

SHOWING LEADERSHIP

Mary Moran was named president and chief executive officer of Calgary Economic Development in June, taking over from Bruce Graham who stepped down. Moran had been serving as vice-president of marketing, communications and research with the business organization prior to the promotion. Here she answers a few questions from *Shannon Sutherland-Smith* about her goals and inspirations.

Q Whose leadership style fascinates you?

A There are so many great leaders through history as well as in the current day, in politics and in business, that it is hard to choose, but I think I would have to go with Wilfrid Laurier (former prime minister of Canada), Winston Churchill (former British prime minister) and Walt Disney (founder of the Walt Disney Company).

I choose Wilfrid Laurier because he's Canadian and very much responsible for forming Alberta and Saskatchewan. I can't help but wonder what he would think of Alberta today and what we've become. He was great at taking divergent groups and forming a culture of success and I admire that.

I'm a huge war buff so Winston Churchill is an obvious choice. He overcame so much adversity. He had a vision and he sold that vision.

Walt Disney was an innovator and was incredibly creative. He was also an impressive communicator.

Q Tell us about a book, fiction or

non-fiction, that has influenced you as a leader and how so.

A I like to read and there are two books that really impacted me as a leader in particular. Breaking the Glass Ceiling gave me pragmatic and practical advice on managing in a male-dominated environment. I learned about this from personal experience from an early age — I grew up with four older brothers — and I have definitely seen parallels between the dinner table and the boardroom table!

The other book that really influenced me was Unbroken. It's a Second World War survival story, and what was striking to me was the leadership that was demonstrated (by American soldier Louis Zamperini) floating in a raft in the middle of the ocean.

He encouraged and inspired others to stay alive while facing death himself. And in the face of death, he didn't back down from his beliefs and values.

Q What are three areas you'd like to build on at Calgary Economic Development this year?

A Well, first, we're focusing on

increasing awareness of and engagement in our 10-year economic strategy. This is a guide to help us in both the ups and downs of economic cycles. We want people to understand we have a plan and are being very purposeful about goals such as diversification for sustainable growth, investing in shared prosperity and building stronger communities.

There is lots of really good work being done by all kinds of businesses and organizations in Calgary, but I look at it like a drawer full of ball bearings that are rolling around. We are the magnet. We bring focus and help people work together.

We partner with everyone from post-secondary institutions, the private sector and Calgary Airport Authority to really bring people together with common purposes.

Second, we want to establish a strong relationship with the new (provincial) government. They're new at their job and we're a conduit and connector to the Calgary business community. We have a macro view of the economy and I really believe we can provide some valuable input and insight.

And third, we want to more clearly define what Calgary Economic Development does in our business community and in other communities.

Q What is your favourite thing to do when you aren't working? What recharges you?

A I'm a competitive figure skater, so I love that as well as skiing and running. Being physically active recharges me.

Q Can you please finish these thoughts?

It really frustrates/disappoints



Mary Moran, president and CEO of Calgary Economic Development, with the many awards received by the business promotion organization.

PHOTO BY WIL ANDRUSCHAK

me when leaders ...

Don't focus on their people. Put your people first and the rest will come.

When I make a misstep as a leader, I think it's important to ...

Own it and learn from it.

If people were to describe my leadership style with five words, I'd hope they'd use these ...

Inspiring, humble, responsive, passionate and visionary.

DIRTT builds winning culture

SHANNON SUTHERLAND-SMITH

When the new chief financial officer walked into DIRTT's office for the first time nine years ago, he was greeted by the familiar, smiling face of Marty Peel — the guy who trained him to cook two decades earlier when he was a college student earning some cash at Earls in Bankers Hall.

"It was pretty great to see Marty. He was a great cook then, and he's a great cook now. Feeding people great food is just one of many ways we invest in the satisfaction of our employees and our clients," says Scott Jenkins, the former chief financial officer who is now president of DIRTT Environmental Solutions Ltd.

"Marty is one of many longtime employees. We have always paid very close attention to employee turnover.

"We have our fair share of incentives and perks like stock options, an on-site gym and carpooling programs, but people who call themselves DIRTTbags are pretty self-motivating."



President Scott Jenkins, third from left, with manufacturing staff members from DIRTT Environmental Solutions Ltd. PHOTO BY WIL ANDRUSCHAK

Jenkins says he believes the best way for leadership to understand the work environment is by working alongside employees in that same environment.

He gave up his permanent desk (there are no offices for anyone at DIRTT) to move around and work among all the different teams and says it was a terrific decision.

"People can hear me on the phone, we talk to each other and it really makes our leadership team very approachable," says Jenkins. "We know what's going on, they know what's going on, and we all collaborate. Our culture really defines us. It's our secret sauce," says Jenkins.

In 2010, DIRTT employed just over 550 people. As of the end of

2014, the Calgary-based manufacturer of customized, prefabricated interiors employed almost 870.

Last year, the company saw record earnings while launching new products, winning major contracts and focusing on growth through relationships with small and medium enterprises, which contributed to an exceptionally strong financial performance.

Jenkins says thanks to investments in a strong team, a simplified capital structure and a healthy balance sheet, DIRTT is well positioned to take advantage of growth opportunities throughout North America and now internationally.

"We're proud of where we came from and proud of where we're going," he says.

GlobalFest faces explosive popularity

SHANNON SUTHERLAND-SMITH

Alberta's most explosive festival is bursting at its seams.

That's the message GlobalFest producer Ken Goosen is shouting from the hilltop as the multicultural and international fireworks festival enters its 13th season.

More than 1.2 million audience members have passed through the GlobalFest gates at Elliston Park since its inception. Last year GlobalFest hosted Albertans from more than 100 communities outside of Calgary and a number of visitors from neighbouring provinces and states.

"In 2014, finale night ticket sales reached capacity three weeks prior to the festival," says Goosen.

"A waiting list of multicultural groups wishing to participate in the OneWorld Festival exists, but there's just not enough available green space."

Goosen says it's unfortunate organizers are turning away the very individuals, groups and organizations the event was created to serve.

"This is both a challenge and an opportunity," says Goosen. "We need to grow to meet the demand and at the same time remain affordable and accessible.

"The validation in the work we are doing can be seen in the overwhelming demand."



Ken Goosen, producer of GlobalFest, says the popular event is in need of larger grounds.

PHOTO BY WIL ANDRUSCHAK

The board of directors and executive team have been scouring the countryside seeking 97 hectares to develop what they hope will become southern Alberta's top outdoor festival and concert park.

"The plan is to develop a facility that will not only meet the demands of GlobalFest and other local festivals that are experiencing similar growth and venue challenges, but also to meet the demand for new festivals and performance groups," says Goosen.

This year the Trico Homes International Fireworks Festival's theme is Parade of Champions, with four award-winning teams returning for the Aug. 20-29 event.

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