



# WE FOR SHE

Championing the Next Generation

— 2016 Event Summary —

Organizing Partners



# WE FOR SHE

Championing the Next Generation

2016 Event Summary

## INTRODUCTION

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More than 1,500 business leaders and young women in grades 10-12 came together in Vancouver in October 2016 for WE FOR SHE: Championing the Next Generation, a day-long conference hosted by the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade (GVBOT), the WEB Alliance of Women's Business Networks and the Province of BC. Their focus: how to support women in the workplace and inspire young women to be bold in their careers.

### Goals for the forum

During the *WE FOR SHE* event, 750 Grade 10-12 students joined with 750 male and female business leaders to advance strategies to support women in the workplace and inspire young women in their careers. Attendees came together and acknowledged the critical role women play in ensuring BC's economic growth; they discussed challenges, successes and practical actions to create gender equity.

The day included inspiring keynote addresses, panel presentations with Q&A opportunities and group discussions between the students and business leaders. For part of the program, students attended workshops geared to encourage them to learn about BC's in-demand careers, and get practical experience in tech and trades activities. Group sessions included videos and polling throughout the day in an attempt to gather and share ideas, information and experiences from all of the participants.

During the day the audience was asked to respond to several questions by way of an online survey tool. The information collected was both shared with the attendees and is summarized in this report.

### Background: What led to this forum?

The first *BC Economic Forum: Women as a Catalyst for Growth* took place in 2014 to help advance the economic impact of women in the province of British Columbia. Over 400 people participated to consider the barriers, strategies and recommendations needed to advance women as leaders, on boards, as entrepreneurs and in the trades and emerging industries. That forum led to the creation the 'Women as a Catalyst for Economic Growth: A British Columbia Action Plan,' released in May 2015, which featured the following five key recommendations:

- Promote and advocate diversity,
- Foster positive & self-affirming mindsets,
- Champion women,
- Incorporate a diversity focus in early education, and
- Activate men.

That Action Plan also recommended the following next steps to continue the momentum from this work:

- Public relations,
- Regional consultations,
- Tracking progress, and
- A 2015 Economic Forum.

In the months following the 2014 *BC Economic Forum*, several initiatives took place to create further action. Women's Enterprise Centre (WEC), with funding from Status of Women Canada, hosted regional dialogues in four other BC communities to gather more information, ideas and opinions. The Premier's Women's Economic Council (PWEC) provided recommendations to government to advance women in the economy. The GVBOT Women's Leadership Circle created the "Leadership Challenge" to help member companies increase gender diversity in leadership; and the Minerva Foundation produced its "Face of Leadership™ BC Score Card" to track the gender diversity statistics of key BC companies.



Jill Earthy and Lois Nahirney

A second *BC Economic Forum: Women as a Catalyst for Growth* was held on October 23, 2015 to continue to build momentum, measure progress and generate further action. About 350 people attended that forum, which again featured facilitated dialogue to move the dial forward for women leaders, entrepreneurs and innovators in BC. Many new diversity initiatives taking place in British Columbia and elsewhere were featured at the event (see 'BC Economic Forum 2015: Women as a Catalyst for Growth, Progress Report', December 2015). The Catalyst for Growth Fund, was announced, which supported 19 projects around the province during 2016.

This third forum, *WE FOR SHE: Championing the Next Generation*, was intended to build on the two prior forums, the Action Plan and the work that followed. The focus of this year's event was on inspiring the next generation of girls in Grades 10-12 from across the province and encouraging both emerging and established leaders to make personal commitments to advance gender equality in the BC economy.

## Why we need a call to action

Since the 1970's, most young women have started their careers believing they live in an age of equality. However, from then to today, women have continued to lag far behind men in jobs, pay, opportunities, promotions and leadership roles. Based on the pace of change for the past 20 years, it will take over 200 years to achieve gender parity!<sup>1</sup>

**Jobs:** Girls get better grades in school and graduate in higher numbers than boys from university, yet achieve less in pay and jobs<sup>2</sup>.

**Pay:** On average women who work full time earn 72 cents for every dollar earned by a man<sup>3</sup>.

**Opportunities:** Women are great entrepreneurs. They own over one-third of small businesses in BC and start businesses at a greater rate than men however women receive less than 4% of venture capital<sup>4</sup>.

**Promotions/Leadership:** While women form 47.3% of the workforce, they only make up 5.3% of CEOs<sup>5</sup>.

# EVENT FORMAT

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## Forum Opening

**Iain Black, President and CEO** and **Fiona Douglas Crampton, Chair of the Women's Leadership Circle of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade** opened the event. **Mary Charles** and granddaughter **Christie Lee Charles** provided a First Nations blessing. **WE FOR SHE Co-Chairs Jill Earthy and Dr. Lois Nahirney** provided an introduction and overview of the day's events and thanked the sponsors.



*Fiona Douglas-Crampton, Iain Black*



*Premier Christy Clark*

## KEYNOTE 1: Premier Christy Clark

**The Honourable Christy Clark, Premier of BC**, delivered an inspiring and compelling talk on her commitment to championing the next generation. She used personal examples to illustrate the importance of gender equity and the issues that she has faced in this regard along the way. She asserted that the British Columbia economy needs more women in industry, elected office and at boardroom tables. She urged everyone in the audience to step up and be part of this change.

Premier Clark spoke of her concern about the low numbers of women at the top of organizations and shared some instances of differential treatment and not being seen as a leader simply because she was female. She related how, even as Premier, at some meetings, people direct their comments and responses to her male Chief of Staff rather than to herself. She described the tension women face between being direct and decisive (considered male traits) and being caring and nice (considered female traits). In her opinion, until we as a society can combine both, we will all be at a disadvantage.

Premier Clark also expressed her view that women continue to face challenges such as being paid on average 72% of men doing the same job. She called on situations like this to change but acknowledged the many advances that women have made, and emphasized that we have so much further to go.

Premier Clark noted that there were also issues related to the language of bias, unconscious bias exists with respect to women, some male colleagues tend to repeat and take credit for women's ideas, which can diminish women's confidence. She called on women to be willing to take on 'stretch assignments.' She closed by noting that this generation could be the one to eliminate gender disparities.

## KEYNOTE 2: Nicole Verkindt, OMX and Next Gen Dragon's Den

**Nicole Verkindt, Founder OMX and "Dragon" from the show, Next Gen Den**, delivered an inspiring keynote on her entrepreneurial journey. Nicole related that she grew up thinking that the leadership model in place early in her career was hierarchical – based on fear and following orders. She has since found that in the work of entrepreneurs this is no longer the case.

Nicole shared some tips and interesting facts for this new generation to keep in mind:

- Don't hesitate to start a venture. There is never a perfect time to do it, so why not now?!
- Wear your failures as a badge and be proud of trying something risky.
- It's a marathon, not a sprint, so don't panic.
- 60% of future jobs require new skills that aren't currently being taught.
- The majority of new jobs created are innovative/part-time, can be more manageable/flexible.
- Optimism is a self-fulfilling prophecy!
- Diversity is statistically more profitable.



Nicole Verkindt

## BUSINESS LEADERS SESSION 1: The Case for Change

**Miklos Dietz, Managing Partner at McKinsey & Company** spoke about the gender inequality, the reasons why the problem is not solving itself and some unique ways to advance women in organizations. He reminded the audience that research shows that having more women in leadership positions results in quantifiable financial benefits worth over \$12 trillion.



Miklos Dietz

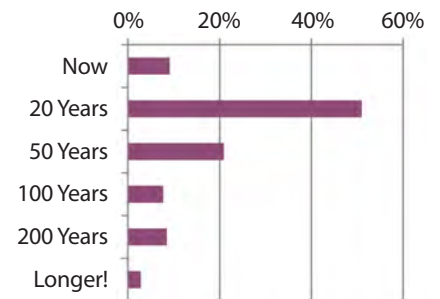
He suggested that women might be the most important single driver for companies today. He encouraged leaders to work on gender diversity. He does not believe that the gender pipeline is working. Although women are flooding into organizations, they are still not getting into top positions. In order for diversity efforts to work, they should pay attention to C-suite positions, involve skill building, have a flexible work component and include a review of hiring and retention practices, among others. Other key points;

- Women tend to demonstrate more often than men 5 of the 9 types of leadership behavior that improve organizational performance.
- Representation of women lags so far behind – “Not a particularly efficient revolution.”
- New emerging sectors such as tech are even more male focused than traditional ones.
- Commitment at the top does not always cascade down to middle management.
- Efforts lack rigour and are not tracked.
- This is not just a moral, but a hard-core economic issue.



### Poll

*How many years do you think it will take for women to achieve full equality in the workplace based on today's progress?*



### The Shocking Truth

*With the progress rate of today it would take over 200 years for women to achieve full equality in the workplace in Canada, according to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.*

*Using the methodology developed by the World Economic Forum, the report calculates Canada's score overall and in the areas of health, education, economics and politics, beginning in 1993. Learn more at: <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/newsroom/news-releases/gender-gap-leaves-canadian-women-leaning-next-228-years-study>*



*Dr. Santa Ono, Elisabeth Finch, Fiona MacFarlane, Phillipa Wilshaw, Miyo Yamashita*

## BUSINESS LEADERS SESSION 1: Future of Work

### Panel Opening Remarks

**Moderator, Dr. Santa Ono, President of UBC**, opened the panel discussion with the following question: How do we champion and prepare the next generation given the lack of diversity in organizations? Here are the opening replies:

#### **Elisabeth Finch, Partner, Tax Services at PwC**

suggested that we can all accelerate the pace of change and described three ways in which PwC was working on gender diversity: using education on topics like unconscious bias and leadership training; promoting gender equity by encouraging men to take a pledge to advance women and working with the UN. PwC uses specific targets and measures change.

**Fiona Macfarlane - Managing Partner, British Columbia and Chief Inclusiveness Officer at EY** used the metaphor of fish in a salt water stream to describe workplaces today. Although some fish (men) thrive, other fish (women) can barely breathe. In her opinion we can't keep providing oxygen tanks to women but must instead "desalinate" the stream so that more fish can flourish. In other words companies must look at the whole ecosystem from boards and leaders to customers and even government policy if we really want to things to change for women. Some of the things that EY is doing include bias interruption (like blind interviews) and gathering information on the gender business case so that others will become convinced that advancing women is positive at many levels.



### Top 5 Questions for the Panel

1. What is preventing women from stepping up to a senior leadership role? How can we encourage women to put their hand up? (80 votes)
2. How can you respond to men who argue that supporting women puts them at a disadvantage? How do you help them understand the inequality? (80 votes)
3. How do we promote mentorship within companies to ensure our young female leaders have those role models? (62 votes)
4. How can we recruit men as allies in achieving equality in the workforce? (56 votes)
5. How do we address the subconscious patterns that inform bias in hiring and promotion decisions? (50 votes)

**Philippa Wilshaw, Partner, Mining Industry Leader, GVA at KPMG LLP** suggested that one of the main reasons why change has increased in recent years is partly because there are more male executives with wives and daughters in the workplace so they feel the discrimination at a personal level. KPMG offers a number of programs and specifically a program called “Women in Line for Leadership” that targets and supports women in advancing up the corporate ladder.

**Miyo Yamashita, Managing Partner, Talent at Deloitte** asked the audience to look more closely at the millennials for the answer to gender diversity. Research suggests that this generation is the most concerned yet and will come to the workforce expecting that we already have transparent, fair and equal workplaces. And they will leave if they do not find such a workplace. Deloitte is a promoter of gender diversity. It conducted research on so-called “courageous” corporations, which statistically perform better, and discovered that in terms of inclusion only eleven percent of Canadian companies were “courageous” which means we have a lot of work to do on this front.



Sybil Verch



## Poll

*What was the idea or message that resonated most with you from the morning sessions?*

## Top 3 Answers

1. *Optimism is a self-fulfilling prophecy.*
2. *Stop talking, start acting.*
3. *Lean in; be proactive in the change that we want to see. We all need to propel a mindset change and introduce diverse perspectives.*

## Panel Discussion

The panel discussed several other questions both from the moderator and from the audience and the following ideas emerged:

- **In terms of leading gender diversity, everyone has a role.**  
Schools and universities are creating the next generation of critical thinkers and must emphasize this aspect. They need to help build women confidence and understanding of the existence of bias.
- **Difficult conversations are necessary if we want to challenge the status quo.**  
It's the role of the board to ask tough questions.

- **A big problem is unconscious bias or out-dated mindsets about women.**

We need to provide people with the facts so they can understand the real issues, unconscious bias training equips people to address the issues.

- **Data must drive change and corporations should keep track of women's progress.**

We need to engage women to retain them and understand if/ why they leave. Statistically it is a myth that women leave the work-force to start families, more that companies simply recruit more senior men than women.

- **We must not only focus on improving women but also look at systems.**

Companies need to instigate blind interviewing and systems which subvert gender bias, we must also emphasize the different types of leadership and make leadership positions attractive to women.

- **Women need male sponsors not just mentors (e.g., "men who talk about women, not just with women").**

"Mentors talk to you, champions talk about you."

- **We need to "level the playing field" so that both women (and men) benefit.**

Supporting women is just that, it's not about competition and gaining an advantage, it's about levelling the playing field.



*Sue Paish, Chris Hatton, Nanon de Gaspé Beaubien-Matrick, Ravi Saligram*

## **BUSINESS LEADERS SESSION 2: Expediting Change**

### **Panel Opening Remarks**

**Moderator, Sue Paish, CEO, LifeLabs**, opened the panel discussion by asking the following question: Where do you see diversity now in your sphere of business? Here are the opening responses:

**Chris Hatton, COO of HSBC Bank Canada**, understands the importance of gender diversity because his organisation is truly global with offices around the world. He suggested that all companies must make diversity and inclusion a priority, reasoning that if your team reflects the mix of people in your customer base, you will clearly provide a better product. Change has to be resolute, relentless and systematic. You need to force it through. HSBC Canada appointed a Head of Diversity and Inclusion; this was seen as a turning point.

**Nanon de Gaspé Beaubien-Mattrick, President & Founder of Beehive Holdings**, knows about the gender barriers for entrepreneurs, and sees that leadership and masculinity are often conflated. She helps women to prepare themselves for pitches so that they can gain funding in some very male-based industries. She sees them struggling and is frustrated with the research that shows the glacial pace of women's progress since at an intuitive level we all know that having more women at work causes us to produce better products and offer better service. But as a society, she pondered, "How can women get gender parity if we continue to treat women as sexual objects?"

**Ravi Saligram, CEO, Ritchie Brothers Auctioneers**, is deeply concerned about the lack of women in leadership and as a result has taken fairly aggressive steps in pushing gender diversity at his company. For example when hiring for a COO CFO he decided to only select from a pool of women. He has introduced implicit bias training for all managers to help them overcome sexist attitudes and has made gender diversity a corporate mandate. He feels that managers have to truly understand and believe that diversity is good for business in order for change to take place. He urged the audience to ask hard questions if we really want to break down barriers.



## Top 5 Questions for the Panel

1. *The lack of work-life balance of senior leaders today does not encourage young people to aspire to these roles, what are you doing to understand the expectations of the next generation In this regard?* (97 votes)
2. *How do organizations support young mothers as they raise families while also building their careers?* (79 votes)
3. *If women do put their hand up, ask for promotions or raises, they're more often seen negatively than men (by both female and male bosses). How do we change that?* (60 votes)
4. *How do we encourage more sponsorship of women in corporate settings?* (56 votes)
5. *Given that the greater percentage of businesses in BC are 'small business' how can they enact change?* (54 votes)

## Panel Discussion

The panel discussed several other questions from the moderator and the audience and the following ideas emerged:

- **Learning about unconscious bias is critical.**  
People are more than happy to hide behind cop-out answers "all our customers are men," particularly within male-dominated industries, it's a self-perpetuating problem unless addressed.
- **We must accept that women face bias and this is backed by research.**  
We need strategies for systematically recognizing and confronting our bias.
- **We must get comfortable hiring people who are "different."**  
Make it about broader diversity, not just gender equality.
- **Sometimes quotas and radical steps are necessary to overcome bias.**  
HSBC Canada appointed a Head of Diversity and Inclusion, this was seen as a turning point, you need to force it through. Change has to be resolute, relentless and systematic.
- **Diversity must be on the minds of senior executives.**  
Put all managers through unconscious bias training. Diversity in the DNA helps, you need to "crack it in the senior ranks first" and utilise the trickledown effect. You need to build the demand for diversity, create a groundswell throughout the organization.
- **We need more examples of women who are leading in a positive way.**  
Different examples of leadership help women to visualize success – get your courage on.

- **We need to question why so many senior jobs are 24/7 and don't promote balance.**

Key to having balance is instilling passion for the job, you need to make sure you have the right people for the roles, sponsor and celebrate the best people.

- **To gain true balance both mothers and fathers must have flex hours and child supports.**

If you care about your employees you have to be flexible and work with them to make arrangements that work. We need to encourage families to take on the discussion together.

- **We need to care more about people as humans who have full lives.**

Our definition of success is important, it should not be so narrow.

- **Work is a part of life and we should not have to select one over the other.**

## KEYNOTE 3: Ravi Karkara, UN Women

**Ravi Karkara, Senior Advisor Strategic Partnership and Advocacy at UN Women**, has traveled the world speaking to audiences and promoting gender diversity through his work as a diversity educator. He described several of the programs that the UN is involved in and urged the audience to join those that resonate most with their personal interests. He described the UN Sustainable Development Goals and its Women's Empowerment Principles that sets standards for gender diversity. We have much work to do in achieving women's equality worldwide and we can all contribute to positive change. He called on men in the room to make a pledge to end gender inequality. Other points he touched on include:

- The Sustainable Development Goals are the first agreed-upon timeline for ending discrimination and violence against women.
- We need to address not just entrepreneurship and business but issues such as unpaid care work.
- UN Women's Empowerment Principles represent 'low-hanging fruit' that everyone can implement to drive change.
- Men need to be re-educated and have to step up, particularly in relation to fatherhood which should be a joy not a job.
- We need to publicly report and celebrate our actions.
- Safe cities initiatives are essential in enabling women to go to school and work and eliminating all violence against women.



*Jill Earchy, Ravi Karkara, Lois Nahirney*

# YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Over 750 Grade 10, 11 and 12 students from across British Columbia attended the youth program which featured:

- break-out sessions with hands-on information about BC's in-demand job sectors;
- opportunities to develop a personal career action plan; and
- an opportunity to test the skills needed for in-demand careers through the WorkBC Find Your Fit program.



## A Student's Reflection on the Day's Activities

*"I really enjoyed the atmosphere at the conference, but in particular at each of the tables. It was great to compare the opinions and advice of women who have had work experience, to girls who are just beginning to have exposure in the world of work and inequality."*

*I also really loved Christy Clark's speech. It was uplifting and got a message across in a positive manner that influenced girls that we can create change!"*

~Aava

## PANEL: The Power of Generations

### Panel Opening Statements

**Master of Ceremonies, Jill Krop, News Director and Station Manager at Global BC** opened the panel discussion by asking the following question: Why is this forum today so important?

**The Honourable Christy Clark, Premier of British Columbia** opened by emphasizing the importance of creating a space where both young and more experienced women can come together to share, mentor and learn from each other. She feels that connections not only create opportunities but are essential in reminding you of your own capabilities which is often necessary.

**Janet Kennedy, President of Microsoft Canada** said she felt it was her duty and role to give back to the next generation so that they can learn from her mistakes.

**Karina LeBlanc, Retired Canadian Olympic Soccer Goalkeeper and UNICEF Ambassador** feels deeply committed to being a role model for the next generation of Canadian girls and wants to show them that we are all important and have an obligation to fulfil our potential.

**Emily Naing, Co-Founder of Swave** said we all need mentors so we don't get lost. It helps to have a picture of what success looks like when we get there.



*Jill Krop, Emily Naing, Premier Christy Clark, Karina Leblanc, Janet Kennedy*



*Youth from Quesnel with the Premier*

## Panel Discussion

The moderator asked the following questions to the panel: What challenges have you experienced in a male-dominated industry? Do you feel you must act like men? And what helps you succeed? Here are the general themes that emerged:

- **Men tend to want to talk to men, even if women are leaders.**

Men will talk to the senior man if the room over you, even if you're the Premier.

- **People do not always view women as leaders.**

Make sure you're at the table, commanding respect and being heard.

- **Unconscious sexism and bias still exist.**

But we are lucky living here in that upbringing and background do not determine who you are, political leadership sets a great tone for women here, we have to be vigilant to carry on that progress.

- **Women seem to have to work twice as hard to get noticed.**

People notice you when you take a visible stance, you get used to being the only women in the room, don't wait to be noticed, you succeed when you don't sit back.

- **It's good to set your own goals and ignore the criticisms of others.**

Remember who you are, define your own success, stop worrying about what other people think. Work out what you're willing to do and tell someone about it.

- **It's important to see mistakes as steps towards success.**

Be self-aware, use failure for self-improvement, to drive you on, free yourself of fear.

- **Speak up because you never know how far your voice will go.**

Make a statement to the rest of the world.



*Shauna Harper and Laurel Douglas*



## TABLE DISCUSSIONS: Taking Action

**Laurel Douglas, CEO of Women's Enterprise Centre** and **Shauna Harper of Live Work Communications**

introduced the table discussions. The participants were asked to discuss the following two questions at their tables and provide feedback.

### Question 1: What do you think needs to change?

What do you think should be done now in order for you to feel like you have equal opportunities no matter what career path you choose?

#### Top survey responses (276 participants, 115 answers):

- Have more honest & uncomfortable discussions in order to address unconscious biases. Dare to be yourself! (61 votes)
- Eliminate stereotypes – educate to change perceptions. (37 votes)

- Unconscious bias is the foundation from which our sexist behaviours arise. We need to teach our children, partners and professionals that positive leadership attributes are not restricted to one gender. (32 votes)
- More women need to come forward overtly to be role models. We (women) need to take accountability to make a difference... men can help but women need to unite and be the ones out front. (22 votes)

#### Common themes from the business leaders:

- Recognize, encourage and empower girls and women to boost confidence and mindset
- Leverage the conversation to support young women, provide sponsorship and mentorship, champion rising stars.
- Education to enable women to stand up for themselves, ask for help, promote themselves and drive change.
- Reduce unconscious bias, including generational and institutional bias.

#### Common themes that emerged from the youth:

- Education to enable women to stand up for themselves, ask for help, promote themselves and drive change.
- Reduce stereotypes, societal perceptions, and pressure on girls to conform.
- Expose men and boys to the issues and help them to understand.
- Enhance opportunities for girls/ women in more varied/ non-traditional fields and sports.



Cecilia Mkondiwa and Dawn McCooley



### What Needs to Change?

*"Don't just provide equal opportunities but actively invite women to the table and champion them."*

~ Business Leader

*"Eliminate stereotypes--education to change perceptions."*

~ Youth

*"Get boys here!!! They need to hear this stuff."*

~ Youth

*"Implicit bias – understand what it is and how it impacts both men and women."*

~ Business Leader

## Question 2: How will you make a difference?

What will you do today, whether it is in a business you built, an organization you work for or as a student? When you leave here today, what will you do to move the dial forward?

### Top survey responses (199 participants, 72 answers):

- We all have a purpose on this earth and it is our obligation to live it! (51 votes)
- Instill confidence in women around you. Let them know that they are doing great. Give good feedback. (31 votes)
- Empower, don't compete. (21 votes)
- Step up! Speak up! (18 votes)

### Common themes from the business leaders included:

- Be a role model/ mentor/ sponsor.
- Have confidence in myself, toot my own horn, push my agenda.
- Spread the message from today/ be an advocate/ encourage conversation.
- Facilitate opportunities/ networking/ support.

### Common themes that emerged from the youth included:

- Empower, inspire, and provide support for other women and girls.
- Be confident in my ability as a woman, take control, and don't be scared to set goals or to fail.
- Don't be self-conscious, put my hand up.
- Share this knowledge with my peers, ask tough questions, and continue the discussion.



## How Will You Make a Difference?

*"Be confident – don't let people try and tell you you're being aggressive just for standing up for equality."*  
~ Youth

*"Be my own sponsor."*  
~ Business Leader

*"Stepping up – call people out, don't be embarrassed, they might not realize."*  
~ Youth

*"Believe things can change and act as if they already have."*  
~ Youth

*"Get my courage on."*  
~ Business Leader





Leigh Wall



Raven Lacerte



Ann Makosinski

## Rapidfire Speaker Series

In this session, three speakers gave short presentations on the work they are doing to advance women and girls.

**Leigh Wall, Apprentice Truck & Transport Mechanic**, spoke about how she broke through gender barriers in her non-traditional role as a mechanic. After being laid off twice from what would be seen as good jobs but which she had no passion for, she gravitated towards the trades, immediately felt challenged and motivated and discovered a passion. She is now proud to act as an ambassador for women in skilled trades and thinks the trades are great for women in many ways. She is now a Vancouver Community College trades recruiter and loves what she does.

**Raven Lacerte, Co-Founder, Moose Hide Campaign**, spoke about her "Moose Hide Campaign", an awareness campaign which she started with her father to educate men about ending violence against women and children, particular within Aboriginal communities. She makes small squares of moose hide for men to wear to show their support for women. This brings men into the conversation and creates interactions with strangers who ask what the squares of hide are. She has given out 250,000 squares of hide and hopes to have one million men wearing them.

**Ann Makosinski, Serial Inventor & Google Science Fair Winner**, spoke about some of her amazing inventions. Even as an 18 year-old she urged the audience to follow the thing they loved to do most. As a self-identified geek, she loves building things and simply found a basic problem and looked for a way to fix it. She reminded us that people are probably not judging us as much as we might think and that we need to surround ourselves with good people because, in her view, we are the average of the five people closest to us.



## What Is Inspiring About Their Journey?

*"Learning how important passion is to success because of the link to motivation."*

*"Incredible youth speakers! Feeling so optimistic about the future!"*

*"You are the average of the 5 people you spend the most time around – So choose those people carefully."*

*"I'm a nerd and very proud of it. Own your weird and different – it's what makes you stand out."*

*"You can do the impossible, the unbelievable!"*

*"Love showing that role models aren't always CEOs. Much broader definition of success which inspires a broader set of women!"*

## CLOSING: We Are the Difference

The *WE FOR SHE* Co-Chairs, **Jill Earthy** and **Lois Nahirney** provided a brief summary of the highlights of day and thanked the sponsors, volunteers and organizers.

On behalf of the Province of BC, the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade, the WEB Alliance and the entire organizing committee, thank you to all those that participated in the *WE FOR SHE: Championing the Next Generation* forum. We are thrilled that over 1,500 people took part in this unique event, bringing business leaders and students together to advance women in our economy and to inspire the next generation.

Keep the discussion going!



*The last poll of the day asked:*

*Do you believe that working together we can achieve gender equity sooner?*

*Over 98% of respondents said "Yes! Let's Do This!"*

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## Sponsors

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### Media Partners



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1. Centre for Policy Alternatives and based on the World Economic Forum methodology
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## ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Alison Coyne	Province of BC
Austin Nairn	Greater Vancouver Board of Trade
Jill Earthy	FrontFundr
Katherine Laurence	Province of BC
Lois Nahirney	DNA Power
Laurel Douglas	Women's Enterprise Centre

## SECTION HOSTS

Dawn McCooey  
Laurel Douglas  
Lisa Niemetschek  
Renee Wasylyk  
Shauna Harper

## ON-SITE TEAM

## EVENT CHAMPIONS

Thanks to the over 100 business leaders who stepped up and hosted the table discussions on the day!

## REPORT TEAM

Ben O'Neill  
Chaunda Honkonen  
Jill Earthy  
Laurel Douglas  
Lois Nahirney  
Maureen Fitzgerald  
Sarah Bendall

## SHOWCASE

Kerrilee Auger  
Hanne Madsen



*Kylie Marshall*



*Austin Nairn, Tasmeen Rana, Amelia Wong*

# POST-EVENT SURVEY RESULTS

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According to the post-event survey, 88% of all attendees are very likely to take action on their *WE FOR SHE* commitments, while 81% are very likely to share lessons from *WE FOR SHE* and their commitment. As well, 83% of attendees would attend again and, of those, 80% would bring a friend.

## BUSINESS LEADERS SURVEY

The post-event survey was sent to business leaders in the days following the event. Entrepreneurs comprise 37% of the business leaders surveyed, while 22% work in corporations and 22% in government.

### Taking Action on Their *WE FOR SHE* Commitment

- 97.5% of those surveyed state they are likely to take action on their *WE FOR SHE* commitment

### Sharing Their Commitment and Lessons from *WE FOR SHE*

- 95% say they are likely to share their commitment and the lessons from *WE FOR SHE* with others

### Overall Event Rating and Intentions to Attend Again

- The *WE FOR SHE* event was given a rating of 4.3 out of 5
- If a similar event were held again next year, 92.7% of the business leaders surveyed would likely attend again

## TEACHER/CHAPERONE SURVEY

Some teachers noticed an immediate change in their students and the discussions that they were having around gender equality.

*"Each of our girls made and shared a commitment on the bus ride to the ferry. Our group has planned to meet, including friends, to work on public speaking, goal setting, and to address topics of special interest."*

*"The students have spoken about the conference highly and are more motivated and inspired."*

*"I would say all the young women left believing they have greater adaptability in their future careers. Knowing that work and society is rapidly changing but that their agency and resilience can carry them through was a big lesson!"*

If a similar event were held again next year, 91% of the teachers surveyed would attend again and all with equal or greater numbers. Some that stated they would bring equal students cited cost as the main issue prohibiting them from attending in greater numbers.

## APPENDIX: POLL RESPONSES

Following are the categorized poll responses submitted by attendees during the *WE FOR SHE* event.

### QUESTION 1: What Do You Think Needs to Change?

#### Youth Responses

YOUTH RESPONSES TO QUESTION 1: What do you think needs to change?	
Response	Frequency n=382
Education to enable women to stand up for themselves, ask for help, promote themselves and drive change	66
Stereotypes and societal perceptions of men and women, pressure on girls to conform and say what people want rather than what they think	47
Expose men and boys to the issues and help them to understand	39
Enhanced opportunities for girls/ women in more varied/ non-traditional fields and sports	30
Empowering women to stand up for themselves and challenge bias	28
Unconscious bias, particularly within schools	22
Exposure to more/ more relevant/ positive relatable role models and mentors	19
Increased dialogue/ collaboration re. gender issues, better understanding of the facts	18
Parental/ teachers/ cultural support/ understanding for girls to pursue different paths	17
Start the conversation much earlier, in schools, address gender issues early	15
Language of bias	14
Pay equity	14
Objectification/ sexualisation of women	12
Also address cultural bias, spread the word abroad/ and across all cultures, address far worse issues in other countries	10
Recognition and empowerment for girls and women to boost confidence, stopping negative mindsets	9
Dress codes and expectations around appearance, hair, make-up etc.	8
Views of leadership	7
Stop benchmarking ourselves against other people	3
Flexible working conditions for women with children/ female friendly policies	3
Safety	1

## Business Leader Responses

BUSINESS LEADERS' RESPONSES TO QUESTION 1: What do you think needs to change?	
Response	Frequency n=243
Recognition, encouragement and empowerment for girls and women to boost confidence and mindset	44
Leverage the conversation to support young women, provide sponsoring and mentorship, and champion rising stars	34
Education to enable women to stand up for themselves, ask for help, promote themselves and drive change	30
Unconscious bias, including generational and institutional bias	19
Increased and improved dialogue/ collaboration re. gender issues, better understanding of the facts	18
Expose men and boys to the issues and help them to understand	16
Stereotypes and societal perceptions of men and women's roles, pressure on girls to conform	13
Exposure to more/ more relevant/ positive relatable role models and mentors	12
Enhanced opportunities for girls/ women in more varied/ non-traditional fields and sports	7
Flexible working conditions for women with children/ female friendly policies	7
Policy-level changes to mandate gender equality	7
More women in leadership roles	6
Address gender issues much earlier, through parenting and in schools	5
Provision of skills training, resources and practical experience, business skills	4
Views of leadership/ success	4
Also address cultural bias, celebrate inclusion	4
Recognize skills and competencies, not just education and experience	4
Recognize and embrace different personality types	4
Objectification/ sexualisation/ harassment of women	3
Culture to embrace gender equality	2

## QUESTION 2: How Will You Make a Difference?

### Youth Responses

YOUTH RESPONSES TO QUESTION 2: How will you make a difference?	
Response	Frequency n=210
Empower, inspire, provide support for other women/ girls	40
Be confident in your ability as a woman, take control, don't be scared to set goals/ fail	37
Call out sexism/ stereotypes/ inequality, stand up for what you believe in	34
Share this knowledge with my peers, ask tough questions, continue the discussion	33
Be yourself, Focus on/ achieve/ celebrate your goals	21
Don't be self-conscious, put my hand up	10
Find a mentor/ sponsor, seek out other voices	8
Interact collaboratively, engage with boys	8
Pay it forward	6
Breakdown gender boundaries, not conforming to/ reinforcing stereotypes	5
Interact with other generations, learn from each other	3
Celebrate people for their merits	3
Address unconscious bias	2

### Business Leader Responses

BUSINESS LEADERS' RESPONSES TO QUESTION 2: How will you make a difference?	
Response	Frequency n=136
Be a role model/ mentor/ sponsor	37
Have confidence in myself, toot my own horn, push my agenda,	25
Spread the message from today/ be an advocate/ encourage conversation	19
Facilitate opportunities/ networking/ support	16
Understand and question unconscious bias	9
Challenge men, invite them to take on more	8
Be myself, define my success	6
Find a sponsor	5
Pay it forward	5
Choose the right life partner	2
Address language of bias	2
Embrace diversity	2

Download this summary and the 2016 Call to Action at  
[weforshebc.ca/resources](http://weforshebc.ca/resources)

Forget about  
who people think you  
are - Be who you are  
i be Proud to be you!  
Chisty  
or yourself. ♡

