

December 2014 Newsletter

MENTORING WOMEN IN NEED



iSisters Technology Mentoring

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## A Word from the Chair

This past season at iSisters we focused on our Career Connections programs; for the first time, we had sessions running with three different partner locations simultaneously. This innovative program executed in conjunction with the City of Ottawa and several other organizations provides a well-rounded curriculum for job seekers. Career Connections programs ran at the Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO), the Nepean, Rideau and Osgoode Community Resource Centre (NROCRC) and Immigrant Women Services Organization (IWSO).

These partners serve diverse segments of our Ottawa community, and provided safe and convenient facilities for all of our fall graduates to learn about resume writing, job interviewing, dressing for success and entrepreneurialism.

The happy faces on our graduates tell the story – the program offers valuable skills and information, and many had already secured jobs by the time the program completed. Many thanks to our co-presenters from Invest Ottawa, Dress for Success, Accenture, and the City of Ottawa for making this a truly successful fall season!

Claire Toplis  
iSisters Board Chair

Thank you for all your support in 2014. We're looking forward to another great year. Happy Holidays!

### Board of Directors

- Claire Toplis, Chair
- Patricia den Boer, Past Chair
- Cathy Lewis, Director, Founder
- Colleen Kelley, Director, Treasurer
- Beth Nightingale, Director, Communications
- Judy Puritt, Director, Volunteer Management
- Maria Magaso, Director, Secretary
- Melynda Layton, Director
- Sarah D'Angelo, Director, Human Resources

### Staff

- Linda Milton Perreault, Executive Director

### Mentors

- Tim Birch-Jones  
Mobile Lab Teacher and eLearning iTechnology
- Fran Harding  
Community Liaison, Asset Mapping
- Bernarda Jurela & Eric Calvert  
Technology Instructors

### Mission

Our mission is to provide access to technology, to develop and deliver technology mentoring programs and to enhance career opportunities through technological awareness.

### Vision

iSisters Technology Mentoring, a leader in technology learning and development, helps empower women in need to live better lives, create brighter futures and build stronger communities.

### Our Values

We are passionate and committed to:  
being Learner-Focused, being Community Oriented, Excellence, being Respectful, being Accountable

## Bethany Hope Centre Launch



Our formal launch at the Bethany Hope Centre was very successful. Many of our supporters were on hand to help celebrate our newest program, Technology Mentoring for Young Mothers. iSisters, with technology instructor Eric Calvert at the helm, successfully delivered two six-week 'New Media 1 & 2' sessions with eight young mothers graduating. The program will resume in the spring after the mom's take a much deserved Christmas break.

We are grateful to our partners in this program for their support:

Community Foundation of Ottawa  
Johansen-Larsen Foundation  
Leacross Foundation  
The Harry P. Ward Foundation  
The Kiwanis Club of Ottawa



# PROFILE

Eric Calvert



There are a number of reasons why I wanted to work with iSisters and their partnership with Bethany Hope. I liked the simplicity and necessity of the mission: helping mentor women in need through technology. Learning and keeping up-to-date with new technology is an increasingly important task that can be difficult for all of us.

Also, I could identify with the students. Not that I was ever a young mom - but I was the stay-at-home parent for my daughter, and I remember well how time consuming that responsibility can be. Another reason I wanted to be at the front of the class for this project was the challenge! We had to create a curriculum and deliver a program that was relevant, and met the technology needs of the young moms. The program also needed to be flexible, to allow for missed classes due to the demands of raising children.

After our pilot projects, we now have a formula for success!

The New Media Program focuses on helping the students make use of business and design applications which will help them market their own business. This includes technology-based materials like websites, social media, promotional photos, and video or PowerPoint presentations. It also includes more traditional products such as flyers, business cards, and signage, where students learn to create the required digital prepress assets. Each student has unique needs based on their business concept, so there is a lot of one-on-one time. We can deliver that thanks to the help from our volunteers: Hanna, a college student on placement at the Bethany Hope Centre, and Misty who is experienced in business applications.

In the end, our young moms get a high level of personalized coaching in readily transferable computer and media skills.

Eric Calvert, iSisters Technology Instructor

Eric Calvert has created curriculum for programs and taught a wide range of skills, including writing, video production, photography, sailing, navigation, music theory, cooking, and spirituality.

Eric is a faculty member of Algonquin College's School of Media and Design, runs corporate training courses in communications, and teaches computer skills for iSisters. The young moms at the Bethany Hope Centre say he is 'awesome'!

## Highlights from the AGM

The iSisters 2014 Annual General Meeting featured a captivating presentation by digital entrepreneur Kelly Kubrick, President of Online Authority and co-founder of dStrategy Media.

Kelly spoke about how non-profits can make use of a digital strategy to support the organization's overall strategic plan, even when their budgets are tight. Kelly's "Six Dimensions of Digital Maturity" help all organizations take stock of where they are with digital processes, from online donations to accepting memberships and using digital channels for reporting outcomes to sponsors and donors.

Kelly is, and has been a proud member of the Digital Analytics Association since 2006. She holds an MBA from New York University and serves on the Board of Directors of her third-generation family business, Morrison Lamothe Inc.

For more information on Kelly's work, please visit dStrategy Media at [www.digitalstrategyconference.com](http://www.digitalstrategyconference.com).



## iSisters is Awarded Accreditation by Imagine Canada Standards Program

Staying true to our commitment to maintain organizational effectiveness, iSisters completed the Imagine Canada Standards Program application. The Standards Program awards accreditation to charities and non-profits that demonstrate excellence in board governance, financial accountability and transparency, fundraising, staff management, and volunteer involvement.

We are proud to announce that on September 19, 2014, iSisters was notified that it was awarded accreditation by Imagine Canada's Standards Program!

"It's no small feat for an organization to earn Standards Program accreditation," says Bruce MacDonald, President and CEO of Imagine Canada. "It's a rigorous, peer-reviewed process that is meant to build public trust and confidence in the charitable sector. These organizations take accountability and operational transparency very seriously. We're glad to have them on board."



## Congratulations Graduates!

We are so proud! Launched this past September, iSisters offered three Career Connections programs at three different centres serving women in need. We graduated 20 women and in addition, celebrated 14 new participants at OCISO (Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Ottawa), IWSO (Immigrant Women Services Ottawa) and the NROCRC (Nepean Rideau and Osgoode Community Resource Centre).

Michelle Vervoot, Branch Manager from Alterna Savings was with us at NROCRC to celebrate our learner's success, and to formally present iSisters with a generous grant for our next Career Connections program at the centre.

We would like to thank all our supporters and partners for their generous contributions to this program: Accenture, Alterna Savings, City of Ottawa, Cowan Insurance Group, The Cowan Foundation, and Invest Ottawa.



## A Special 'Thank-You' to Patricia den Boer

Having served with distinction as Chair of the iSisters organization for the past seven years, Patricia den Boer's decision to step down last year was received with no small amount of trepidation.

She has guided the organization from its early days, and her legacy is particularly clear in the strong governance focus brought to the board. Pat's stewardship of iSisters is characterized by both innovative ideas and strategic thinking establishing the foundation from which we move forward.

The Directors are most grateful, Pat, for your extended dedication to the mission of iSisters.

An accomplished community builder, Pat is a distinguished contributor to the Queensway Carleton Hospital Board of Directors, the Women's Business Network of Ottawa, and the Diefenbunker Museum. In 2012, Pat was recognized for her contributions as a United Way Community Builder Award winner.

Pat remains, thankfully, a director on the iSisters board as Past Chair.



## Tis the Season to be giving!

Help iSisters help a woman, her family, and our community

Your support of iSisters has made a difference to so many Ottawa women.

Our practical, effective brand of support helped over 200 disadvantaged women in 2014.

It doesn't take much to make a difference in the life of a woman on society's margins. For just \$100, you can help a woman attend a technology mentoring session to improve her employability, or help her return to school.

This upcoming holiday season, please consider the gift of economic independence. With your help, iSisters can continue to provide award-winning technology mentoring to women in need.



## iSisters is iSocial

Thanks to all those who have been following us on social media!

Please visit our [Facebook Page](#) and "like us."  
Follow us on Twitter under the handle [@iSistersorg](#).  
Join our group on [LinkedIn](#).



click here to visit our website at [www.isisters.org](http://www.isisters.org)

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