Shashi Assanand of Richmond

Shashi Assanand is a visionary and pioneer in founding the Vancouver and Lower Mainland Multicultural Family Support Service Society (VLMFSS). Since 1991, VLMFSS has been providing multicultural, trauma-informed, culturally responsive services to immigrant, refugee and visible-minority women, children and families who face domestic violence. This vulnerable population often faces barriers such as the lack of ability to speak English or a lack of understanding about the Canadian legal system.

Once a woman separates from an abusive partner, she also loses the support of her family and the community. Many victims and survivors do not access the transition houses and other supports due to these multiple and intersecting barriers. It is within this context that VLMFSS came to be through the vision of Assanand to provide free and confidential services in more than 20 languages by workers who speak the same language, hail from the same culture as the women seeking help and understand the immigrant experience. Through this model VLMFSS has been able to make more than 780,000 contacts and serve more than 43,500 women over the course of its 29 years.

In the early years, Assanand recruited immigrant women from various ethnic communities and trained them one-to-one to enable them to serve the women in their communities. Each new worker opened the door to that community and Assanand supported every worker and empowered them to develop ethno-specific strategies to assist the women within their community. The workers in turn empower the women they help through a trusting, respectful, safe, women-centered and strength-based approach. These were the days when domestic violence was a topic that was taboo to discuss openly. Assanand has brought domestic violence to the fore, increasing its awareness across all cultures through VLMFSS, an organization run by immigrant women for immigrant women.

Assanand, a refugee from Uganda, has a pivotal role in spearheading crime prevention programs for immigrant and refugee women and creating a safe place for community dialogue. For this, she received the Anthony J. Hulme Award from the Province of B.C. Her calm, accepting, non-judgmental demeanor percolates through all her interactions with the workers, community partners, funders and clients. In true multicultural spirit, she is a role model for acceptance of individual and cultural differences and is focused on the positives and strengths of all individuals.
Assanand served 16 years in the settlement sector and 27 years in the anti-violence sector. Her participation in numerous advisory bodies, committees, panels, boards of community, government agencies at provincial and national levels, and research projects, has lent a voice to immigrant women in developing policies and programs that affect vulnerable immigrant women while creating equal access for all immigrants and building an egalitarian society. She has received many awards and medals including the YWCA Women of Distinction Award.

**Ryan Beedie of West Vancouver**

Ryan Beedie exemplifies the Order’s purpose of recognizing British Columbians who have made significant contributions to making this province a better place to live.

Under his direction, Beedie Development has become the market’s leading industrial developer in western Canada and is widely recognized as a reputable residential builder in B.C. Beedie Development prides itself in operating a business that lives its motto: Built for Good. Beedie is a leader in B.C.’s business community. In 2009, he was recognized as Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of The Year in the Pacific Region.

Beedie is making his mark beyond business: he has established himself as one of our leading philanthropists, creating one of the province’s largest post-secondary scholarship foundations, leading fundraising efforts for hospitals, supporting neighbourhood support services, and representing Canada in international efforts to end extreme poverty and preventable disease.

For Beedie, it’s about giving back and building up the communities where he lives and works. That starts with education. He has established Beedie Luminaries, a $50-million scholarship fund for bright, driven students. The creation of the fund was inspired by a belief that education is life-changing and that students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds should be given an opportunity to fulfill their potential. This past year, Beedie Luminaries funded 80 students from 43 high schools in B.C. with $40,000 each to pay for their education. The fund will grow to provide scholarships to over 100 students per year.

Beedie Luminaries is the most recent investment in education made by Beedie and the Beedie family. In 2011, they made the largest ever contribution to Simon Fraser University, establishing the Beedie school of business.

It’s not just education: Beedie chaired the fundraising campaign for the new medical and surgical centre at North Vancouver’s Lions Gate Hospital, raising $100 million in under two years including a $2.5-million personal contribution. He and his wife Cindy have donated more than $1 million to Children’s Circle of Care at the BC Children’s Hospital and sponsored BC Children’s Hospital fundraising efforts. He has also made a substantial contribution to the expansion of Burnaby Hospital.

In 2019, Beedie was named by the Together We Can – Addiction Recovery & Education Society as a Canadian Champion for going “above and beyond to help others.” He sits on the Canadian Board and the Global Leadership Council for the ONE Campaign, a global movement to end extreme poverty and preventable disease by 2030. He is a contributor to the YWCA, the
Vancouver Police Foundation, Ronald McDonald House, the St. James Community Service Society, Street to Home, Covenant House Canada, the Sarah McLachlan school of music and many other charities and foundations.

Beedie has received the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, was named Association of Fundraising Professionals “Philanthropist of the Year” (2015), received the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade’s 2018 Rix Award for Engaged Corporate Citizenship, and the SFU Service to the Community Alumni Award (2018).

**Michael Bublé of Burnaby**

It’s hard to overstate the impact of Michael Bublé’s music. His music is loved by millions of people around the globe who attend his sold-out concerts. He is one of the world’s most successful artists, selling more than 65 million records worldwide. His music has won 13 Juno awards and four Grammy awards.

Bublé was born in Burnaby in 1975. He still makes his home in the neighborhood where he grew up and where he played street hockey with the neighbourhood kids. His children attend the same elementary school he attended. Bublé has said he dreamed of becoming a singer from a very young age, a dream that lived alongside his wish to become a professional hockey player. He says as a kid he attended every Vancouver Canucks home game, a devotion that today is expressed in his support for Canuck Place Children’s Hospice. Bublé also supports the BC Children’s Hospital as an ambassador, the Burnaby Hospital Foundation and the Burnaby RCMP. His efforts supporting international charities include Dog for Dog, Children’s Hospital Los Angeles and Children’s Hospital in Argentina. Bublé is part owner of the Vancouver Giants junior hockey franchise.

Bublé’s father was a fisherman and he spent six summers, from the age of 14, working as a commercial fisherman. He learned his love of jazz and the great American songbook from his grandfather. Bublé says: “My grandfather was really my best friend growing up. He was the one who opened me up to a whole world of music that seemed to have been passed over by my generation. Although I like rock and roll and modern music, the first time my granddad played me the Mills Brothers, something magical happened. The lyrics were so romantic, so real, the way a song should be for me. It was like seeing my future flash before me. I wanted to be a singer and I knew that this was the music that I wanted to sing.”

Bublé won the Canadian Youth Talent Search while in his teens. In 1997 he became a regular guest on CTV’s Vicki Gabereau Show, a live national talk show, where Bublé made himself available to fill in when other guests had to cancel, using the opportunity to improve his skills as a live performer. He was introduced to musician and record producer David Foster in 2000 who eventually signed Bublé to his 143/Reprise record label. Working with Foster, Bublé’s self-titled debut studio album was released in 2003 and reached the top 10 in Canada and the UK.

His second studio album, “It’s Time”, was released in 2005 and spent 104 weeks on the Billboard jazz chart including 78 weeks at number one. In 2009, his album “Crazy Love” debuted at number 1.
Bublé won the 2010 Juno Awards for album, pop album, and single of the year. At the Grammy Awards, “Crazy Love” won best traditional pop vocal album of the year. His string of successful recordings continued, releasing his 10th studio album in 2018, “Love,” written as a heart emoji. Bublé has had five TV Specials on NBC and three specials on PBS. In addition, multiple appearances on Saturday Night Live, the Today Show, the Tonight Show and David Letterman, plus major television shows around the globe, including The Social and Marilyn Denis in Canada. Bublé also hosted the Junos in 2018 and 2013 and performed in the 2010 Olympic Games Opening ceremony. Recently, Bublé has been very active with health-care workers throughout B.C. and Canada doing what he can to spread the word about the dangers of COVID-19 and how the public can protect themselves from this pandemic.

Shirley Chan of Vancouver
Shirley Chan is a third-generation advocate for her community and for others, mostly people at risk of displacement, discrimination and marginalization.

Her great-grandfather came to Canada for the gold rush, worked on B.C.’s railways and started a successful import-export business in Vancouver’s Chinatown. Her mother and father (Mary Lee Wo Soon and Walter Chan) helped create the Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants Association in 1968. Chan worked with them to successfully challenge city plans that would have displaced thousands of residents and run a freeway through Vancouver. The Chans were able to galvanize others to work together to stop the freeway and protect their neighbours and neighbourhoods. Chan campaigned with her parents, going door-to-door to build opposition to the freeway plans and organizing a network of block captains to keep residents informed. Community activism has remained fundamental to her ever since.

Chan’s work roles include CEO of Building Opportunities with Business Inner-City Society; director of sustainable development, healthy environments and consumer safety branch, Health Canada; regional director general, B.C./Yukon; regional director, population and public health branch, B.C./Yukon Region, for Health Canada; director, non-market operations division, City of Vancouver; chief of staff, mayor’s office, City of Vancouver; and many more.

Chan’s volunteer work is extensive including Learning for a Sustainable Future Board; Pathways Serious Mental Illness Society, vice-president; Vancouver Chinatown Foundation Policy advisor; Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee; Chinatown Historic Area planning committee; UBC president’s advisory committee on the university library; UBC Asian studies advisory committee; and Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden trustee.

She has served on many boards including B.C. Hydro, Powerex, Vancity Credit Union; Vancity Enterprises; Citizens Bank and Trust; Vancity Place for Youth Society; Vancity Foundation; UBC board of governors; UBC president’s advisory committee on downtown presence; UBC Foundation board; and Children’s International Summer Villages. She has advised several B.C. premiers on many community issues.
More recently, in addition to community service, since her daughter developed schizophrenia, Chan has been active in promoting mental health. She credits the North Shore Schizophrenia Society for helping her and her husband move from “a place of denial and confusion, with nowhere to turn, to one of strength and knowledge about what was happening to our daughter and ourselves and knowledge about the mental health system.” She currently serves as VP on the board of Pathways Serious Mental Illness Society as a fierce advocate for people with mental illness and chair of Pathways’ education and support committee.

**Neil Cook, M.G.C., of Cranbrook**

Neil Cook has demonstrated selfless dedication to making his community a better place for all residents. He has made a positive, lifelong impact through the lives of the three children he and his wife, Marilynne, adopted, in addition to the 24 foster children they welcomed into their home and their hearts.

Cook has volunteered much of his time with local non-profits, in areas such as mental health (six years as a crisis line volunteer and six years on the local CMHA board), homelessness (seven years as the chair of the East Kootenay Homeless Coalition, working to build a 24/7 homeless shelter), and community services (seven years on the Cranbrook Family Centre Board, now Summit Community Services, and nine years on the Cranbrook Society for Community Living Board). Cook had the vision, determination, and perseverance to lead the formation of the Cranbrook and District Community Foundation (now the Community Foundation of the Kootenay Rockies).

Cook served as the founding president, and then a director, on the Community Foundation board for a total of 17 years. His work resulted in the establishment of an effective and efficient Community Foundation, which now holds almost $2.5 million in permanently invested funds and returns annual grants to eligible community groups, in perpetuity. In all his volunteer work, Cook has been kind, inclusive and generous.

Cook has been an active member of local service clubs as well, including Cranbrook Sunrise Rotary (three years), Cranbrook Rotary (two years), and Kinsmen (seven years). His other volunteer contributions in the community include 22 years of volunteering with the Cranbrook Community Christmas Dinner as a fundraiser and chef, as well as 10 years on the church committee at Christ Anglican Church. Cook’s work life also included community service, such as his role as Anne Edwards’ Kootenay MLA constituency assistant from 1992 to 1996 as well as three years as the East Kootenay emergency services co-ordinator.

He also served for three years on the College of Pharmacists for the Province of B.C. and for two years on the City of Cranbrook Planning Council. In the midst of these many contributions to the community, Cook played a key role in supporting numerous community fundraisers and events, including the SPCA, Juvenile Diabetes Association, Kinsmen Mothers’ March, Canadian Cancer Society and the Cranbrook Children’s Festival. For all the 26 years that Neil has lived in Cranbrook, he has chosen to volunteer his time with many organizations and
projects, all with the goal of helping people and improving our community.

**Paul George of Gibsons**

Over the course of 40 years Paul George has helped to steward a contemporary view of B.C. beyond a province of just resource extraction with the creation of the Western Canada Wilderness Committee.

George, a Vietnam war objector, immigrated to Canada from the U.S. in 1968 to teach senior high school sciences, drawn to B.C. by the magnificent images of its wilderness. Work, research and friendship in Haida Gwaii led George to collaborate with Haida leader Guujaaw and others in order to protect Gwaii Haanas (South Moresby), today a Haida Heritage Site and National Park Reserve.

In 1980, George founded Western Canada Wilderness Committee (Wilderness Committee) with a group of friends. Under his leadership the organization grew to over 100,000 members with donors across Canada.

In 1983, George helped to found North America’s first Green Party, the Green Party of B.C. From 1980 to 2005, George led dozens of campaigns building public support for wilderness protection. He left the Wilderness Committee after writing his seminal book about the organization, its campaigns and tactics, Big Trees not Big Stumps.

Through education and facts, with beautiful images of endangered wild places alongside graphic images of large-scale clear-cut logging, George helped shape an era of public focus on wilderness protection, laying the bedrock for political decisions to protect more of B.C.’s magnificent natural heritage.

An inspirational leader, George came up with ideas for unique campaigns, tactics and strategies that no other environmental group had used including widely distributed educational newspapers and building the world’s first upper canopy temperate rainforest research station.

George co-authored over 120 newspapers, each with a call to action on a specific wilderness area or wildlife cause and often in collaboration with local conservation groups. The largest run, Conservation Vision for Vancouver Island, saw over 300,000 distributed to households in every community on Vancouver Island. Featuring a scientific analysis recommending half the Island’s remaining wilderness be protected in order to save biodiversity, the paper prompted loggers to chant “12 per cent and no more” in a protest on the lawns of B.C.’s parliament Buildings.

George also launched the trail-building that became a renowned Wilderness Committee activity, involving hundreds of volunteers. He believed that enabling people to see beautiful places under threat was essential to building support for their protection.
Working with First Nations, George campaigned collaboratively with the Haida, Nemiah, Nuu-chah-nulth and Squamish Nations to declare several Tribal Parks founded in Indigenous rights and title. He also pushed the boundaries of law, winning cases that established the right of an environmental group to represent wildlife in B.C. court (re: the B.C. wolf kill) and the right of public access to Crown land under tree farm licence (Carmanah Valley). Some of the successful campaigns George worked on included South Moresby (Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve), Stein Valley, Carmanah Valley, Meares Island, Clayoquot Sound, and Stoltmann Wilderness (Elaho Valley).

Over 25 years, his tireless work resulted in the park protection of millions of hectares of wilderness areas and a legacy for all British Columbians.

**Rusty Goepel of Vancouver**

Business trailblazer and respected community leader Ruston (Rusty) Goepel has made lasting contributions to B.C.’s economic growth and social prosperity. With family roots in B.C. extending more than a century, Goepel’s dedication to his home province can be seen across five decades of work: in a successful investment career bringing employment and prosperity to people and businesses locally and nationwide; through his key leadership role in the 2010 Winter Olympics; and in his enduring support for many community causes that improve the lives of British Columbians.

Goepel co-founded Goepel Shields & Partners in 1989, bucking traditional business models to create an independent institutional brokerage where all employees shared in company profits. Starting with a staff of 18, Goepel Shields & Partners grew quickly throughout B.C., Alberta and Ontario under Goepel’s leadership. A 1996 merger with a retail-based broker created Goepel McDermid, a full-service investment brokerage with 500 employees. In 2000, the company completed a $130-million transaction with Raymond James Financial to form Raymond James Canada. Today, it is the largest independent investment dealer in the country, employing 700 people in B.C. and more than 1,600 staff nationwide.

Goepel’s business acumen has also helped other B.C.-based companies flourish. He serves as chair of Vancouver-based Yellow Point Equity Partners, which has raised $320 million and currently holds a controlling interest in seven B.C.-based companies that employ more than 3,700 people. He has also served on numerous corporate and public boards, including the Business Council of B.C. and Vancouver Airport Authority.

A lifelong passion for volunteerism and sport attracted Goepel as a central player in the 2010 Olympic Games. First joining the Olympic bid corporation in 1998 as a director, Goepel was later appointed to the Vancouver Organizing Committee (VANOC) Board. There, he was intimately involved in key planning and decision-making around the Games, from hiring CEO John Furlong to budgetary oversight. Following the passing of founding chair Jack Poole in 2009, Goepel was elected by his fellow directors as new chair to deliver the games to the world. He continued to serve until VANOC’s dissolution in 2013.
Goepel is a tireless community champion. Through his professional and personal network, he actively connects community groups with donors eager to support their vision. His volunteerism includes:

- recruiting benefactors for Templeton School’s acclaimed theatre program and Boys and Girls clubs. He helped program administrators significantly expand opportunities for East Vancouver youth, especially those at risk;
- co-founding and chairing the KidSport B.C. golf tournament, helping raise more than $350,000 to remove financial barriers for children wishing to play sport;
- raising more than $500,000 for Community Living B.C. during his 24-year tenure as chair and founder of its charity golf tournament;
- supporting the Canadian Diabetes Association as a fundraiser, gala chairman and donor, personally funding a diabetes research associate position at BC Children’s Hospital Research Institute; and
- fundraising for CNIB, BC Cancer, the United Way, Big Sisters of B.C. and Lower Mainland, Canadian Olympic Committee, LIFT Philanthropy Partners and Canadian Little League Championship.

**John Malcolm Horton of Delta**

Marine artist John Malcolm Horton has made significant contributions to the appreciation and safety of B.C.’s coastal history and its waters through his paintings showcased in collections across Canada, commemorative coin designs for the Canadian Mint, and a lifetime of volunteer service to keep mariners safe.

In his outstanding paintings — over 1,400 in number — Horton depicts the history of the coast of B.C., bringing to life the historic voyages of captains Cook and Vancouver. His work has attracted the attention of officials at the Department of National Defence who selected him to produce paintings of Canadian warships serving in the Arabian Gulf and on international exercises.

Equally significant is his long-time volunteer work in marine search and rescue.

Over the years, Horton has been active in the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary, Canadian Lifeboat Institution, Royal Naval Sailing Association (B.C.), Royal Canadian Sea Cadets, and the Naval Officers Association of B.C. He was instrumental in the development of the Lifeboat Institution and used his own vessels to respond to 600 incidents.

Since joining the Canadian Marine Rescue Auxiliary in 1979, his focus has been on assisting the native and commercial fisheries in B.C. along with any other mariners in distress. Volunteering under the auxiliary flag, he has assisted in the rescue of hundreds of vessels either in distress or disabled.

In 1988 Horton began volunteering with the Canadian Lifeboat Institutes’ Search and Rescue service (SAR), a not-for-profit registered charity that provides non-government supported search and rescue assistance in the Lower Fraser River and Gulf of Georgia waters. From its
base in Steveston, Horton has trained volunteers to be competent crew members. As well he has devoted thousands of hours and his own money to maintain its 52-foot Delta Lifeboat, formerly the Steveston Lifeboat. Its safety role to the fishing fleet in the Gulf of Georgia and Fraser Estuary cannot be over-estimated; to date almost 900 incidents have been attended by Horton aboard the Delta Lifeboat.

In recognition of his marine art he is the only Canadian artist mentioned in the late Dennis Brook-Hart’s definitive book, Twentieth Century Marine Painting. He is a founding member of the Canadian Society of Marine Artists and member of the Federation of Canadian Artists, the Naval Officers Association of B.C. and the Honourable Company of Master Mariners. Through his art, he has supported many schools, museums, hospitals and community-based charities.

**Mel Krajden, MD of Vancouver**

Over the past two decades, B.C. has built a global reputation in the field of communicable disease control and innovative scholarship in public health sciences. Mel Krajden has been central to building this reputation through his leadership in the B.C. Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) Public Health Laboratory and significant contributions to fields such as Hepatitis, HIV, HPV and most recently, COVID-19.

This year more than ever, Krajden provided critical scientific leadership. With the emergence of COVID-19, B.C. and Canada needed urgent access to rapid, validated tests for the virus. Under his leadership at BCCDC, and relying heavily on his exceptional expertise, Krajden and his team were able to rapidly develop an assay for the province to commence testing in January 2020, weeks before other jurisdictions. Access to this test was an essential element in the management and control of the outbreak and the safety of British Columbians.

Krajden created the world-leading B.C. Hepatitis Testers Cohort, which integrates de-identified data on 2.4 million individuals tested for, or diagnosed with, hepatitis B, C, HIV and TB infections linked to their corresponding health-care administrative data since 1990, to create longitudinal medical histories. This cohort has produced influential pieces of evidence that shaped clinical and public health guidelines and policy in Canada and globally. He was instrumental in the development and continued progress of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) funded Canadian Network on Hepatitis C, a well-known multidisciplinary group committed to developing a national strategy for hepatitis C elimination.

Krajden was one of the key personnel in the STOP HIV initiative in B.C. This public health endeavor saw the implementation of acute HIV testing, allowing diagnosis during the most infectious period of the disease, resulting in timely interventions, and communication to partners to reduce transmission. This undertaking helped lead to the lowest HIV incidence on a provincial scale in decades.

Krajden also played a pivotal role in global public policy changes in human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine dosing regimen and the associated reduction of financial access barriers to care. Similarly, his work with respect to assessing the utility of HPV testing vs. traditional Pap smears is expected to contribute to guidelines that will benefit women worldwide.
In his educational capacity, Krajden has the reputation of a wonderful teacher and valued mentor; training researchers, health professionals and students at all levels. He is widely known for his willingness to provide input and advice despite numerous other commitments, contributing to the success of others. His steadfast dedication further extends into the clinical realm, where he always has patient interests at heart and never hesitates to devote his own time to make a difference in client outcomes.

Over many decades, Krajden has demonstrated exceptional innovation, leadership, and sustained contributions to the province, country and the world. He is a highly respected visionary, scientist and educator who has inspired countless researchers and health professionals with his clinical excellence, dedication and generosity of spirit.

Janet Nadine Mort, PhD of Brentwood Bay

Internationally acclaimed innovative literacy curriculum designer, author of two books, organizer and speaker at over 28 educational summits, Janet Nadine Mort is responsible for the reading success of countless vulnerable primary learners.

Upon retirement in 2007, after a 35-year career as a teacher, principal and superintendent of schools on Vancouver Island, Mort attained a PhD in language and literacy. Still determined to address the unmet needs of struggling primary students, Mort aligned her research and vast experience to develop her Joyful Literacy Interventions program. She formulated an effective assessment/teaching/tracking paradigm that educates children through playful activities.

Mort began highly productive pilot programs (ongoing) in Peace River South and Lau, welnew Tribal School in Brentwood Bay where her innovative teaching practices were successfully adopted. She continues to personally collaborate with over 200 teachers in rural and First Nations communities, demonstrating her selfless passion to achieve literacy success with disadvantaged, vulnerable children. Results in over 100 classrooms in B.C. have been outstanding: 80% to 90% of K-3 children, despite vulnerabilities or significant cultural differences, are reading at grade level after three years in Mort’s program. These results have been proven through independent, quantitative research, and seeing the successes of their students, teachers report a great sense of accomplishment.

As facilitator and a vibrant keynote speaker at 28 summits in B.C., Alberta, and Washington state, Mort’s approach has reached over 15,000 educators representing many thousands of classrooms. Her summit sessions partner renowned international authors and researchers with hands-on workshops illustrating early literacy techniques.

Mort has written two books, “Joyful Literacy Interventions” and “Putting on the Blitz”. These books clearly weave together her essential assessment/teaching/tracking components with practical, joyful classroom applications that facilitate rich and stimulating student-teacher interaction.

Through B.C.’s Ministry of Education, Mort’s leadership skills led her to international influence
as a consultant for a kindergarten program in Egypt for over three years. As superintendent of innovation, Mort again represented B.C. as an expert in early literacy at the World Congress of Education in Melbourne, Australia, and at an international educational summit in New Zealand. She generously had her two books translated and donated to an impoverished village school in Mexico.

Mort’s publications and awards are many; a highlight is the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal that was awarded to her in 2002 in recognition of service to children and to leadership in educational change. At 75 years of age, Mort continues to teach intervention strategies and mentor teachers in B.C. and beyond through her Joyful Literacy Interventions framework.

Following a stellar career, upon retirement, Mort chose not to relax. Instead she forged a new career path with an undaunted belief that she could give all young children an equal start in literacy. Her inspirational commitment to providing a successful school experience for all children will be her legacy.

**Tracy Porteous of Vancouver**

Tracy Porteous’s commitment to helping and supporting victims began when she started volunteering at the Victoria Women’s Sexual Assault Centre at 19 years old. Her experience of supporting survivors was so meaningful that she decided to dedicate herself to the cause for the rest of her life and that has made her a visionary and pioneer in her field.

During her time as project manager with the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre, with the help of two other women, she wrote a booklet aimed at teenage girls called, Let’s Talk About Sexual Assault. This booklet was the first of its kind in Canada and won the national award for crime prevention. It became a Canadian bestseller and was widely used in schools, doctors’ offices, police departments and sexual assault centres.

When Porteous became the executive director of the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre, she realized that the sexual assault and victim service centres in B.C. did not have a co-ordinated voice at the provincial level. With that knowledge, she worked to create a provincial body that exists today as the Ending Violence Association of B.C. (EVA BC) which today has over 300 programs and initiatives.

Her determination as executive director led EVA BC through a game-changing initiative that they called “Be More Than a Bystander”. This opened the conversation to what was historically viewed as only a women’s issue at a time when there was a dramatic increase in domestic violence homicides in B.C. By asking the BC Lions Football Club to become spokesmen, this successful initiative encouraged men to talk to other men about sexual assault and intimate partner violence. For this groundbreaking campaign, Porteous was honoured with a lifetime achievement award from B.C.’s then Child and Youth Representative Mary Ellen Turpel-LaFond.

Porteous is also the co-chair of the Ending Violence Association of Canada, which helped the Canadian Football League develop its national violence against women policy, which coordinates the training of players, coaches and staff of every Canadian Football League team and
assists the league on critical incidents that relate to gender-based violence.

In June 2020, the University of British Columbia bestowed an honorary doctor of laws degree on Porteous as it does each year for “distinguished individuals who are deemed worthy of recognition for their outstanding contributions to society.”

The recognition of her work extends beyond Canada. In 2012 Porteous attended the United Nation’s 57th commission on the status of women in New York as an official delegate from Canada and spoke at a global session about prevention of violence against women. Porteous’ commitment and leadership has brought her many other recognitions such as the Justice Canada Excellence in Victim Services Award (2018) and the Governor General of Canada’s medal, which she won three times. The most recent medal (2014) in recognition of the Persons Case for “exemplary contributions towards the equality of women in Canada.” Porteous was also a member of B.C.’s 2010 and 2016 Domestic Violence Death Review panels and has testified before parliamentary committees related to violence against women, law reform and judicial training.

The work Porteous has done throughout her life has and will continue to help countless women across the province.

Carole Taylor, O.C., of Vancouver

Carole Taylor has been in public service virtually all her life from her very early career as a journalist covering politics, to serving as a politician herself and advising politicians, as well as business and community leaders.

As a young journalist, Taylor covered politics and worked as an investigative reporter at the CTV and CBC television networks. For many years, she conducted the annual prime ministerial year-end interviews.

Taylor then entered politics herself. First, she was elected as an independent Vancouver city councillor in 1986 and topped the polls four years later. Running provincially, she was elected as MLA for Vancouver-Langara in 2005 and was appointed finance minister, during which time she introduced four provincial budgets and oversaw the implementation of B.C.’s groundbreaking carbon tax.

Taylor has had to make many tough decisions in the public eye. Her colleagues describe her as an individual who can bring diverse people together, an excellent strategic thinker and a talented communicator. Those skills came together when, as finance minister, she was able to sign 100% of B.C.’s public-sector workers to new contracts before their old ones expired; a $6 billion negotiation covering more the 300,000 workers – BCGEU, HEU and CUPE members, teachers, nurses and doctors.

Her passion (and talent) for public service is core to her as a person. She and her late husband Art Phillips, former mayor of Vancouver, were both noted for their community calling. “We all have an obligation to serve and work toward making the world a better place,” she’s been
quoted as saying.

That calling continued after she left politics in 2008. Taylor went on to chair the national Economic Advisory Council at the invitation of the federal government and in 2011, she became the 10th chancellor of Simon Fraser University, serving until 2014.

Today, she is the Canada Chair for the Trilateral Commission, a non-governmental, policy-oriented forum focused on finding solutions to geopolitical, economic and social challenges.

Taylor also currently serves as chancellor of Victoria University at the University of Toronto from which she graduated in 1967.

Her past services include chairing the boards of the Vancouver Board of Trade, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the Vancouver Port Authority, among others, as well as serving with the B.C. Business Council.

Taylor has been recognized for her public service with numerous awards, including the Order of Canada, the SFU Distinguished Community Leadership Award and the Peter Lougheed Public Policy Award.

She is also the recipient of four honorary degrees, including an honorary doctor of laws from Simon Fraser University and an honorary doctor of technology from the British Columbia Institute of Technology.

**Ruth Williams of Kamloops**

Ruth Williams was born in Big Bar Creek, a remote and isolated community in the Cariboo and raised by a single mother with six other siblings. When she moved to an urban setting, it was a complete culture shock.

She took her hardships and became a determined, visionary and selfless individual who has striven to do all within her powers and abilities to improve the lives of Indigenous peoples. Williams may be soft-spoken, but she has learned to stand up for what she believes and has gained the courage and confidence to speak out and be heard.

Williams’ passion and dedication for improving the health and well-being of Indigenous children and families can be seen through the following:

- involvement in numerous community and government committees for advancing a health-care system that supports Indigenous peoples; supporting families and children in care; promoting early childhood education for Indigenous children; and developing health programs and services for Indigenous peoples;
- founding member and active board member on the first Urban Native Housing Society, which has 103 affordable and safe housing units in Kamloops and 94 units within the Thompson, Okanagan and Kootenay regions;
• advocacy work to increase the number of Indigenous graduates and students pursuing post-secondary education and decrease the number of students dropping out of school by ensuring supports were in place for them. This included the development of an Urban Native Alternate School to support the re-entry of Indigenous students and for single parents who needed flexible hours and access to daycare;
• All Nations Trust Company, an Indigenous-owned shareholders’ lending institute for Indigenous businesses and entrepreneurs. Since its inception, the company’s shares have increased from $10 to $87. She has also been influential in ensuring First Nations’ connectivity through Pathways to Technology and provision of business service through All Nations Development Corporation;
• consulted by federal and provincial governments to gain knowledge and insight into the issues, challenges and barriers faced by Indigenous peoples, which have resulted in a change to government policies, processes and structures; and
• development of a daycare centre designed to promote Indigenous programs and culture for all children age groups.

Williams’ influence is shown by the variety of awards that she has received, including an honorary doctor of laws from Thompson Rivers University and the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal. She received the Kamloops Rotary Club Paul Harris Award, the City of Kamloops 100 Year Confederation and Distinguished Service Awards, a Lifetime Achievement Award from B.C. Aboriginal Achievement Awards and numerous business awards.

Williams has a special gift to see the potential in people. Many friends and staff members will tell you that she challenges you to be the best person that you can be. She is supportive, an inspirational mentor and a role model. Not only has she directly impacted so many Indigenous lives, but she has worked most of her life to improve the systems and policies that negatively impact Indigenous peoples.

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