

ADVANCING

Female Leadership

Q&A with Canadian supermodel Coco Rocha

Mediaplanet

Where do you get your ambition?

Coco Rocha Cindy Crawford once told me that lasting success in fashion is one small part opportunity and one large part ambition and drive to do something with that opportunity. When I started modelling at age 15, I knew very little about the world I was entering, but I knew not to take it for granted. I was raised by a single mother who worked tirelessly as a flight attendant to provide for my siblings and I. When she couldn't find a babysitter, I'd join her on the plane to China and sleep in the cockpit. Later, when I wanted to dance, my Mom set up a business selling dance clothing at the competitions to help fund my passion. I like to think I've inherited some of her drive and go-getter personality.

MP Why do you think it's important for women to take charge of their careers?

CR If you don't take charge someone else will. As they say, if you don't stand for something,

you'll fall for anything. Early on in my career, I decided to take stock of what I wanted out of life. Did I want fame and success at all costs? Or did I want to remain true to myself and my own moral compass, and create a career path I could be proud of? I decided to take the more difficult path and said no to a lot of opportunities that didn't feel right for me. In the end, I think there's a great deal of power in knowing when to say no. True, you can lose out on the instant payoff, but in the long run, being authentic and true to who you are is always rewarded.

MP What advice would you give to young women who may lack self-confidence?

CR The best way to master insecurity is to do the thing you're afraid of. Jump out there and make the choices that you want to make. In this life, you can never please everyone, so you might as well please yourself because that will be your longest relationship.

Read more of the interview online at industryandbusiness.ca

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Tanya van Biesen
Executive Director,
Catalyst Canada

Engage Men as Allies in the Pursuit of

Gender-Balanced Leadership

Gender inequality is not a women's issue — it's a socioeconomic issue. Accelerating progress for women isn't just the right thing to do—it's an urgent business imperative. Most economists acknowledge this fact and yet a significant gap in corporate leadership continues to persist, with men dominating positions of power in the workplace. The Canadian population is aging, the fertility rate has fallen, and our future workforce will be smaller than ever before. We'll need to engage all of Canada's talent to address these challenges. Savvy organizations understand the competitive edge gained through an approach that prioritizes inclusive leadership in management.

Men can help educate other men

Creating a work environment where everyone's

talent is valued requires the involvement and support of all employees. Men can — and should — be partners in moving organizations toward gender equality and female advancement in leadership.

By engaging men to take deliberate action, we affect change where it matters the most. Men can create space and opportunities for women in the workplace by ensuring their ideas are heard and considered. They should support their female colleagues by sponsoring them for promotions, working through subconscious biases, and being open to new ways of thinking.

In a week where we celebrate International Women's Day and rally around its call for greater gender equality, we need to send a strong message to corporate Canada: men, it's time to stand up for women.

WHY MENTORSHIP MATTERS TO YOUR CAREER

Whether you're just starting out in your career or aspiring for the C-suite, mentorship can take you to the next level.

According to a study commissioned by American Express Canada in partnership with Women of Influence, roughly 32 percent of women believe that reaching the C-suite is achievable. However, that number jumps to 49 percent if women have a mentor and to 61 percent if they have a sponsor — illustrating the fact that having an advocate such as a mentor or sponsor helps women believe they are capable of more.

American Express (Amex) identifies mentorship as something that can be asked for — it's an informal or formal relationship with an advisor who acts as a role model. Sponsorship, on the other hand, is earned on an individual basis, rather than assigned.

"Mentoring is a great way to gain the support and guidance you need to achieve your career aspirations," says Sandy Kara, the Director of Credit Operations at American Express Canada.

Kara, who serves as a mentor to several young women, believes that mentorship can provide unbiased career advice, coaching, and advocacy to help females at entry or mid-level career stages advance in their careers. But it doesn't need to stop there.

Women at more advanced stages of their career can also benefit from mentors to help enhance their visibility to senior management and ease their transition to

higher positions.

"Frank discussions with my own mentor have helped ensure that I was being represented as a strategic leader to senior leaders within the organization," says Kara. "Although the specific issues and opportunities I focus on now with my mentor may differ compared to earlier in my career, the key lessons have been equally valuable."

Along with providing sound career advice, mentors can help reiterate the importance of having a growth mindset. For Jenny Li, the Program Manager with American Express' Enterprise Architecture Team, having a mentor has helped her focus on future roles within the organization.

"My mentors have advised me on what I can do beyond my current role and have helped me evaluate where my next opportunities might be," says Li.

Mentorship enhances the corporate culture

In a business environment where talent retention drives competitive advantage, American Express Canada employees report that mentorship benefits themselves and the workplace as a whole.

"Mentorship is engrained in our DNA, which enhances our employee engagement, gender inclusion, and diversity initiatives and goals," says Kara.

American Express employees can access mentorship opportunities through numerous programs and networks such as the Millennial Network, Women's Interest Network, and more recently, Women in Technology (which was founded by Li).

"Our Employee Networks provide various informal mentorship opportunities which are fully supported by Amex," explains Li. "As the co-lead of our Women in Technology Network, I'm proud to share that we've had multiple women achieve their career advancement goals through our mentorship initiatives."

Seek opportunities

Both Kara and Li credit mentorship for their career achievements and advise that other women should ask for mentorship opportunities wherever possible.

"Don't be shy about it," says Kara. "My best piece of advice is to seek out mentorship opportunities that set you up for success instead of waiting for them to happen. Take control and jump start your own career."

On a similar note, Li adds, "It's important for both men and women to be change agents and to inspire females to grow within the company. Creating and sustaining long-standing mentor relationships is the first step to helping women thrive in their career."

Anne Papmehl



Sandy Kara (left) and Jenny Li (right) discuss the powerful impact of mentorship.

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The Future is Bright for Women in the Energy Industry

Mediaplanet *Why is it such an exciting time for young women to consider a future in engineering?*

Jane D. Allen I always say that with great change comes great opportunity and right now the energy industry is changing dramatically. We're experiencing the next generation of energy as we see huge developments in clean technology, renewable energy, and sustainability. With an increase in the numbers of technical positions available, there hasn't been a better time for women to break barriers and create a path for themselves in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics).

At Hydro One, we're always looking for motivated and talented engineering professionals who are seeking to develop their skills. Women working in organizations like ours will undoubtedly have the opportunity to realize their leadership potential.

MP *What is Hydro One doing to actively encourage female students to consider careers in technology and engineering?*

JA Hydro One has partnered with a number of universities including Ryerson University, the University of Ontario Institute of Technology, the University of Waterloo, and Western University on an initiative to encourage and

increase enrolment of women in STEM. We also reach out to students at the high school and post-secondary levels to encourage them to pursue a career in engineering. One of the ways we do this is by providing mentorship and networking for young women across Ontario.

We also offer scholarships to 10 deserving female undergraduate students in engineering every year. Winners receive a financial award along with a paid student placement at Hydro One. We believe that investing in young talent is critical to closing the gender gap.

MP *Why is promoting gender equality such an important issue for Hydro One?*

JA When you have greater diversity, you have a better, more productive workplace. Women bring different perspectives and approaches to problem-solving. It doesn't make good business sense to not take advantage of all the talent in an organization and that's why we want to nurture, develop, and promote talented women. Our female engineering workforce is about twice the size of the industry norm, and we would like to attract and retain even more young women into an exciting, dynamic, and rewarding career at Hydro One.

Sandra Macgregor

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Jane D. Allen
Senior Vice President,
Strategy & Innovation,
Hydro One

Forging an Inclusive Culture

Mediaplanet *Why is the issue of women in leadership important to you?*

Katharine Bambrick Much has been written about why women have been so underrepresented in leadership positions. For decades this has presented a loss to society, with the recent trend toward transformational leadership and emphasis on empowerment and collaboration, women are excelling in leadership roles. I have been fortunate to have held amazing leadership positions in my career and as a result, I focus on fostering leadership in bright, talented women. I believe it's important to have equal representation in private and public sector organizations for men, women, and those that identify as LGBTQ+ to help drive innovation and social equity. I am very fortunate to work with a passionate and dedicated team at the Ontario Trillium Foundation, where more than 50 percent of people in leadership positions are women.

MP *How is the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) working to ensure it is representative of Ontario?*

KB Last year, the foundation identified two groups that were underserved by grants from the Ontario Trillium Foundation: the LGBTQ+ and francophone populations. We also explored how we can deliver on our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation initiatives going forward. We embarked on a learning journey in the pursuit of supporting these groups by reaching out to communities and stakeholders to identify gaps, developing solutions, and working to understand the needs and issues facing each of these communities. This work culminated in the adoption of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Framework by our board. As a public agency, funder, and employer, we do our work by living the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and ensuring that we are reflective of the diversity of those we serve. We are excited about the transformation it will bring in the way we work and serve Ontario communities.

MP *What drew you to the OTF?*

KB The thought of contributing to an organization that supports meaningful change in communities right across the province was inspirational. I am passionate about the mandate of an organization that supports the wellbeing of staff, volunteers, grantees, and the communities we serve, and that is essential to everything the Ontario Trillium Foundation does. As a prime example, this year we were honoured to be named one of Canada's Most Admired Corporate Cultures by Waterstone Human Capital.



Katharine Bambrick
CEO, Ontario Trillium
Foundation

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Building a Better World for Women and Girls, One Step at a Time



Courtesy of Plan International Canada



Caroline Riseboro
President & CEO,
Plan International Canada

With the #MeToo movement dominating public discussion recently, Caroline Riseboro has noticed new attention on the work she does. As the President and CEO of the international rights and equality organization, Plan International Canada, she helps fight for equality for women and girls worldwide.

“We’ve been screaming from the rooftops for a while,” Riseboro says, “but it’s only now that the public perception of gender equality has started to catch up to the reality.” Girls and women face unique barriers, including pervasive gender discrimination and women’s rights violations, which often prevent them from achieving their potential. For instance, globally, 15 million girls are forced into early or childhood marriage each year; there are currently more than 130 million girls out of school; and complications during pregnancy and childbirth are still the leading cause of death for girls between 15 and 19 years old, despite our knowing how to save their lives.

“We can’t limit our attention of #MeToo and the gender movement that’s grown over recent years to North America,” says

Riseboro. “Rights are universal — and so too should be the battle to enforce them.”

Affecting the future

During a recent trip to El Salvador, Riseboro learned that girls under 18 account for 30 percent of all pregnancies there. “The issue of early pregnancy is exacerbated by harmful gender stereotypes and the perception that a girl’s only role is motherhood,” she says.

In one of the country’s regions where Plan International works, that number has been reduced to zero by engaging youth in opportunities to learn about their sexual and reproductive health and rights. Interventions like these help provide a pathway to brighter futures — educating girls when they’re young results in healthier women with higher incomes and increased decision-making abilities.

“As we’ve seen in El Salvador, in so many communities worldwide and here at home, empowering girls and

women creates a ripple effect that benefits whole societies.”

Equality for all

“Even though we’re primarily known for our Because I am a Girl initiative, we don’t only work with women and girls,” says Riseboro. “We partner with communities in 75 countries, striving to achieve gender equality for all. That means actively involving men and boys. I’ve seen men become really engaged with this work once they have a daughter. But we’ve got to get past that. Regardless, men have an important role to play.”

Countries where women have more education and access to their rights, according to Riseboro, are more prosperous.

“Working together to protect children and empower women and girls is the solution,” says Riseboro. “Gender equality means a better world for us all.”

Rob Cserynik



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Plenty of Leadership Opportunities for Women in the Trades

The industrial trades offer a wealth of career advantages to women — high pay, freedom, independence, career satisfaction, and opportunities for advancement. Unionized tradeswomen are also eligible for generous benefits and retirement pensions. Yet women make up only about three to five percent of workers in the construction trade industry, with an even lesser percentage in leadership roles.

Industry association working toward inclusion

With the industry being so male-dominated, trade organizations like the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry (UA Canada) are taking steps to promote diversity within the construction trades and to encourage more women to consider the trades as career options. “It can be a very fulfilling career with room for advancement,” says Alanna Marklund, the National Manager of Youth, Diversity and Indigenous Relations with UA Canada. “Once you’ve earned your Red Seal ticket, no one can take it away from you. You will always have something practical to fall back on. It’s a skill set you’ll never lose, and it provides opportunity to open many doors in your career.”

Within the UA construction trades, women can become plumbers, pipefitters/steamfitters, sprinkler fitters, welders, instrumentation technicians, and refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics. As they gain experience, they can advance to leadership positions, such as trade school instructors, site supervisors, project managers, and quality control inspectors.

Marklund — a Red Seal journeyman welder herself — believes more opportunities to participate in the decision-making process will help women advance in the trades. “The diverse perspectives and opinions that women bring to this process are very important not only for recruiting women, but also for retaining them and having them advance to senior leadership positions,” she says. “Even for things like maternity leave, it’s going to bring about those conversations, ensuring that women at the table have a say as well.”

Learn on the job

Unlike many jobs where a college or university degree is required up front, a trade is something one learns through a combination of on-the-job and classroom training through a three- to five-year apprenticeship program. “You’re not born with these skills, they’re learned, and that’s why it’s important to have women coming into the trades, so we can teach women apprentices how to do it, and set an example for the new workforce,” says Marklund.

What kinds of women are suited for the trades? Marklund says trade jobs are ideally suited for women with a positive attitude and strong work ethic who aren’t afraid to get a little dirty and who enjoy seeing a project go from start to finish. “You can drive by a building later in life and say, I helped build that.”

Anne Papmehl



Alanna Marklund
National Manager, Youth,
Diversity & Indigenous Relations,
UA Canada



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Banking on Inclusion and Diversity

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Vivian Abdelmessih
Senior Vice President
& Chief Risk Officer,
Canadian Banking, TD Bank

At TD, the journey to creating an even more inclusive and diverse work environment isn't just a strategic imperative – it's at the very heart of the organization's core values. Fostering an inclusive and accessible environment where everyone feels welcome is essential to attracting and retaining the best talent. It also helps to achieve greater engagement with both customers and employees, and to expand capacity for innovation, driving better results. The bank's goal is to ensure that inclusion and diversity are embedded as much as possible into every aspect of the business, including workplace practices, customer relationships and community involvement.

And while a lot of progress has been made in inclusion and diversity at the bank over the past decade, TD knows there's still room to improve.

"While diverse representation remains important, we have a long way to go towards increasing women's engagement and advancement," says Vivian Abdelmessih,

Senior Vice President and Chief Risk Officer, Canadian Banking, TD Bank.

Research shows that women across many industries are primarily in support and relationship roles rather than management roles and that conscious and unconscious biases against women remain as barriers to entrance for many.

"To build a truly inclusive workplace we need to make some fundamental changes to how we define success and what leadership looks like," adds Abdelmessih. "Hiring a diverse slate of employees is just the first step. We also have a role to play in ensuring that we foster a culture where everyone feels valued, respected, and has a sense of belonging and opportunity."

Abdelmessih says that organizations need to develop their talent by training diversity and inclusion-savvy leaders to give them the skills and capabilities required to build and lead diverse teams. "People need to be given tools and understanding so they can not only successfully

manage across differences but gain the benefits of diversity within their teams," she says.

Abdelmessih acknowledges that representation in top levels of leadership plays a key role. "The differences among us can impact the trajectory of our career. If you never see someone like you in a leadership position, it's hard to think you can ever achieve that level of success. That's one of the reasons why role models are so important. They change the realm of possibility and embolden others to believe that they, too, can get there."

Abdelmessih is encouraged that conversations about diversity and inclusivity are evolving. "Every one of us has a role to play to help close the gaps between us," she says. "We are changing people's lives for the better by acknowledging inclusion, and in turn, highlighting opportunities for women and diverse groups that may not have been considered in the past."

Ken Donohue

Diversity Makes the Difference at Humber

Humber College is home to hundreds of diverse programs offered at all levels, from marketing to police foundations to robotics. The school strives for inclusion and diversity, especially through improving the gender balance in fields where women have been traditionally underrepresented.

Mediaplanet What is your educational background?

Rani Dhaliwal I went to high school in England and then attended York University where I earned a Bachelor of Business Administration and a Bachelor of Economics. I became a Certified Management Accountant, completed a post-grad Chartered Director program at McMaster University, and completed a sustainability leadership program at Harvard University.

I'm a continuous learner. I think there's no end to one's journey in terms of developing and

growing one's perspectives. I also reflect the immigrant experience. My parents left my home country, India, to give us better opportunities and a better education.

MP How does Humber address gender inclusion and diversity?

RD In addition to having a student population from more than 138 countries and nationalities, we have a Centre for Human Rights, Equity, and Diversity that provides our students and staff with training and programming around events like Black History Month. We also promote inclusivity through our Aboriginal Resource Centre and our LGBTQ+ Resource Centre, among many other student support and success areas. Academically, we're working to address equity and access in some of our programs, specifically the trades, in which the gender mix leans more toward males.

As a part of the college's commitment to equity

and diversity, we have many ongoing outreach programs aimed at narrowing the gender gap, and providing opportunities for all students to find the program that is best for them. Humber's polytechnic approach focuses on the breadth and depth of credentials offered and the seamless pathways between them, offering students options on their academic journey.

MP How do you ensure student success? Are there still barriers?

RD At Humber, we want every student to be successful and to have a positive college experience. There are better opportunities today than there have been in the past, but it takes time. Our Academic and Student Success and Engagement teams provide strong support systems for students to enable their success. That's the Humber culture.

Zoe Davey



Rani Dhaliwal
Senior Vice President, Planning & Corporate
Services; CFO, Humber College

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Preparing Young Canadians to Thrive in 2067



Dr. Bonnie Schmidt
President & Founder,
Let's Talk Science

Let's Talk Science is a national charitable organization that creates and delivers programs and services to engage children, youth, and educators in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). President and founder Dr. Bonnie Schmidt recently talked to us about the importance of STEM and the best way to teach it.

Mediaplanet In October 2016, Let's Talk Science launched Canada 2067, an initiative aimed at developing a national vision for STEM learning. Can you tell us more about that?

Bonnie Schmidt Canada 2067 was designed to create a 'made in Canada' plan with clear goals to help youth prepare for a world that is being transformed by science and technology. We've engaged students, educators, millennials, parents, community, and industry leaders and we've looked around the world to learn from others. It's an exciting time and there is strong interest in collaboration to support kids. Everyone can get involved!

MP What is one of your biggest priorities when creating STEM programs?

BS Inclusivity. We have only five million school-age children in Canada, so we can't afford to miss any of them. We must commit to designing programs that are accessible to all children and youth regardless of geography, gender, culture or financial status.

MP There's a stereotype that boys are better at math and science. Is it true?

BS There is no empirical evidence that suggests the capacity to learn STEM is unequal between genders. International science tests have shown no gender

difference in performance, for example. Girls are interested in STEM too, but they do tend to gravitate to life sciences whereas boys lean more towards physical sciences. Girls often underestimate their own abilities.

MP How does your programming take gender diversity into consideration?

BS We do that by considering research that has been done for gender and learning. For example, the way we organize workshops for young children. If we have all the materials in the middle of the table before the session starts, boys will usually jump in and start playing with them right away whereas the girls will wait to get instructions. Then, they see that the boys have already started building and so they'll take on other jobs like note-taker. We try to facilitate sessions to respect all learning styles and promote active engagement.

MP What is the overarching goal of Let's Talk Science?

BS We want young Canadians to be able to thrive and contribute to the world of tomorrow. There are critical issues facing the world, including climate change, the lack of clean drinking water, and energy sustainability, that we as a global community need to deal with so STEM is vitally important.

Randi Druzin

To celebrate International Women's Day, learn more about Let's Talk Science and women in STEM. Visit letstalkscience.ca/WomenInSTEM

FAST-TRACK TO AN ACCOUNTING CAREER AT GOODMAN



Pascale Lapointe-Antunes
Associate Professor,
Accounting, Goodman School of
Business, Brock University

Last year, Pascale Lapointe-Antunes an Associate Professor of Accounting at Brock University's Goodman School of Business, received the prestigious title of Fellow and the FCPA designation from the Council of the Chartered Professional Accountants of Ontario (CPA Ontario), the highest distinction in the accounting profession.

Mediaplanet What should students know about accounting as a profession?

Pascale Lapointe-Antunes It's a great path to success. There are misconceptions about what it means to be an accountant. It's not just about numbers — accounting is about professional judgment and decision-making.

MP What's the benefit of getting a fast-track Master's in Accounting?

PL Our Bachelor of Accounting (BAcc) students can continue directly to our Master of Accountancy (MAcc) program through our accredited CPA pathway. The MAcc takes only eight months and leads right to the CPA exam. This is a faster route and gives students the full grad school experience.

Alternatively, students can enter CPA Canada's Professional Education Program, which takes two years.

MP What makes Goodman's MAcc special?

PL Of last year's 55 MAcc grads, 52 passed the CPA's qualifying exam. Three of our grads were on the exam's national honour roll. We have a high pass rate, but we also have happy students. The MAcc is intense, but students feel supported and accompanied in the learning process.

In addition to the accredited fast-track BAcc/MAcc pathway, Goodman offers an MBA and a Master's of Professional Accounting that lead to CPA's Professional Education Program.

Zoe Davey

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