

## WOMENTORSHIP

The Betty-Ann Heggie  
Womentorship Program

### Past Speakers

- **Betty-Ann Heggie**
- Veronique Larlham
- Lauryn Oates
- Barb Stegemann
- Dr. Sakena Yacoobi

### Calendar of Events

How Do I Join?

Testimonials

Photo Gallery

## Betty-Ann Heggie

Former PotashCorp Senior VP

Co-founder of Womentorship program



### Did you always know you were going to find your success from empowering others?

I always say that you have to think about where you get your energy from. You get 80% of your results from 20% of your energy if you're being who you are. And it's going to have more meaning for you because you're going to feel like you're being authentic. Wanting things to be better has always been a driving force in my life. And it was always about making things better for the community, for people. It was never about, "I want to go out and do that for myself." It was, "How do we improve the system? How do we make things better?"

### When did you first consider yourself as a mentor for others?

I think that mentorship has always been something that I did when I look back. I was the oldest of four so I think it was quite natural that I mentored younger siblings. I was the first in the family to get my license so I used to drive my siblings ... I remember one of my brothers saying, "Oh, I hate some

of those car trips when she gives me her lectures on life."

So, I think mentorship has always been a part of me but I don't think I really identified that it was mentorship so much as when I was still working at Potash. I'd been in the job I was doing for a long time and I was realizing that I was getting the most energy from the mentorship I was doing with a lot of the young people that were coming into the organization. It was almost like, "I've been here. I've had my career. I've done my thing, but how can I help you now do your thing?"

### How did the idea for Womentorship arise?

It was kind of a natural thing for me when I left the corporate world to continue to mentor people. I would have a lot of young women phone me up and say, "I just want some advice on this" or "Can we have coffee?" and so I got to the point where I was doing a lot of mentorship myself. I was overlooked. And I got to the point where I thought, "Well, I really can't adopt the world."

I started going out and giving these speeches on mentorship and its importance and people would phone me up and say, "I've got a young woman in my office and I wonder if you'd mentor her," and I'd say, "I'm tapped out but I'll match her with somebody. Let's get together and have lunch. I'll listen to her goals and aspirations and I'll go home and I'll find someone to be her mentor."

Eventually I was getting too many people that needed matches. So I went to the Edwards School of Business and said, "Would you consider running a mentorship program for women? I'd be happy to sponsor it. I'd be involved and I can help you find the mentors." So, they agreed and we've had the program running for a couple of years now.

### How are male and female mentors different, and why did you choose to start a women-focused mentorship program?

I'm such a believer in mentorship. I believe that women need that connection. When I went through work, there weren't women in higher positions than me and so I just didn't have anybody that I could call upon, that I could emulate, that I could even ask, "How did you work this out?"

The purpose of this program is to match women with women although, frankly, if a guy came in and wanted to be matched with a woman, we would do it. But it's meant to match women with women and I encourage women to have a myriad of mentors. This shouldn't be your only mentor. This is a formalized program. This program says we match you with someone; it's a one year commitment. You get a meeting once a quarter for an hour with that person. The protégé does all the work. They set up the meeting and come up with an agenda. The mentor's job is just to show up and give advice based on their own experience. It's a male system. Women can say, "Yeah, I've been there and here's how I handled it."

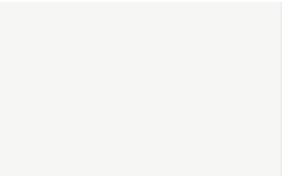
But I do encourage women in the program to find male mentors because mentors can open doors for you. They can get you into meetings and – let's face it – men are the ones who are largely in positions of power in our organizations. So having a male mentor can open a lot of doors for you.

### Who was your first mentor?

Probably my mother. It's interesting – you talk to women and almost always it's a mother. In my case, I had a working mother in a time when it wasn't fashionable for women to work. She gave me a lot of good advice. She was a teacher. She said throughout her career, whenever she ran into problems, she would always think to herself, "OK, what would a man do in my situation?" It always helped her understand the masculine thinking. It was something I used my whole life – a very important piece of mentorship advice.

### How do mentoring relationships evolve over time?

You parent your children and when they go away to university, you become a mentor because they're away doing their own thing. What you're doing now is just giving your perspective and letting them live their lives. What we're doing in mentorship is elevating you. We're giving you a hand up to bring you to our level. And then we're ultimately like birdies and kick you out of the nest. And that's really what mentorship is.



And eventually those protégés, when you're a mentor, become your friend. That's one of the reasons we have set up this program so it's a one year term. When the year is up, we don't have any obligation to call each other or to see each other but we're still connected because we've had this close relationship. If my protégés ever have an issue, they call and we discuss it but now I'm a friend.

I think your whole life you should get a mentor and be a mentor. I think at all stages of our lives, we could use somebody that we can turn to.