

Canada Sister Society Meeting Recap

First Virtual Meeting: September 24

In attendance – 62 people from across Canada.

- **Update from GWLN**

Eleni Giakoumopoulos, Global Women's Leadership Network (GWLN) Director, joined to give an update on the GWLN. She shared key insights from the recently concluded Asian Confederation of Credit Unions Conference's Forum. She mentioned that women have to create opportunities for themselves sometimes. Ask for those opportunities. Make your voices heard. We need to move women in leadership roles forward, change the data for women, and continue to do so. Click to watch the [GWLN @ 15 video](#).

- **Nuggets from Panel session "Making Our Voices Heard: Amplifying Women's Visibility and Representation in the Workplace."**

Women in leadership data have improved, but there is still much work to do. Here are some key points to remember from the panel:

- Making Mistakes: It's okay to make mistakes and learn from them. Be open to failing and taking risks, be curious, and always be open to learning, which will position you for leadership opportunities. Fail forward!
- The credit union sector is a great place to build a career, develop important skills, and create lifelong contacts. Its cooperative structure and concern for the community align with personal values and provide wonderful opportunities for women.
- Mentorship and sponsorship are crucial. Being kind means giving feedback and constructive criticism that can advance a career. For those seeking a mentor, take ownership of your career and find like-minded people to learn from. Mentorship can significantly impact your career trajectory in a positive way, but both mentor and mentee need to take ownership and be honest if the mentorship isn't working.
- Women should support each other by being aware of the struggles in a male-dominated society and doing what they can to support other women whenever possible. This means empowering other women, removing their barriers to opportunities, encouraging them to try new ideas, and supporting their personal development.
- Show compassion and be empathetic. Having the courage and confidence to make hard decisions while being vulnerable with your team is important.
- Tackle imposter syndrome by recognizing your achievements, having confidence in your abilities, and being willing to take on new opportunities. It's important to be realistic about your strengths and weaknesses and not compare yourself to a false ideal.
- Advocate for yourself and be comfortable expressing your needs. It's important to be as strong at advocating for ourselves as we are for other women.

- Be resilient and remember that challenges and setbacks are part of our unique learning journeys. Building support networks can help challenge negative thoughts and be confident enough to share when feeling vulnerable.
- Women want to have their voices heard, so keep sharing your voice for the betterment of ourselves and others.
- When doubting yourself, remember to look around the room and determine why you think anybody else can do it better than you.
- **Community Development – Volunteer at Dress for Success**
 - Dress for Success Canada Foundation is among Canada's most recognized registered charities in support of gender equity, economic independence and workforce development for women and non-binary individuals. Dress for Success Canada Foundation develops custom national partnerships to champion and fund Dress for Success locations from coast to coast.
 - Dress for Success Canada is the only national women's organization focused exclusively on pre-employment and job retention support for marginalized and low-income women and non-binary individuals. To optimize growth of our mission impact, the Dress for Success Canada Foundation was established in 2017 to ensure that every woman and non-binary individual in Canada is able to access the services of one of 13 affiliate locations coast-to-coast from Vancouver to Halifax. Our affiliates across the country have been serving women and non-binary individuals since 1999.
 - Dress for Success Canada Foundation plays a role in collaboration, alongside Canadian affiliates in strategic development, impact measurement and national brand building. Leveraging economies of scale, the Foundation supports the affiliates in building capacity, and establishing and maintaining operating efficiencies. Affiliates from coast-to-coast empower women into good jobs, financial empowerment and personal success through free pre-employment and career retentions, wrap-around supports and community building.
 - We implore the Canada Sister Society volunteers to volunteer at the affiliate locations. Please [take a look at their affiliate locations](#) and feel free to connect directly with those you might be interested in working with.
- **Upcoming Events:**
 - GWLN Virtual Executive Readiness Summit will ho Oct 30 – 31st, 2024. Register [here](#).
 - Canada Sister Society Meeting – December 4. Click [here](#) to join the Group.
- **GWLN Membership**
 - The GWLN is open to everyone to join. If you are interested in joining the GWLN, please click [here](#).
 - Join the Canada Sister Society by clicking [here](#).
- Access the meeting recording [here](#).