



## WW2G Trek connects outstanding women leaders across health and long-term care



**Returning participant Sharon Henderson, Vice President, Marketing and Communications, Chartwell Retirement Residences, joins us for the 2019 Trek.**

With Chartwell since 2009, Sharon's national role includes oversight for corporate and regional marketing, brand stewardship, online investment, corporate communication strategies and reputational risk.

Sharon's involvement with the Trek began in 2017. Invited by a colleague, she was pleased to "walk with a purpose" in support of a great cause. What she didn't expect was such an eye-opening and life-changing experience. "Sometimes you say yes without knowing how meaningful something will become to you," she explains. **"For me the Trek was not just a walk, it was the first step in a fulfilling personal journey."**

Sharon says those first days on the Trail, with a collective of capable women leaders, ignited an enduring passion for hiking. **She made lifelong friends who often join her now on hiking and camping holidays. She also greatly expanded her professional network**, key in both her career and role on the Ontario Retirement Communities Association Board of Directors, where she has served as VP Government Relations, President, Past President and currently Director, Public Affairs.

"The Trek connected me on a personal and professional level with so many wonderful people in the sector, afterward allowing me to pick up the phone anytime, anywhere, if I need to talk over any issue," says Sharon. **"When I attend sector events now, I feel the room is full of friends more than just colleagues."**

After graduating from Carleton University with a combined degree in Sociology and Law, Sharon worked for over 15 years as a political advisor at the federal, provincial and municipal levels. She also found time to complete a Certificate in Strategic Communications Management, and Executive Certificates in Marketing and Strategic Leadership from Queen's University, all while managing progressively senior leadership roles.

She attributes a good part of her success to those who mentored her during her career, and she always tells others - especially young women - not to be afraid to find someone they admire and respect, and ask for their time. **"The secret sauce for most people who've achieved any success is the generosity of other leaders,"** says Sharon. "I've had a lot of amazing mentors along the way who took the time to answer my questions and set an excellent example for me to follow."

For Sharon, emulating her mentors includes encouraging others to join the Trek, confident they will come out of the experience as she did, with far more than they ever anticipated.

"What this Trek offers is the gift of time, walking and talking in the most genuine way with an incredible group of people," says Sharon. **"Whether you walk 10 km or 100 km with us, you'll come out feeling stronger, enriched and more connected."**

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