

Canadian Women Voters Congress

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Return this donation form and a cheque made payable to:
 Canadian Women Voters Congress
 PO Box 4722 - VMPO
 Vancouver, BC V6B 4A4 Canada
 For more information: Tel: 604-219-4014
 Fax: 604-681-4545

Founded in 1996, the Canadian Women Voters Congress is a non-partisan, grassroots organization dedicated to advancing women in politics.

The mission of the Congress is to demonstrate leadership by providing education, research, resources and opportunities for networking.

The Congress envisions a nation where women are proactive in directing their governments, and participate fully in the democratic process.

Thank you to the sponsors of the 2006 Women's Campaign School

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



Privacy Statement:
 At Canadian Women Voters Congress, your privacy is our priority. We adhere to all legislative requirements with respect to protecting privacy. The information we collect is used only to process donations, keep people informed about our activities, and ask for support to further our work. We do not disclose your information to other organizations. If at any time you wish to be excluded from any such contact, or have questions about our privacy policy, please contact Preet Virk at 604-219-4014.

www.canadianwomenvoterscongress.org

Canadian Women Voters Congress

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



Timing is Key

by Cyndy Hill

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

Now is the time to start strategizing, networking and planning. A week may feel like a lifetime for a candidate during an election but it can take several years of preparation to get there. Community connections, winning the nomination and building a solid team are all important steps in a successful run for office.

Hosted by the Canadian Women Voters Congress, the Women's Campaign School also includes the Celebration of Women in Politics on March 3, 2006 at 6:30pm with keynote speaker Sheila Copps.

Register today for the 9th Annual Women's Campaign School this March 3-5 at UBC Robson Square. The Women's Campaign School is a non-issue-based, non-partisan, intense three-day program that will give you the basic skills to run or be involved in a political campaign. The only non-partisan Campaign School of its kind in Canada, the instructors are veteran politicians and advisors from all parties, sharing practical skills and first-hand experiences from winning campaigns.

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. Whether you see yourself working behind the scenes or running as a candidate, the Women's Campaign School is for you.

Be sure to register early as spaces fill quickly. A limited number of bursaries are available. See www.canadianwomenvoterscongress.org/WCS-Registration.htm for more information and a bursary application form.

Talk the Talk with Sheila Copps

Considering her family history, some might say it's genetic. But Sheila Copps worked for every public office she held—and that's saying something.

After two decades in federal politics, five successive re-elections, several impressive cabinet posts including Deputy Prime Minister, and advocating tirelessly for women's rights, Ms. Copps is uniquely qualified to be the keynote speaker for the 2006 Celebration of Women in Politics.

See page 3 for details.

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



Canadian Women Voters Congress

Profile: Jenn McGinn

Candidate Parks Board, Vancouver Municipal Election Nov. 2005
Current Occupation: Executive Director, South Granville Seniors Centre



Position you sought in the civic election held last November and why. I ran for the Vancouver Park Board with the Coalition of Progressive Electors (COPE). I chose the Park Board because I have seen first hand the impact that access to park and recreation program and services can have on people's lives.

How did you prepare yourself in order to run? I have been active in politics for many years as a volunteer on other people's campaigns. I have seen first hand how campaigns work and all the "grunt" work that needs to happen to ensure a successful campaign. (I have been working on NDP MP Libby Davies' campaigns since she became an MP as well as other campaigns at all 3 levels). I have been a community activist all my life and have developed strong networks

throughout a variety of settings. So, it's a combination of working hard at the community level and the more formal political arena. When I became more serious about running, I consulted with friends, mentors, and colleagues and was humbled by how much support there was out there. You need that support on so many levels! I confirmed my decision to run after attending the Women's Campaign School.

How did attending the Women's Campaign School help you? The Women's Campaign School was amazing! The thing I found so helpful was the practical, hands-on approach. I also appreciated the variety of women presenting and that it was women from all political backgrounds and beliefs. They offered practical advice while, at the same time, being fairly frank about how much more difficult things can be for women candidates. I think it's important to know what we are getting ourselves into! The other women attending the school were great, too! It was wonderful meeting them and hearing why they are passionate about politics and their communities!

They [WCS] offered practical advice while at the same time, being fairly frank about how much more difficult things can be for women candidates.

Any words of wisdom for other women who are thinking of running in an election? I think the most important thing is to make sure you have a solid support network. That network is not just your political network, but your friends and family who will offer hugs, encouragement, someone to vent with and celebrate success with, people to help you with the day-to-day things you won't have as much time for (like laundry or babysitting your cat!). They say it takes a village to raise a child, I think the same could be true of a candidate. Don't be afraid to ask for help—it's out there!

Although you were not successful this time, would you run again?
Absolutely.

Alumni

Listed below are alumni of the Women's Campaign School who won their respective seats ...

- Jackie Ngai - Saanich - Council
- Suzanne Anton - Vancouver - Council
- Betty McIntosh - New Westminster - Council
- Lori Lynn Ackerman - Fort St. John - Council
- Joy Cameron - Nanaimo - Council
- Deborah Munoz - Prince George - Council
- Cynthia Chen - Richmond - Council
- Helen Kormendy - Village of Ashcroft - Council
- Penny Priddy - Surrey North - MP (BC)
- Linda Reid - Richmond East - MLA (BC)

Congratulations! If you have won your seat, please contact us and we will publish your name in our next newsletter.

From the President

By Janet Wiegand

As the newly formed Conservative government takes office, we come face to face with the realization that women's representation in Canada may be stagnating. After rising steadily for several decades, the past two federal elections (2004) and (2006) have resulted in an even percentage of women elected at approximately 21%. Surely, this cannot be a glass ceiling.

Of the 308 women who ran for office this past federal election, 64 were successful in winning their respective seat, in other words 16.8%. Over the years, the percentage of women candidates who win their seat is rising. This is good news. In order to continue this trend, we need to ensure that the pool of potential candidates is comprised of women who are prepared, are known within their parties, have a wide range of networks in their communities, and are knowledgeable on issues of importance to their communities. This preparation is an ongoing commitment. Any resources that will allow women to excel need to be explored and highlighted.

This is where the Women's Campaign School, run by the Canadian Women Voters Congress, comes in. Our three-day Campaign School brings together experienced women politicians and party strategists from across parties and from different levels of government who share their knowledge and hard-earned experiences in the political arena.

You can help by looking around and identifying women who you believe would benefit from further information and preparation, and inform them about the Women's Campaign School.



Sheila Copps: Talking the Talk

Born and raised in Hamilton, Ontario, Ms. Copps is a second-generation member of a political family that has dominated Hamilton-area politics on the municipal, provincial and federal levels. Her father, Victor K. Copps, was one of the most influential mayors of the City of Hamilton; the city's landmark sports arena, Copps Coliseum, is named in his honour. Her mother, Geraldine Copps, was a Hamilton city councillor.



Ms. Copps entered politics in 1981 by becoming the first Liberal in more than 50 years to represent the provincial riding of Hamilton Centre. In 1984, she ran for federal office and was elected to the House of Commons for the riding of Hamilton East.

Following the 1993 federal election, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien appointed Ms. Copps as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment. In that portfolio, she brought forward the strongest federal environmental assessment legislation in the world, instituted Canada's first framework for the "greening" of federal government operations, created a Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development and initiated the drafting of Canada's first national legislation to protect endangered species.

In January 1996, Ms. Copps was named Minister of Canadian Heritage. Among her achievements, Ms. Copps unveiled the Canada Television and Cable Production Fund for independent film and television production, brought in copyright protection for Canada's recording artists and producers and added 60,000 square kilometres of wilderness to Canada's national parks. She also started the work on a world instrument on culture that was implemented at UNESCO in October 2004—an idea that began in Canada following the threat of cultural domination that arose during the magazine wars with the Americans.

Retired from elected politics, Ms. Copps published her second autobiography *Worth Fighting For* in October 2004 (the first, *Nobody's Baby*, was published in 1986), hosts a weekly syndicated radio talk show, *Weekends with Sheila Copps*, focusing on lifestyle issues, and publishes four weekly columns for Sun media.

On March 3, 2006, take the opportunity to learn from and be inspired by the considerable experience and wisdom of Sheila Copps, a woman well known for her straight-forward approach.

Hosted at UBC Robson Square, the reception for the Celebration of Women in Politics begins at 6:30 p.m., with the evening's program beginning at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$50, and include refreshments.

To reserve tickets, contact Norma Miller at 604.742.2789 or nmiller@bcrea.bc.ca.

From the editor: New Year, Same Resolution

By Preet Virk

This year the Canadian Women Voters Congress is ready to meet our purpose with even more fire in our belly. We start the year with fresh faces to the Canadian Women Voters Congress Board of Directors. We embark on our 9th annual Women's Campaign School this year with Sheila Copps as this year's keynote speaker.

It is time we all got involved in increasing the number of women in politics. Whether you decide to run in the future, tell someone about the Campaign School or even just cast your ballot. Involvement is the first step.