



Regional Prosperity Initiative

Regional Prosperity Initiative Advisory Group Biographies of Members

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Iain Black

President & CEO, Greater Vancouver Board of Trade

Iain Black has led the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade since October 2011. Over these five years, the iconic 129-year-old organization has experienced a modern renaissance, with dramatic membership growth and a rediscovered relevancy for 21st-century business, government and thought leaders.

Iain came to the Board of Trade directly from the ranks of government, where he was elected twice to the provincial legislature and served as a cabinet minister in three different cabinet posts. His history before politics, however, is all private sector. His core strengths of communication, strategy development, and operational analysis and execution, were developed over 15 years in the technology and new economy sectors through increasingly complex and high-profile CEO assignments across both publicly traded and private companies.

Iain is married with three teenagers and a West Highland White Terrier.



Tony Geheran

Executive Vice-President and President, Broadband Networks, TELUS

Tony Geheran leads TELUS' Broadband Networks team – responsible for the design, implementation, marketing and deployment of our world-class Fibre-to-the-Premise (FTTP) network. By expanding our fibre-optic infrastructure directly to homes and businesses, the Broadband Networks team is providing TELUS customers with unprecedented speed and reliability. This important program is helping drive innovation in the delivery of education, healthcare solutions and consumer & business products and services while putting Canadian communities at the forefront of the emerging digital economy.



Prior to this role, Tony spent 5 years as Senior Vice-President of Customer Solutions Delivery, where he led a team of more than 5,000 TELUS team members and partners across Canada responsible for delivering TELUS wireline services to consumer and business customers. Tony has a wealth of experience in the telecommunications industry having previously led several teams in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. As a Director with Cable & Wireless Communications, Tony oversaw a multi-million dollar investment to bring new data, mobile and voice solutions to Ireland. He also specialized in Managed Services and Business Services with Mercury Communications and NYNEX Cablecomms UK.

Tony is a graduate of the Cranfield School of Management with a Diploma in Professional Marketing from the Chartered Institute of Marketing. He holds a Professional Certificate in Business Administration from Open University and received his Professional Qualifications in Mechanical and Electrical Engineering while serving in the Royal Navy.

Kathy Kinloch

President, British Columbia Institute of Technology

Kathy Kinloch is President of the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) – Canada's premier polytechnic institution – a position she has held since January 2014.

Kathy is recognized for leading organizational renewal in complex environments. Through a number of senior leadership and executive roles, she has spearheaded change initiatives in the post-secondary as well as government and health care sectors.

At BCIT, she is focusing on efforts to broaden and deepen BCIT's partnerships with business, industry and community, and on taking BCIT globally.

In 2016, Kathy was named a Woman of Distinction by the YWCA Metro Vancouver. She was also recognized in 2015 by BC Business as one of the 50 most influential women in British Columbia; by Vancouver Magazine on the top 50 Power list; and by WXN as one of Canada's most powerful women: top 100 in the category of Public Sector Leaders.



Val Litwin

President & Chief Executive Officer, BC Chamber of Commerce

Entrepreneur and local Chamber leader Val Litwin became the new President and CEO of the BC Chamber of Commerce on September 7.

Most recently, Litwin served as CEO of the Whistler Chamber of Commerce for three years, where he grew its membership, launched a world-class educational partnership with the Gustavson School of Business at the University of Victoria (which was recently featured on Forbes.com) and reinvigorated the Chamber's brand.

In 2007, Litwin co-founded a first-to-market concept, Blo Blow Dry Bar, which has since grown to more than 70 locations worldwide. In 2011, as Vice President of Franchise Operations at Nurse Next Door, Canada's largest homecare company, he helped drive the franchise system's fast growth into the US market. Litwin also knows the social enterprise space. In 2002, he co-founded Extreme Kindness and launched volunteer tours and a web series based on committing random act of kindness across Canada and the U.S. The tours evolved into a best-selling book on corporate social responsibility and the power of communities to build social capital.



Santa Ono

President & Vice-Chancellor, University of British Columbia

Professor Santa Ono officially stepped into his role as President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of British Columbia on August 15, 2016.

As a professor of medicine and biology, Professor Ono has worked at Harvard, Johns Hopkins, University College London, and Emory universities. Last year he was inducted by Johns Hopkins into its Society of Scholars, which honours former faculty who have gained distinction in their fields. Ono's research encompasses the immune system, eye inflammation and age-related macular degeneration – a leading cause of blindness. He and his research team are working to develop a blood test that could identify biomarkers in people who are progressing towards the disease.



As a university administrator, Ono is also known for his vision beyond the laboratory. He was the first Asian-American president of the University of Cincinnati when he was appointed in 2012. Previously, he served as the University Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. Prior to his recruitment to the University of Cincinnati, Ono was Senior Vice Provost and Deputy to the Provost at Emory University. Ono is deeply committed to diversity and his achievements were recently recognized by the American Council on Education with an award that honours individuals who have demonstrated leadership and commitment on a national level to the advancement of racial and ethnic minorities in higher education. Inside Higher Education named him America's most notable university president in 2015.

An avid music lover, whose tastes range from Rihanna to Rachmaninoff, Ono studied at the Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore and remarkably still finds time to sing and play his cello – even taking to the concert stage to perform on occasion. His family also helps him stay grounded. Ono is an active father to his two daughters, Juliana, 18, and Sarah, 12, who are also musically talented. UBC is certain to enjoy the lively engagement of his wife Wendy Yip, who trained as an immunologist at McGill and as a lawyer at Boston University.

Andrew Petter

President, Simon Fraser University

Andrew Petter QC. is President of Simon Fraser University and professor in its School of Public Policy. Prior to joining SFU in 2010, he was professor in the Faculty of Law of the University of Victoria where he served as Dean from 2001 to 2008. He previously taught at Osgoode Hall Law School and practiced law with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice.

From 1991 to 2001, Professor Petter served as an MLA of the Province of British Columbia and held numerous cabinet portfolios, including Advanced Education and Attorney General.

He has written extensively in areas of Constitutional Law and Public Policy, including works on the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Canadian federalism.

Professor Petter holds an LL.B. from University of Victoria, where he was gold medalist, and an LL.M. with first class honours from Cambridge University. He is a member of the British Columbia and Saskatchewan law societies.

Since coming to SFU, President Petter has overseen the development of a Strategic Vision that seeks to distinguish SFU as “Canada’s most community-engaged research university.” The vision commits the university to “expand its community connections as an integral part of its academic mission” and to “maximize the capacities of its three campuses to enhance the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities both locally and globally.”



Robin Silvester

President & Chief Executive Officer

Mr. Silvester was appointed president and chief executive officer of the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority in 2009, bringing to the position extensive international experience in both the port and property sectors. Prior to joining the port authority, Mr. Silvester served as chief executive for the property and facilities management business, United Group Services ANZ in Australia.

Mr. Silvester spent a significant portion of his career serving in senior roles internationally with P&O Ports. As chief development officer, Mr. Silvester led the company's strategy and global acquisition program, including the businesses that became P&O Ports Canada. Having completed that acquisition, in 2003 Mr. Silvester was appointed the first president and chief executive officer of P&O Ports Canada, based in Vancouver.



In 2004, Mr. Silvester relocated from Vancouver to London, United Kingdom, and later to Sydney, Australia, as a member of the P&O Ports global executive team. Following the acquisition of P&O, then the world's fourth largest container terminal operator, by Dubai Ports World in 2006, Mr. Silvester remained in Sydney and joined United Group Limited, an ASX 100 listed Engineering and Property Services firm, as chief development officer. He led the \$500 million acquisition of U.S. facilities management business Unico. He was later appointed chief executive of United Group Services ANZ, responsible for leading the company's property and facilities management business in Australia and New Zealand.

Mr. Silvester began his career in the chemicals industry in the United Kingdom. He also worked in business management and strategy roles in the steel industry and was involved in British Steel's acquisition program.

Mr. Silvester is a Chartered Engineer, Institute of Corporate Directors, ICD.D, and a graduate of Cambridge University. He completed a corporate finance program at the London Business School. Mr. Silvester is a board member and former chair of the Association of Canadian Port Authorities, an executive member and past chair of the Greater Vancouver Gateway Council, chair of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade and past chair of its Policy Council, a director of the Western Transportation Advisory Council, a board member of the Canada West Foundation, a member of the executive committee of the British Columbia Business Council and a past board member of the British Columbia Maritime Employers' Association.

Tamara Vrooman

President & Chief Executive Officer, Vancity

As President & Chief Executive Officer of Vancity, Canada's largest community credit union, Tamara Vrooman believes that banking has a vital role in developing a healthy society—building the well-being of people and, at the same time, ensuring the long-term sustainability of the communities in which they live and work. This summarizes Vancity's vision of redefining wealth.

Under Tamara's leadership, Vancity has gained international recognition for its values-based banking model—from becoming the first Canadian financial institution invited to join the Global Alliance for Banking on Values, an independent network of the world's leading sustainable banks and banking co-operatives, to an invitation from the Vatican to participate in a summit about creating a more inclusive economy.



Tamara's achievements at the credit union include leading Vancity to become the first carbon-neutral financial institution in North America, the largest private-sector living wage employer in Canada, and one of the first mainstream financial institutions to launch an alternative to predatory payday loans for its members—the Vancity Fair & Fast Loan™. Under Tamara's leadership the credit union has grown by over 60% to become Canada's 10th largest financial institution.

Before joining Vancity, Tamara served as Deputy Minister of Finance for B.C. from 2004 to mid-2007, and as Secretary to the Treasury Board, as well as Deputy Minister and Executive Financial Officer for the Ministry of Health.

Tamara lends her voice and leadership experience to issues related to women, families and children with a particular focus on issues related to equality, inclusion and empowerment. She has been recognized for her leadership with multiple awards and honours and is a frequent speaker at local, national and international conferences and symposia.

Jonathan Whitworth

Chief Executive Officer, Seaspan ULC

Jonathan Whitworth joined Seaspan in 2009 as Chief Executive Officer, bringing over 20 years of seagoing, shore side, strategic planning, management, and leadership experience to the organization.

After graduating from the Texas Maritime Academy, Jonathan sailed for six years as an officer aboard tankers and chemical carriers in the international market. He also still holds an unlimited chief mate's license, and a 1600- ton captain's license.

After completing his MBA at the University of North Texas, Jonathan came ashore and held a number of management positions at ExxonMobil and Teekay Shipping. He later became CEO of Maritrans Inc., the largest publicly held tug/barge and tanker operator in the US Jones Act trade. Maritrans was sold to Overseas Shipholding Group of New York, in 2006, and Jonathan was retained as President to continue the strategic plan created at Maritrans.

As CEO of Seaspan, Jonathan is responsible for developing and implementing the strategic plan, making major corporate decisions, managing the overall operations and resources of the company, and acting as the main point of communication between the board of directors and corporate operations.

Outside of Seaspan, Jonathan is involved in the industry and business community sitting on many boards including Industry Training Authority, Marine Transportation Advisory Council, Business Council of BC (past chair), Texas A&M University Galveston, Co-Chair - Board of Trade's "Greater Vancouver Economic Scorecard", and has been a member of YPO since 2004.



John Wiebe

Chief Executive Officer, GLOBE Group

Dr. John Wiebe established the GLOBE Foundation in 1993. The in-house expert on environmental business and on the application of sustainability principles to business ventures, he was recognized in 2011 as one of Canada's Clean16 – the 16 individuals who have done the most to advance the cause of sustainability and clean capitalism in Canada.



John has managed projects and advised governments and corporations in all parts of the world for the past 30 years. Until May of 2005 he was also the President & CEO of the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada and until April of 2007 was Chairman of the Board of the Canadian Education Centre Network and Global Schools Inc. He has been a senior executive with the Government of Canada and served on the National Roundtable on Environment and the Economy where he chaired the Capital Markets taskforce. He is a past Chair of the Vancouver Economic Development Commission and a past Director of the International Centre for Sustainable Cities, the McCrae Institute, Desert Gold Corporation, Boltens Capital Corp. Tonbridge Power Corp. and on the Advisory Boards of the Simon Fraser University Business School, the Banff School of Management and the East West Center.

He currently serves as the Chairman of the Green Table Network and as a Director of West Mountain Capital Corp., Advantage BC, and Eco Canada, and is Chairman of the Advisory Board of Ecosystem Restoration Associates Ltd. Though his travel commitments don't leave much spare time, he enjoys spending whatever's left with friends and colleagues on the golf course.

Yuen Pau Woo

Senator

The Honourable Yuen Pau Woo has three decades' experience in strategy and policy for business, government and not-for-profit organizations. Widely recognized as a leading thinker on international economic issues and Canada-Asia relations, he was appointed to the Senate of Canada in November 2016, and sits as an independent representing British Columbia.

Prior to joining the Senate, he was President of HQ Vancouver, a public-private partnership that promotes British Columbia as a location for head offices of international companies. From 2005-2014, he was President and CEO of the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, where he continues to serve as Distinguished East Asia Fellow. He is also Senior Resident Fellow at the Beedie School of Business, Simon Fraser University; Senior Fellow in Public Policy at the Institute of Asian Research, University of British Columbia; as well as co-founder and President of China Global: The Vancouver Society for Promotion of Chinese Art and Culture. He is chair of the board of the Vancouver Academy of Music, and a member of the Global Council of the Asia Society, as well as on the Advisory Boards of the Mosaic Institute, the Canadian Ditchley Foundation, and Global Diversity Exchange at Ryerson University. Mr Woo has previously worked for the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, the Monetary Authority of Singapore, and the Government of Singapore Investment Corporation; and he has been an advisor/consultant to the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, APEC, and the OECD. In 2012, he was honoured with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Award for his contributions to Canada-Asia relations.

