



## **Volunteering at CAGP– Making a Difference in Strategic Charitable Giving!**

Volunteering is a powerful force in on our lives and communities. It exposes us to new people, experiences and ways of thinking. The Canadian Association of Gift Planners is a volunteer grassroots- driven organization that promotes strategic charitable giving. From its inception CAGP volunteers have strived to expand the philanthropic sector and support Canadians through initiatives that will make a difference in the lives that follow. The following are three such examples:

### **Marie-Anne Desjardins**

Chair, Montréal Chapter  
Collège de Montréal

Volunteering as a Chapter President for CAGP has been, and still is, one of the most rewarding parts of my career in philanthropy.

The Montreal Chapter has been, from its inception, a very dynamic organization. Every year, through our 10 monthly events, we bring over a dozen speakers to our members. Some are from Montreal, others from the rest of Canada, the USA or even the UK. By working hand in hand with the speakers we invite, so they can deliver presentations that meet the needs and interests of our attendees, I get to know and work with know a dozen professionals who excel at what they do and build relationships with them. They then become part of my network, part of the people I can then call upon should I need advice, have a question, need to hire a consultant or recommend a few advisors to donors. They expand my horizon and my own impact within my organization as a fundraiser and manager.

Secondly, I derive a great sense of accomplishment through my volunteer work for CAGP by participating in my colleagues' own professional development. It is not secret that fundraising is still very much a profession based in the US and English Canada. But here, in Quebec, we also strive to improve our practices and are hungry for knowledge that will make us even better fundraising professionals. Finding and bringing top experts in their respective fields to CAGP members so that they can perfect their trade and love the career they have chosen even more is very gratifying. So is giving colleagues who have developed their skills to a point that they have a lot to share with others a forum where to do this. I feel I not only serve CAGP while doing this but the profession as a whole, and therefore my community.

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### **Vicki Corbin**

Planned Giving Officer  
University of Saskatchewan  
Chair, Saskatchewan Chapter & LEAVE A LEGACY™

I have been involved with the LEAVE A LEGACY™ program through my local Chapter for many years. What has kept me coming back year after year? The fact that LEAVE A LEGACY™ benefits all charitable organizations in my community. That's a pretty widespread impact!

Since I have worked for various charitable organizations, I also see the value in LEAVE A LEGACY™ public awareness messaging. Particularly for organizations who LEAVE A LEGACY™ provides an invaluable service by planting the seed in the minds of donors to support those organizations that mean the most to them.

Many people don't feel that they are in a position to make a planned gift. LEAVE A LEGACY™ strives to inform people that planned giving is not only accessible to everyone, it also need not be complicated. With the "Top 10 Things You Can Do to Leave a Legacy Today" options for legacy giving are spelled out with the goal of motivating donors to talk with their advisors and favourite charities about putting a planned gift in place.



Another key to LEAVE A LEGACY™ success is the stories we tell. We are fortunate to have the support of many charitable organizations in communities across Canada. Through these organizations, we have access to a wealth of stories about the difference legacy gifts are making every day. LEAVE A LEGACY™ shares these stories through our events and advertising to inspire others to think about making their own legacy gifts.



*Vicki Corbin has focused her career on the not-for-profit sector and is currently a Planned Giving Officer with the University of Saskatchewan. She is particularly enthusiastic about Legacy Giving and has been involved with the LEAVE A LEGACY™ program for the past 7 years. She is honoured to work in a profession that makes an ongoing difference in her community.*

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**Ann Vessey**  
Development Officer, Planned Giving  
Office of External Relations  
Dalhousie University  
Chair, Communications Nova Scotia Chapter

For twenty-three of my 33 years working for Dalhousie University (Halifax, NS) I've worked in the External Relations (Alumni & Development) Department. In 2008, when appointed Development Officer, Planned Giving I immediately joined the NS Chapter of CAGP and have volunteered as Communications Chair since 2009. On behalf of CAGP, I regularly communicate with Nova Scotia non-profits - large and small - to promote CAGP's purpose to support philanthropy by fostering the development and growth of gift planning throughout the region. As the face of the NS Chapter, I'm the person (*or rather email address*) that sends information about upcoming CAGP-NS professional development workshops as well as pertinent notices to our members and other fundraising professionals. I look forward to our NS Chapter where I'm able to put the face to the name of someone who reached out to me regarding CAGP.

Because I'm the person who distributes our CAGP notices, I'm often the first person individuals contact when appointed to roles with 'planned giving' in their job description. I thoroughly welcome the opportunity to mentor and encourage others in this fulfilling profession, and, in fact, learn as much as I share. It's been my experience that professional fundraisers have always been ready and willing to share their time and experience with me, so I look at it as an opportunity to 'pay it forward'. I encourage everyone to refer to the CAGP website and to contact other CAGP members when they have questions.

My involvement with CAGP has provided me the opportunity to develop a close working relationship with our allied professionals in the financial services and estate planning fields as well. One of the benefits of this means I'm called upon to respond to inquiries from allied professionals or they may suggest their clients contact me directly. It's not uncommon that a donor to one organization in our region is a donor to other organizations so it can only be a win/win scenario for everyone involved. Estate planning is a time to consider who has made an impact on our lives and how we want to make a difference in the lives of others by leaving their legacy. It's my hope that I am able to help individuals experience the fulfillment that comes from supporting something truly important to them.

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Feeling inspired yourself? Get in touch with your local Chapter to find out how you can be a part of a [Chapter](#) or [LEAVE A LEGACY™](#) program in your community.