



Indigenous Women In Business Virtual Conference 2021

Speaker Biography

Victoria LaBillois

“When the goin’ gets tough, the tough put on lipstick”

A Mi’gmaq entrepreneur from Listuguj, in the traditional district of [Gespe’gewa’gi](#), Victoria owns *Wejipeg Excavation Inc.* Created in 2011, her company participated in wind park development in her territory. In 2016, Victoria added to her businesses with [Wejuseg Construction Inc.](#) which she co-owns and serves as President. In addition, she owns rental properties in both New Brunswick and Quebec, launched an online clothing company [www.rezmopolitan.ca](#), and is a partner in other joint ventures in the region.

Victoria has served many roles for the surrounding First Nations and the federal public service, working at the community level, as well as regional and national levels. Her energy, passion and commitment to serve Indigenous people is extensive.

Victoria holds a Bachelor of Arts ('91) in political science and a Master’s in Business Administration ('04) both from the University of New Brunswick at Fredericton. Recipient of the E.D. Maher graduate student prize in administration awarded to her as the graduating MBA student with the highest GPA.

Post-secondary studies included a sojourn in the French Riviera at the Université Canadienne en France ('90). She also holds a contractor’s license ('11) from the Régie du bâtiment du Québec.



As coach and role model to many, Victoria serves as mentor to Indigenous women as part of the Indigenous Women in Community Leadership program at the Coady International Institute, St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia. She has also been a mentor to the New Brunswick Joint Economic Development Initiative (JEDI) Aboriginal Business Accelerator Program. Victoria works to ensure that her community members and locals have a foundation in financial literacy - helping to build foundational skills around managing money in general and specifically, per capita distributions.

Victoria is fluent in English, French and intermediate Mi'gmaq. With her gift for languages, Victoria is the go-to MC for events in her community. She is a founding member of the local woman's hand drum group, *Pugwalesg*, preserving and sharing the ancestral songs of the Mi'gmaq. Ensuring her culture and language continues to thrive is a passion.

Giving back is important to Victoria; she served as co-chair for a national Steering Committee with the Canadian Construction Association, overseeing development of an [Indigenous Engagement Guide for SMEs](#).

Victoria is active in the struggle to end violence against women. An unwavering advocate to the local Indigenous women's shelter, Victoria continuously supports the team in carrying out community-based prevention and healing activities.

Victoria is a proud alumna of the 2017 Governor General's Canadian Leadership Conference; with time spent examining Northern Ontario issues through a local lens and [exploring relationships between leadership and community](#).

In 2019, Victoria was selected to attend the Banff Forum where she enjoyed the discussions and challenging the status quo.

Current board service includes a Governor-in-Council appointment to the National Indigenous Economic Development Board and the local Listuguj Economic Development Commission.

National and International speaking engagements include the Māori Women's Entrepreneurs in New Zealand; Start-Up Canada Day on the Hill; Canadian Council of Forest Ministers; and the inaugural national Indigenous Women Leadership Summit. Victoria's diplomacy and leadership skills were evident in her role as moderator of the 2018 Peace and Friendship Leadership Dialogue with federal and provincial Ministers and New Brunswick Mi'gmaq and Wolastoqiyik Chiefs.

In 2019, Victoria was honoured by the WXN as one of Canada's Top 100 Most Powerful Women as an RBC Champion and again in 2020, in the category CP Skilled Trades.

Victoria has a great sense of humour, which enables her to infuse her relationships with a sense of warmth and humanity. As a point of interest, Victoria holds a Black Badge from the International Practical Shooting Confederation of Canada.

At home, she and her husband Ken give love and fundraising efforts to the local chapter of the SPCA, and happily pamper two rescues, Tiny Dancer & Marvin.