last 17 years.

Since 2005, Nathalie is the provincial coordinator for the Becoming an Outdoors Woman program. As an environmental conservationist, she also enjoys camping and kayaking.

Nathalie lives in Vallee des Rivieres NB, is married, with one wonderful daughter.



MELISSA MARTIN



Firefighter and Champion for Women in Non-traditional Careers

In 2002, Melissa qualified as a Forest Technician from the Maritime College of Forest Technology in Fredericton. She then graduated from the Conservation Enforcement program at Holland College in PEI before being hired as a NB Conservation Enforcement Officer. In 2004, she was promoted to the position of Assistant Enforcement Manager of New Brunswick. Next, she headed west where she worked as a Type 1 Helitack crew member dropping into remote areas fighting forest fires in Alberta. She then enrolled in the Firefighter program at Seneca College in Toronto before returning east, and to us, in 2008.

Martin is now assigned to "The Fighting Fives" as a driver/operator of Ladder 5 in the Saint John's Old North End. In addition to L5 which is a 100-foot aerial truck, she is also a driver/operator of Ladder Tower 1, a 120-foot platform that runs out of headquarters on Carmarthen Street. Melissa is a skilled and competent operator of arguably the most specialized and complex pieces of equipment on the job, safely navigating the challenges posed by Saint John's narrow and often congested streets. Recently Martin was one of eight members accepted into the new SJFD professional development program which is designed to career path those who may aspire to a role as Command Staff. If successful, Melissa has the potential to be the first female Chief Officer in Saint John Fire Department history.

In her spare time Martin is a runner and accomplished equestrian who once represented New Brunswick at a national competition. Disciplines such as dressage, stadium jumping, and cross country are events she enjoys. In 2018, and in tribute to First Responder mental health, she took on the grueling run up Mount Washington in NH.

BRIANA COWIE

Executive Director of Eastern Charlotte Waterways

Briana has worked on research projects ranging from mapping cultural ecosystem services for the North Shore Micmac District Council, helping to find a cohesive environmental governance system for the Gulf of St. Lawrence region, and contributing to frameworks for full-spectrum sustainability in the Arctic region. Her proudest project to date is the Southwest New Brunswick Climate Hub — a tool for practitioners and service providers in our region.



Recognizing the interconnectedness between environmental management and a collective sense of community, she has also volunteered as a member of the Charlotte County Multicultural Association, Vibrant Communities Charlotte County, the Sackville Refugee Response Coalition, and the Mount Allison Indigenous Support Group. She is currently the Vice Chair of the New Brunswick Watershed Caucus and has presented on multiple panels with the National Climate Caucus, the New Brunswick Non-profit Housing Association, and the GovMakers Conference. She has also worked to co-publish the NRCAN Atlantic Canada Adaptation Assessment chapter for Climate Change with 50+ other national researchers.

With a background in political science, international relations, and environmental policy, she has worked for Eastern Charlotte Waterways since 2018, first as the Climate Change Program Manager, and now as the Executive Director. Here she works with a brilliant team to help design a more sustainable, resilient southwest New Brunswick.

ARDITH SHIRLEY



Executive Director of New Brunswick Teachers Association, Founding Member of Chipman Communities in Bloom

Ardith Shirley was appointed NBTA Executive Director in August 2021. Having served as an EAL tutor, classroom teacher, vice-principal, principal, and facilitator for the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation, she began her work with NBTA as a staff officer in 2007.

Since then, she has provided leadership to teachers in the areas of professional learning, assessment, teacher professional conduct and standards, and social justice.

Ardith has a B.A. from St. Thomas University, a B.Ed. and M.Ed. from the University of New Brunswick (UNB), and a Certificate in Executive Coach from Royal Roads University.

Ardith became a certified FIERCE Conversation facilitator in 2009 and became a certified Executive Coaching in 2018. Ardith is keenly interested in helping individuals and organizations become their best.

In her community, Ardith is co-chair and founding member of Chipman Communities in Bloom. She is immensely proud of the way her small community has come together to raise almost \$750,000 over the last five years to assist struggling not-for-profits.

TERRI PEACE

Wellness Practitioner and Environmental Educator, Founder of “A Time To Be...Connecting Wellness, Nature and You”

Terri Peace was born and raised in a small town in Northern Ontario where she had the privilege of growing up rich in family, community, and outdoor experiences. She moved to Nova Scotia as a young adult. After a period of time raising young children, she realized that time engaged in the outdoors was missing in her life. Thus, she sought out and participated in a few programs and training opportunities.



For over 25 years, Terri Peace has been fully engaged in outdoor experiences in her pursuits as an avid hiker, camper, and snowshoer, volunteer leader with Girl Guides of Canada, and instructor with the Nova Scotia Outdoor Leadership Development Program, and the Becoming an Outdoors Woman Program in both Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

She is a certified trainer with Adventure Smart Canada and the Outdoor Council of Canada, and works in environmental earth education as an Outdoor Recreation Coordinator of Halifax's Adventure Earth Centre.

Through all these endeavours, two observations that stood out to her strongly were the importance of time in nature for people's physical and mental well-being and the sense of empowerment experienced by people participating in outdoor pursuits. She was motivated to pursue these aspects further and is now certified as an Ecotherapy Practitioner and an energy healing practitioner. She has founded her own wellness business, “A Time To Be...Connecting Wellness, Nature and You.”

She looks forward to sharing how her passions have shaped her path and how working from the heart empowers oneself as well as others.

SANDI MACKINNON



Executive Director of Greater Fredericton Social Innovation

In 2006, Greater Fredericton Social Innovation (GFSI) recognized the solutions needed for the challenges to come could only be realized through cooperation and letting go of the way things had always been done.

Sandi brings to life that spirit of cooperation; this involves a keen eye for potential partnerships on shared problems or challenges, building a team where there was no team before, and promoting this new direction to the community. The result is new creative energy emerging in the community and the positive feeling of making a difference.

DIANI BLANCO

Host of Real with Diani Blanco, Dating Abuse Educator, and Co-creator of Queens of Heart

With the beginning of the pandemic lockdown, Diani Bianco started to hear more and more from single parents that found themselves in situations where no organization could provide the timely help. Grocery stores allowed only one adult to come to the shop, little kids can't be left unattended, deliveries took long times because of the sudden demand, and they ran out of milk, diapers, or other basic needs, and this was a constant struggle. Diani decided it was time to make sure no family was left behind. "It takes a tribe," she thought. Partnering with her good friend, Alicia Roisman Ismach, they turned the sporadic help given on a personal basis to a growing community called "Queens of Heart."



Not many are aware of the many families Diani has helped running from house to house to deliver food boxes and other basic items, donated by the members of the group as well as local organizations that discovered the new initiative and decided to help. Now over two years later Queens of Heart already helped hundreds of families in Greater Moncton.

Diani is the host of "Real with Diani Blanco" which broadcasts every Tuesday on RogersTV, an inspirational speaker, founder of Infyno Group (Speakers Bureau), advocate against dating abuse, and she volunteers to support victims at the Service Victims, Moncton Court House.

She believes in leadership and only together can a community grow.



women

CHANGEMAKERS

your picture here!



Picture yourself as a Changemaker Toastmaster

Improve your communication,
public speaking, and leadership skills
in a supportive environment



Changemakers Toastmasters

changemakertoastmasters@gmail.com

<https://7847995.toastmastersclubs.org>

giving voice to your passion

