

## **Keynote Address: Catherine Woodman, Deputy Minister of Business for the Province of Nova Scotia**

### ***Introduction:***

With Catherine's varied leadership experience, she will share her top learnings for forging your own career trajectory and making a meaningful contribution. Having started her career in the health sector, moved to the private sector, then to the non-profit (or social) sector, and now the public sector, she'll discuss how you can adjust successfully to new settings and cultures, using examples and insights from her own experience. She'll challenge you to think about your values, your legacy and how this vision can help guide and shape your career including supporting you during adversity. Catherine will cover the importance of diversity, inclusion and community engagement while being open to the unique contributions and perspectives you and others bring to work. Now embracing her new role as Deputy Minister of the Department of Business, she'll discuss the new department's mandate, and how government and Dalhousie can work together to help shape a better economic future for Nova Scotia.

### ***Biography:***

Catherine Woodman has a uniquely diverse background in both public relations and human resource management across the private, public and non-profit sectors.

Currently Catherine is Deputy Minister of Business for the Province of Nova Scotia, where she is tasked with helping to create the right conditions so the private sector can be successful. Working with industries and regions throughout the province, her focus is on areas with the greatest chance of making a difference in our economy including expanding trade, supporting start-ups and encouraging venture capital partnerships. When Premier McNeil appointed Catherine to this post, he called her, "A trusted voice in Nova Scotia's business community ... and a leader [with] the skills necessary to help us create one of the most competitive and business-friendly environments in Canada."

Before joining government, Catherine was President and CEO of United Way Halifax where she directed change at the community level. Under her leadership, United Way started a transformational change that focused on poverty and health, introduced new revenue streams, founded 211 Nova Scotia, forged effective relationships with three levels of government and boldly changed how United Way is perceived and understood.

A graduate of Mount Saint Vincent University, Catherine launched her public relations career at the IWK Children's Hospital. Maritime Life recruited her as Vice President Corporate and Public Affairs and in 1997, appointed her Vice President, Human Resources. In 2004, when Maritime Life was acquired by Manulife Financial, she led the team recommending people, skills and expertise for the new corporate structure.

An active community volunteer, Catherine is chair of the Lieutenant Governors Community Spirit Award, and a member of the board of directors at the Halifax Partnership. She has also served as chair of the board of Mount Saint Vincent University, and on the boards of Ronald MacDonald House, IWK Children's Hospital, YWCA, the Arthritis Society and the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Public Affairs.

Catherine received the Consumer Choice award, was named one of Atlantic Business Magazine's top 50 CEOs in Atlantic Canada and is the recipient of the Halifax Progress Woman of Excellence Award. She was also presented with the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal.

Catherine has completed four marathons and 14 half marathons. In 2013, she walked 790 km across Spain in the Camino de Santiago. She is mother to three and active in neighbourhood, church and school life.