

## **Armchair Discussion**

In the spirit of this year's conference theme, *Create, Foster, Lead*, the armchair discussion will feature four distinguished guests who have successfully navigated careers in non-traditional roles. Conference MC, Dana Smith will interview Beth Bell, Margo Shaw, Rochelle Squires, and Karin Wittenberg about their experiences as representatives of industry, non-profit, politics, and academia. They will share their perspectives on challenges, successes, changes they've seen and goals for change we are seeking in STEM careers.

### **Dana Smith, Local Comedian**

Dana Smith is a Winnipeg comedian who regularly performs stand-up and sketch comedy across North America. She runs the very successful Women's Open Mic Comedy show at Wee Johnny's Irish Pub on the first Friday of every month. This show has been regularly featured in CBC's 'Top 5 things to do in Winnipeg'. This show has also sparked a vibrant community of women stand-up comedians.

Dana has been featured in the Just For Laughs (Vancouver) Comedy Festival, ODDBLOCK Comedy Festival, and the Winnipeg Comedy Festival. She will be opening for comedian Mark Forward this June and recently opened for Iliza Shlezinger in the Regent Casino Event Center.

In the past year, Dana and her sketch group H.U.N.K.S. have performed in Montreal, Seattle, San Francisco, Chicago, Edmonton and sold out shows in Vancouver and Toronto. Last year their Winnipeg Fringe show garnered a 5 STAR review from the Winnipeg Free Press and a 4 STAR review from the CBC.



**Beth Bell, Vice President, Partner & Canadian Public Sector Lead at IBM Global Business Services**

Beth Bell is a Vice President and IBM Global Business Services Canadian Public Sector Leader. Born, raised, and educated in Winnipeg, Beth grew her career in Winnipeg and was made an IBM executive in 2004. Beth has grown her career through taking several national roles while maintaining Winnipeg as her home.

Beth has a rich heritage in IBM's Diversity Community. She was the founder and former-Chair of the IBM Manitoba Women in Technology (WIT) Program, she conceived IBM's National Aboriginal Strategy in 2004 and is currently the Canadian Executive Sponsor for IBM Persons with Disabilities.

Beth is an active public speaker for IBM and passionate about developing women leaders.



**Margo Shaw, B.Sc., M.Sc.**

Margo has worked in the science field for 30 years. She began her career as an aquatic biologist with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in northern Ontario, and has since served as Executive Director for two non-profit corporations, lectured at college and universities, and as a consultant and business development manager in the private sector. Margo has a B.Sc. from Trent University and a M.Sc. from the University of Guelph.

**Rochelle Squires, MLA for Riel; Minister of the Department of Sport, Culture & Heritage; Minister for Francophone Affairs & Status of Women**

The Honourable Rochelle Squires was elected as the MLA for Riel in 2016 and appointed Minister of the Department of Sport, Culture and Heritage, as well as the Minister responsible for Francophone Affairs and Status of Women. A former journalist, Rochelle holds a bachelor of arts in communications from the University of Winnipeg, a master of fine arts from the University of British Columbia and a journalism diploma from Red River College. She and her husband Daniel have a combined family of five children and one grandson. Rochelle is an avid runner and is currently training to run a half marathon in May 2017.



**Karin Wittenberg, Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture & Food Sciences**

Dr. Karin Wittenberg has a doctorate in Ruminant Nutrition from the University of Manitoba, where she is now Dean of the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences. An initiative led by Dr. Wittenberg has resulted in the establishment of the National Centre for Livestock and the Environment (NCLE) at the University of Manitoba. Completed in 2007, NCLE plays a major role in training and research related to the complex economic, social, and environmental issues facing animal agriculture. Undergraduate and graduate students training in this program are highly sought by employers as a result of their field experience and ability to work on large, multi-disciplinary teams. The Centre's mission is to further the economic and environmental sustainability of integrated livestock and crop production.



Wittenberg also led the concept development, fundraising and construction for the Bruce D Campbell Farm & Food Discovery Center which features interactive displays and programming to explain the role of science in making food. To date, more than 30,000 visitors have come to the Centre to participate in activities that help them understand Canada's food production systems and nutrition literacy.

Wittenberg's work as a university academic and professional agrolgist reflects the continuing need to improve economic competitiveness and to address key issues facing animal agriculture. Recent keynote addresses have focused on Canada's role in global and national food security, the changing role of professional agrolgists and Prairie Agriculture in 2050. Wittenberg has been recognized for her contributions by the Canadian Society of Animal Science Award for Excellence in Nutrition and Meat Science in 2004, the YMCA Woman of the Year in Science and Innovation in 2008, the Education award from Manitoba Pork Council in 2009, and a Canadian Society of Animal Science fellowship award in 2013.

Wittenberg's research has focused on the plant and animal interface with more than 200 publications. This includes technology development to improve harvest and storage of forages as hay and silage; the study of animal energetics in grazing systems and application of novel technologies to allow us to estimate greenhouse gas emissions from cattle in commercial production systems.