

LEADERSHIP | ‘Developing our region as a vibrant hub’

Board of Trade Director Rita Andreone on the importance of driving positive changes and ‘blue-sky’ thinking

Describe what you do in 15 words or less.

Corporate Director and Lawson Lundell LLP Chair and Governance, Investment and Corporate Partner.

Where is your hometown and how did it shape you as an individual?

I was born and reside in Greater Vancouver. This influences me in many ways, including my experiences and my community and professional roles. I appreciate our natural surroundings and the enjoyment they bring, I value community and relationships, and I place importance on engagement, personal responsibility, and hard work.

What was your first job?

I worked in the laundry for an extended care facility.

What is something that most people don't know about you?

This is not so unusual in Vancouver any longer, but my parents and extended family were mainly refugees. This informs my perspectives and certainly, my appreciation of every opportunity that Greater Vancouver,

its economy, industries, and institutions have afforded me — to take up, develop and make my own.

What is the most important lesson you learned from your parents?

I credit my parents for my work ethic and sense of personal responsibility, but also for the importance of family, community service, and compassion.

Why did you join the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade?

I hope that it is obvious that its role in developing our region as a vibrant hub for commerce, trade, travel, and free enterprise was a natural fit for me. By participating on the board of directors, I hope to actively define and advance its strategy, using all my skills, perspectives, and experience.

How do you think our region will be different 10 years from now?

Our region will continue to grow in importance and become a more populous hub for tourism, technology, and trade. Greater Vancouver will have much denser city centres, with

much more developed transit and transportation, but hopefully, remain green, vibrant, and desirable.

What is your creative outlet?

Cooking and eating. I love travelling and experiencing different cultures.

What is your favourite vacation spot?

Maui and Rome.

What is the last TV show you binge-watched?

“Veep” and “Grace and Frankie.” Same long weekend!

What were you like in high school?

Very young. I was idealistic and excited by possibilities.

If you could witness any event of the past, present, or future, what would it be?

So many possibilities, but I have often thought about this relatively recent one. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. I would to have liked to have witnessed the first people who crossed over into West Germany in the first few hours: the excitement,



Rita Andreone, Q.C.

optimism and the emotion, yes, but also the trepidation and fear of retribution? I recall watching footage of West Berliners lining entry points to greet East Berliners with champagne, cheers and hugs. Many restaurants offered the visitors free food. To have witnessed reunions of friends and family!

What qualities make someone successful?


Success is such a personal concept. Ultimately, isn't it achievement of goals, whatever they may be? I guess as a society, we look to certain benchmarks as evidence of success, but there are so many examples that call them into question. For me,

success is achieving personal equilibrium.

If you retired tomorrow, how would you keep busy?

Health permitting, most businesspeople I know that have “retired” seem busier than ever while doing more things that they enjoy. I think that many of us today define retirement differently than our parents did — more as a next stage, maybe with a broader purpose. I would hope to worry less about building in a personal sense and more about “blue-skying” possibilities, driving positive changes, and testing status-quo thinking. These are times of exponential developments. I'm already energized by those coming up behind me, but I see opportunities to lead, motivate, encourage, and guide them. **SB**

Rita Andreone is Chair of Lawson Lundell LLP's Executive Committee and Governance, Investment and Corporate Partner. She also serves as a Director of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade.

 The Greater Vancouver Board of Trade is fortunate to have 36 of our region's top executives and business leaders on its board of directors. For more information on these exceptional individuals, visit boardoftrade.com/directors.



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