

## 2015 RBC CANADIAN WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED TODAY

*Six outstanding female entrepreneurs awarded out of a record-breaking 5,000 nominees*

**TORONTO, NOVEMBER 19, 2015** – The 23<sup>rd</sup> annual RBC Canadian Women Entrepreneur Awards have named six winners of this year’s prestigious awards, including: the president of Calgary’s premiere boutique construction company; the visionary behind Canada’s leading provider of loans for almost 20 years, and; the CEO and founder of the most well-known seal of approval for children’s products in Canada.

“RBC is honoured to partner with Canadian women entrepreneurs who lead and drive business success in our economy and communities,” says Neil McLaughlin, executive vice president, Business Financial Services, RBC. “The awards allow us to celebrate their work and contributions while inspiring Canadians to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams.”

Presented by Women of Influence, the awards recognize the country’s leading female entrepreneurs who have made impressive and substantial contributions to the local, Canadian or global economy. This year’s judging panel is comprised of twelve of Canada’s top business leaders, including: Carol Toller, Executive Editor, PROFIT and Canadian Business Magazine; Tracie Crook, COO of McCarthy Tétrault LLP; Carrie Kirkman, President and Chief Merchant, Sears Canada; Rajini McRae, Head of HR Mergers and Acquisitions, RBC Royal Bank and; Raymonde Lavoie, Co-Founder and Partner, DesArts Communication.

The announcement was made at a gala reception on November 18 hosted by Diane Francis, editor-at-large for the Financial Post. Following a record-breaking 5,000 nominees, this year’s winners are:

- Sharon Vinderine, PTPA Media Inc., Toronto, ON, **Micro Business Award**
- Dr. Wendy McClelland, Vets to Go Inc., Calgary, AB, **Deloitte Start-Up Award**
- Allison Grafton, Rockwood Custom Homes, Calgary, AB, **RBC Momentum Award**
- Marcia Nozick, Eastside Movement for Business and Economic Renewal Society (EMBERS), Vancouver, BC, **TPH Charitable Giving Award**
- Janice Larocque, Spirit Staffing and Consulting Inc., Calgary, AB, **TELUS Trailblazer Award**
- Ann Kaplan, iFinance Canada Inc., Toronto, ON, **PROFIT Award for Excellence in Entrepreneurship**

Alicia Skalin, Co-CEO and Head of Events and Programming, Women of Influence Inc., praised the winners for their dedication and drive, and for paving the way for future generations of female entrepreneurs. “We are honoured to recognize the contributions of women entrepreneurs in Canada, helping to inspire new generations of innovators and leaders,” explained Ms. Skalin.

“The number of women-owned businesses continues to grow, and our nominee numbers reflect that—every year we’re setting a new record. The 2015 winners have turned their personal passions—from home renovation to animal care—into thriving businesses. They have earned the esteem of their peers and their communities, and are truly paving the way for future female entrepreneurs.”

For more information on this year’s award winners, visit [www.womenofinfluence.ca/rbc-cwea](http://www.womenofinfluence.ca/rbc-cwea).

### **About the RBC Canadian Women Entrepreneur Awards**

The 2015 RBC Canadian Women Entrepreneur Awards are presented by RBC and sponsors Deloitte, TELUS, The Printing House and PROFIT Magazine and are the pre-eminent national business awards recognizing the country’s leading female entrepreneurs. Now in its 23<sup>rd</sup> year, award recipients are selected based on a variety of criteria including, but not limited to, level of innovation, profitability and community impact. For more information, please visit: [www.womenofinfluence.ca/rbc-cwea](http://www.womenofinfluence.ca/rbc-cwea)

### **About Women of Influence**

Women of Influence Inc. is North America’s leading organization dedicated to the advancement of women. It produces and hosts the renowned Deloitte Women of Influence Luncheon Series and the Top 25 Women of Influence, in addition to the publishing the Women of Influence magazine. Women of Influence has a community and reach of 120,000 across North America including Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Waterloo, Ottawa, Montreal, New York City, Washington, DC, London, and Hong Kong. For more information, please visit: [www.womenofinfluence.ca](http://www.womenofinfluence.ca).

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