

## **Slate of Nominees for Board of Directors September 2020**

### **Current Board Members (terms to end September 2021):**

#### **Katherine Blake**

In 2020-2021, I will be in my sixth year as a Board member of Victoria Women's Transition House. I am a fundraising professional who has worked at UVic since 2008, raising major gifts in support of student awards, as well as for research and academic programs. In this role, my portfolios have included the Faculties of Engineering, Science, Humanities, the Island Medical Program, and the UVic Libraries.

In the first part of my career as a public relations and marketing professional, I worked for 10 years in corporate offices, mainly for two utility companies. My work during these years spanned internal communications, marketing communications, community relations, and media relations.

I am a mother of two young adults and I enjoy skiing and extreme roller coasters as much as they do. Past volunteer work includes stints with the Canadian Cancer Society, the Fruit Tree Project (Comox & Victoria), the Victoria Compost Education Centre, my children's school Parent Advisory Councils and my professional associations (both PR and philanthropic). I look forward to contributing to the ongoing success of VWTH as a Board Member and I will sincerely strive to be a valuable asset.

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#### **Shirley Elm**

As a long time School Administrator and teacher, I have had experiences within every level and type of school, and have loved the work I have been privileged to do. I believe that education is the key to creating understanding around how we can peacefully exist together in a world that has recently seemed so chaotic. Circumstances surrounding the pandemic, unreasonable political situations that continue to exacerbate divides between people, and our collective climate change situations are all major stressors that are very difficult to navigate. It has been proven that during these times there are increases in family violence. I am very proud to be part of the Victoria Women's Transition House organization and witness the caring and respectful way that women and children fleeing intimate partner violence are welcomed and supported. I stand behind feminist ideals, inclusiveness, and restorative justice. It is my belief that community partnerships and education are keys to helping us break down the barriers of isolation and suspicion that keep people apart. Together we can continue to build and support strong, resilient communities.

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#### **Maurine Karaganis**

Prior to serving in elected office, Maurine Karagianis spent 15 years in the fashion industry and 10 years in publishing for tourism and specialty markets, including some television production and large event planning. She was elected to Esquimalt municipal council in 1996 and was re-elected in 1999 and 2002. She also served as the Capital Region Districts Arts' chair from 1999 to 2005.

Maurine served as a Ministerial Assistant to three Cabinet Ministers in the BC provincial government from 1998 to 2001 and from 2001 to 2005, was an affordable housing consultant in the non-profit sector.

Maurine was first elected to provincial office as a Member of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia in 2005 and re-elected in 2009 and 2013. She served in a variety of Opposition portfolios and was caucus whip for six years.

Maurine is currently serving as the Chair of the Board of the Knowledge Network. She has four children and 10 grandchildren, is a beekeeper, gardener, and avid kayaker.

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### **Jen Nichols**

Jennifer Nichols is a mother, cultural worker, public servant, and art lover. She is a senior policy analyst with the Province of BC's Ministry of Tourism, Arts, and Culture. She has worked in the public sector for over ten years supporting arts development and healthy community policies. Jennifer has provided graphic facilitation for several initiatives under the name Common Thought Creative. She is a member of the Canadian Evaluation Society and co-organizes CreativeMornings Victoria. She highly values collaborative processes.

Jennifer holds a Master of Science from the Swedish Blekinge Institute of Technology, with a focus on Strategic Sustainable Development, a Bachelor of Communication Design from Emily Carr University, and is currently completing a Master of Public Administration at the University of Victoria. Jennifer gratefully lives and works within the traditional territories of the Songhees, Esquimalt, and WSÁNEĆ peoples. She enjoys attending local arts performances, exhibits, and festivals with her partner, Marc, and seven-year old son, August.

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### **Fiona Morgan**

Fiona is honoured to be a Board Member of the Victoria Women's Transition House in Victoria, B.C. She has a Masters from Royal Roads University in Professional Communications, and an undergrad from the University of Waterloo in the faculty of Environmental Studies, Urban and Regional Planning. She also has supporting coursework in Change Management and Project Management. She is compassionate about helping others navigate change successfully and enjoys being a part of the great work at VWTH.

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### **Dawn Robson**

Dawn Robson is a Human Resources professional with over 25 years of experience supporting both for-profit and non-profit businesses. She has worked as an independent HR consultant and has held senior HR roles in a number of industries including financial services, high tech, retail, and manufacturing. She has prior Board experience with the Chartered Professional in Human Resources, BC & Yukon, and has volunteered with a number of other non-profits/charities. In her spare time, she enjoys kayaking, cycling, and, together with her husband, is an artisan wine-maker.

Dawn has a strong belief in the mission and values of the Victoria Women's Transition House and is supporting the organization as the Chair of the Board for the 2020-21 term.

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**Current Board Members seeking re-election for another term (terms to end September 2022):**

**Liette Bates-Eamer**

An Audit Partner with KPMG, Liette has more than 16 years of experience in performing financial statement audits, and in providing advice on operations, control processes, and financial reporting matters, for the public sector and not-for-profit organizations. She has strong technical skills in the public sector, managing engagements both small and large in scale. She is a regular speaker at public sector and not-for-profit educational seminars. She is a member of KPMG's National Not-for-profit Network. She leads the Community Involvement Initiatives for the Victoria KPMG office and champions local diversity and inclusion programs. She previously served as Treasurer on the Board of Victoria Women's Transition House Society from 2010 to 2016 and has made valuable contributions to VWTH as an expert on financial matters as they relate to not-for-profit societies.

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**Current Board Members seeking re-election for another term (terms to end September 2022) Continued:**

**Lynne Jordon**

Lynne Jordon has been a member of the VWTHS Board and its Board Governance and Development Committee since September 2018. She retired from the Greater Victoria Public Library, after a career in library management in Ontario and BC. Lynne has board governance, community partnership, facility planning, and recruitment experience, and has served on governing and operational boards including Kingston Literacy/ Read Society, professional library associations, and is currently the President of the Victoria Ballroom Dance Society. Lynne would like to support a community free of relationship violence and abuse.

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**New Board Members seeking election (terms to end September 2021):**

**Brenda Edwards**

Brenda is an experienced lawyer, retired Judicial Justice of the Provincial Court, and administrative law board adjudicator. Her law career began in 1989 when she clerked at the British Columbia Court of Appeal and continued on as a lawyer in the Ministry of Attorney General where she served until 1997 when she was seconded to the Premier's Office as in-house legal counsel. After that, she served as an Assistant Deputy Minister until 2001 when she took a leave of absence.

Brenda returned to practicing law in 2006 as legal counsel to the Chief Judge of the Provincial Court. She continued to serve in that capacity until she "retired" from the civil service in 2013. Along the way, in 2007, Brenda was appointed as a Judicial Justice of the Provincial Court where she served for ten years as the presiding Judicial Justice in Victoria's Integrated Court, a specialized court for those accused persons who were also dealing with substance use and/or mental health issues. During her time with the Provincial Court, Brenda worked on developing specialized courts to address aboriginal persons in the criminal justice system, domestic violence issues, and mental health and addiction related issues.

Brenda has also worked as an educator, teaching courses at the University of Victoria's Public Administration Program and in the Faculty of Law. She now adjudicates matters for the Environmental Appeal Board, Forest

Appeals Commission, Oil and Gas Tribunal, Health Professions Review Board, and the BC Review Board (under the Criminal Code).

Brenda has served as a volunteer Board Member of the Victoria Youth Empowerment Society, Artemis Place, and the Victoria Citizens' Counselling Centre. She has also served as a member of countless committees of the Canadian Bar Association and the Law Society and has been privileged to be a member of international delegations of the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute teaching the judiciary in Tunisia and investigating allegations of corruption of the judiciary in Cambodia.

Brenda has a lifelong commitment to women's issues and furthering equality rights.

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### **Kerilee Jones**

Kerilee started her policing career in 1997. She spent her first few years in the Patrol Division. She then transferred to the Bike Squad in the Targeted Policing Division, this is where she was first introduced to Undercover Work. She carried on her Undercover work after taking the Provincial Level 2 Undercover course and was fortunate to have had many opportunities in the field, especially when she was transferred to the Strike Force Unit, a covert surveillance unit.

In 2015, Kerilee transferred back to Patrol and was promoted to the rank of Sergeant. She and another colleague wrote a business case to create a Threat Assessment Unit that merged the two Domestic Violence Officers within Investigative Services, the High Risk Offender Officer and the High Risk Missing Persons Coordinator into a single Unit. This proposal was implemented and Kerilee became Sergeant of the Behavioral Assessment and Management Unit (BAMU). She is passionate about Intimate Partner Violence and this passion was strengthened further in the 3 ½ years she supervised the Unit and provided oversight and training to the frontline officers. She feels that it was an honor to work alongside community partners. In February 2019, Kerilee was promoted to Staff Sergeant and now works in Human Resources. She spent nine years on the Greater Victoria Emergency Response Team as a Crisis Negotiator and the last three years as the Team Leader. She stepped down from the Team in January of this year but will never lose her love and passion for ERT or Crisis Negotiation.

Kerilee has a University Degree in Sociology and Psychology and is one course shy of completing her Mediation and Third Party Intervention certificate through the Justice Institute of B.C. Conflict Resolution Program. She is the proud mother of two beautiful teenage girls who are the love of her life. They inspire her every day to make the world a better and safer place. Kerilee's hobbies are hiking with her two beautiful dogs and she is an avid fitness and yoga enthusiast.

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### **Nikki Petersen**

Nikki is a lawyer practicing in the area of Indigenous legal issues. Nikki works for the Province of British Columbia in the Indigenous Legal Relations Solicitor group, where she provides legal support on reconciliation matters, the Crown's constitutional duty to consult Indigenous peoples, and negotiation of agreements. Prior to joining the Province in 2018, Nikki worked for several years at a private practice environmental law firm in Toronto's Financial District.

While living in Toronto, Nikki served for two years as a board member for the Women's Law Association of Ontario. This organization was founded in 1919 and has just passed its hundredth anniversary. The mandate of the organization is to promote the retention of women in the legal profession by providing a collective voice and advocating for equality, diversity, and change. While on the board, Nikki created opportunities for issues facing young women lawyers to move to the forefront of the discussion. She led the overhaul of the organization's website, developed a successful social media strategy from scratch, launched a comprehensive mentoring initiative, and left each of these programs with the structures and the team in place to continue after she departed from the board.

Outside of work, Nikki enjoys hiking, gardening, and exploring beautiful BC. In non-Covid times, Nikki also enjoys taking art classes, where she always makes a real mess and has a lot of fun.

Nikki is looking to give back to the community through an organization that shares her feminist perspectives. She looks forward to opportunities to contribute, learn, and grow at VWTHS.

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### **Retiring Board Members**

#### **Penny Coulson**

Penny is the mother of two children and married her partner of 21 years in 2013. She has 40 years' experience nursing in Victoria, at the Royal Jubilee Hospital and Corrections in Victoria and Nanaimo. She has never stopped learning, taking a multitude of classes over the years related to nursing, family, and life.

Penny loves decorating, gardening, and re-finishing furniture. She is also an avid dragon boater having raced seven years throughout BC and the US. When she is not working, she spends every moment possible with her three small granddaughters, which she accepts as a gift each and every time she is with them.

Her volunteer commitment over the years has mainly been dedicated to her children's schools and sports programs. She also volunteered with the Victoria City Police Victim Services doing court preparation for women facing their accused.

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#### **Suzanne Gatrell**

Taking on the management of The Oswego Hotel in Victoria, Canada which is a luxury boutique hotel with 80 suites, during the 2008 recession was an opportunity she could not resist. Her skillset opened up an opportunity to turn around a struggling hotel. This is what the best hotel management company strives to do.

Suzanne trained in England. Her high end, extensive international hospitality experience is what drives her to find the best practices for all aspects of operating boutique and luxury hotels. In 2015 Suzanne started her own company. Her three decades in this industry have allowed her to create a hotel management company that is focused on the guest experience, running an extremely profitable business, and achieving unprecedented results.

Being of service in our community, empowering and supporting women in leadership roles are strong values

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for Suzanne. She has sat on various volunteer boards and currently is on a third term with the Board for Destination Greater Victoria. Is Vice-Chair for the Tourism Association of BC and is on the Board of Directors for the Hotel Association of Canada. Giving back to the community in many ways are core values to Suzanne personally but, also within her company

Suzanne is married and has two sons. Her hobbies include cooking, gardening, and reading.

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**Elaine Warren, CPA, CGA**

Elaine Warren is a Chartered Professional Accountant (CGA) and retired from Island Health after over 30 years with the organization and its predecessor organizations. From her most recent position as the Corporate Director, Financial Operations, and previous positions, Elaine has over 35 years of experience in senior financial management and administration. Her career has centered mainly on the public sector with non-profit entities. Elaine is a past board member of the Keating out of School Care Society.

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