

Newsletter of the Canadian Women Voters Congress and the Women's Campaign Schools of Canada™

Campaign

**Canadian
Women
Voters
Congress**



2004 Women's Campaign School class photo.

inside

Defining proportional representation

What does it mean? 2

Alumni

Suzanne Anton on her experience as a Campaign School graduate. 2

An evening with Belinda Stronach

The annual celebration of women in politics. 3

Campaign School graduates making their mark

Recognition of recent success. 3

Across borders

The Canadian Women's Voters Congress talks to the Yale Women's Campaign School. 4

Getting the skills to shape your future

Ever thought of running for public office? Maybe you want to support others by working on a campaign.

Register today for the 7th annual Women's Campaign School at UBC, to be held Feb. 11-13, 2005. The Women's Campaign School is a non-issue-based, non-partisan, intense three-day program that gives you the basic skills to run or be involved in a successful political campaign.

Instructors are female politicians and political advisors who will share their own experiences: first-hand knowledge of campaign strategies, fundraising, harmonizing politics and family, campaign ethics, and the necessity for an equal voice in government. They'll help you understand the many opportunities to get involved, and the important questions to ask yourself first about where you want to go. Hosted by the Canadian Women

Voters Congress, the Women's Campaign School will open with a keynote reception, followed by three days of courses at UBC Robson Square and at Vancouver City Hall.

Register Now! Registration is \$481.50. For details call 604-878-8228, send an e-mail congress@telus.net, or visit www.canadianwomenvoterscongress.org.

Join keynote speaker, federal MP Belinda Stronach, at the "Annual Celebration of Women in Politics". See page 3 for details.

Find your voice; it's time you were heard.



Defining proportional representation

By Janet Wiegand

Proportional representation has become a bit of a buzz word lately, but what does it mean?

Traditional electoral systems, like that used in Canada, are referred to as “first past the post” or “winner takes all”. Under a proportional representation system, of which there are many variations, there are multiple winners. Representatives are elected based on the proportion of the support they received — put simply, if your party wins in a third of the electoral

districts it gets a third of the seats. Countries with the highest percentages of women in elected office are typically those that have changed their electoral systems. Most often, they have adopted forms of proportional representation in combination with proactive measures or quotas that ensure both men and women are guaranteed a minimum level of representation. Despite nearly a century with the vote, Canadian women have struggled to maintain 21 per cent representation federally, yet we represent more than half of the population. Women aren't fairing much better at provincial or municipal levels.

Countries with the highest percentages of women in elected office are typically those that have changed their electoral systems

From the editor: A new electoral system for B.C.?



By Amy Sept Gilchrist

Single Transferable Vote is the electoral system alternative that has been overwhelmingly recommended by the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform in British Columbia as a possible change to the status quo.

The Citizens' Assembly's process has been recognized world-wide, its recommendation now scrutinized by the media. In the next issue of *Campaign*, we'll look at the question that will be before British Columbians on the May 2005 ballot.

If you have a question about the Citizens' Assembly or the Single Transferable Vote system, please e-mail it to congress@telus.net.

For more information:

- Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform www.citizensassembly.bc.ca.
- The Assembly has published the details of its recommendation in a Final Report that is available on the Web site.

Canada has lagged behind other countries in trying to resolve the problem of under-representation, but that situation is beginning to change as some Canadian provinces — like British Columbia, through the Citizen's Assembly — and one territory begin initiatives to examine their electoral systems.

Because of electoral reforms, a few countries are quickly closing the gender gap. The single biggest factor in countries that are successfully increasing women's representation to parity is that they advocate for it. So get out to the public meetings in your province if you have an electoral reform initiative underway and raise the issue of women's under-representation. And if you live in a province with no such initiative, ask your elected officials to take one on.

For more information:

- Canada ranks #34 for women's representation on the list compiled by the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Visit their Web site at www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm.

Alumni Suzanne Anton, Vancouver B.C. Class of 2000



“The Campaign School taught me the joys of family support, and the intense pleasures of seeing people's resumes can be daunting — ignore them. I will likely run for Vancouver city council.”

“The gift that the Campaign School gives is the experience with the families, communities

Campaign School graduates making their mark

Recognition of recent success

By Lorraine Sims



Fifty-two women, eager to make a bigger difference, graduated from the Women's Campaign School in February 2004. They came from across the country and across the spectrum of political parties to participate in the only non-partisan, non-issued-based campaign school for women in Canada. And they participated fully – engaging each other, the speakers, and all the resources provided by the Congress.

As a testament to the time and talents devoted by our many volunteers to increase women's participation in all levels of government, we would like to recognize graduates – many from this year's school – who have enjoyed recent success. Although they may not have won their seats this time around, their initiative and dedication deserve commendation!

Federal election in June 2004:

Katrina Carroll-Foster, Campaign Manager, West Vancouver-Sunshine Coast

Nancy Clegg, Candidate, Newton-North Delta

Kathleen Cook, Campaign Manager, Cariboo-Prince George

Jen Fisher-Bradley, Candidate, Esquimalt-Juan de Fuca

Danica Hendry, Campaign Manager, Vancouver-Kingsway

Pummy Kaur, Candidate, White Rock-South Surrey-Cloverdale

Shelley Leonhardt, Candidate, Delta-Richmond East

Tracey Mann, Candidate, Vancouver-Kingsway

Dana Miller, Candidate, Delta-Richmond East

Pamela Munroe, Candidate, Vancouver Island North

Joyce Procure, Candidate, Okanagan-Coquihalla

Mary Pynenburg, Candidate, New Westminster

Other elections and appointments:

Julianne Doctor, elected Board Member to the Britannia Board of Management, Vancouver

Kathleen Cook, appointed Board Member to the BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation Board and also appointed City of Williams Lake 2010 Community Chairperson

Given these recent successes, I have every confidence that we are becoming strong effective voices that will shape a better world. Congratulations to all our grads!

An evening with Belinda Stronach



Belinda Stronach is the Conservative Member of Parliament for Newmarket-Aurora (Ontario). On Feb. 11, spend an evening with Ms. Stronach as she shares her story.

Her journey from Magna International Inc., where she was President and CEO, to her bid for the leadership of the Conservative Party of Canada, to her current position in government, have been widely discussed across the country.

She has been recognized internationally for her leadership and innovation, and in April 2004, *Time* magazine ranked her as one of the world's 100 most influential people.

Hosted at UBC Robson Square, the reception begins at 6:30 p.m., with the evening's program beginning at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15, and include refreshments. Call 604-878-8228 for more information or to reserve your tickets.

Interested in volunteering during this great event? Contact Melissa Tyson at 604-720-3698.

00 Current Occupation: Commissioner, Vancouver Park Board (elected 2002)

of networking and political connections, the intrigue of the backroom, the hard work of campaigning, the importance of political life. Most important is the focus on "you can do it!" no matter who you are or what your background. Other are them and with your own focus and determination, as well as your own experience, no matter at what level, you can ate and was able to be elected as a Vancouver Park Board commissioner — and am so taken with the political world that l in the next election.

to women is the knowledge of the value of having more women elected, and the realization that what they bring in their , and working lives is important and valuable to whichever political arena they are entering."



Canadian Women Voters Congress

Campaign is published by the Canadian Women Voters Congress, a non-partisan, grassroots organization dedicated to advancing women in politics.

Editor

Amy Sept Gilchrist

Designed by

Ginny Paulsen

Contributors for this issue - Suzanne Anton, Lorraine Sims, Janet Wiegand

Canadian Women Voters Congress
PO Box 4722 VMPO
Vancouver, BC V6B 4A4

t. 604.878.8228

f. 604.681.4545

e. congress@telus.net

Board of Directors 2004-05

- Renata Aebi, President
- Janet Wiegand, 1st Vice President
- Amy Sept Gilchrist, 2nd Vice President
- Anne Ellenberger, Treasurer
- Narinder Rihal, Secretary
- Anna Bloomfield
- Carol Metz Murray
- Nicole Prior
- Lorraine Sims
- Leslie Thompson
- Miriam Tratt

Campaign School

Honourary Co-Chairs

- Penny Priddy
- Hon. Linda Reid

Across borders

This summer, the Women's Campaign School at Yale University in Connecticut invited the Canadian Women Voters Congress to talk about the work it's doing here in Canada. Following are a few excerpts from the inspirational opening speech given by the Congress' past president Bernice Davidson.



"In 2002, the Women's Campaign School was thrilled to have three Serbian women attend from an organization called Voice of Difference...This group of 10 women trained 800 volunteers who spoke to 40,000 women, risking arrest to educate women how important it was that they vote. As a result of their door knocking, 70 per cent of Serbia's population went to the polls — and 71 per cent of all the voters were women.

“ Today we've reached 21 per cent. But...52 per cent of the population in Canada is comprised of women – that doesn't look like balanced representation to me.”

"Thirty years ago, only four per cent of members of parliament were women. Today we've reached 21 per cent. But...52 per cent

of the population in Canada is comprised of women – that doesn't look like balanced representation to me."

"The Congress is about encouraging women to use their voices in the government process, about encouraging women to participate in politics, and about supporting women in the process. It's difficult for women to run."

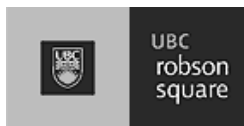
"We need to take a leaf from the book of our Serbian friends who were fighting not just an election, but for their lives and the very core of democracy. We need to leave our complacency at the door and start fighting for democracy, too."

The entire text of Bernice's speech is available through our Web site at www.canadianwomenvoterscongress.org.

Thank you to the sponsors of the 2004 Women's Campaign School

It is through your ongoing support that the Women's Campaign School stands as an example of what can happen when women across all political spectrums come together.

THE VANCOUVER SUN



and... Canada NewsWire, City of Vancouver, Jan Munro Thompson Insurance Services, Minerva Foundation, Pfizer, Sylvia Lim CGA, and Vancouver YWCA.