

Title: "150 Profiles: John Wong"

Author: John Wong

Published in: *The Philanthropist*, [150 Profiles](#)

Date: May 11, 2017

Original Link: <https://thephilanthropist.ca/2017/05/canada-150-profiles-john-wong/>

Date of PDF Download: September 26, 2017

150 Profiles: John Wong

By John Wong

As we mark the 150th anniversary of confederation, The Philanthropist is profiling Canadians from across the non-profit sector and putting a face to 150 individuals who work or volunteer in Canada's social sector.

Name: John Wong

Current role in the sector: Fund development and non-profit management consultant.

Years working and/or volunteering in the non-profit sector: 13 years working and 40+ years volunteering, with the last 15 years in leadership roles.



What was your first job in the sector or a defining

moment?

A defining moment came when I was working with the Canadian Opera Company on their capital campaign to build Canada's first, purpose-built opera house. Through outstanding managers, I learned about the culture of philanthropy, fundraising fundamentals and how to successfully raise money over the telephone. One of my defining moments was seeing how I could transfer knowledge and skills from years of marketing/sales and business to securing \$10,000 gifts on the phone. Other moments included obtaining my CFRE designation, and playing a key role in building coalitions to develop and help fund community-based programs. Also, being profiled in *The Philanthropist* as part of their celebration of Canada's 150th birthday!

Describe your desk/workspace.

My wife has banished me to the basement for my home office! This could be because of all the space I seem to take up with my notes, files and reference materials. Coming from an arts background, I like to think of my workspace as a kind of studio and having my work materials out and around me, helps to boost my creativity in arriving at solutions. (At least that's what I tell her!)

What are you reading or following that has expanded your understanding of the non-profit sector?

I'm currently enjoying Paul Tough's book, [*Whatever It Takes: Geoffrey Canada's Quest to Change Harlem and America*](#) about Tough's pursuit to address poverty, education and the achievement gap through the Harlem Children's Zone.

Also, revisiting [*The Little Community that Could*](#) by [Cathy Mann](#). It's about the power of collaboration for community change and transformation. Published by the [East Scarborough Storefront](#), in a "priority neighbourhood" in Scarborough, Ontario, the book is loaded with new ideas and concepts on ways to support change and impact lives, plus concrete "how-tos".

Both books are fine examples of how our willingness to help others can transform ourselves and communities.

What do you think our sector needs to be thinking about?

Having moved from Toronto to Saint John, New Brunswick in 2014, I'm very concerned with the Port City's [high child poverty rate](#). Working with community, corporate and government partners we're committed to effective, collaborative, system-wide change. I'm focused on creating new ways to pilot/model and sustain change through bold and innovative forms of social development and philanthropy.

Do you know someone we should profile as part of this series? Email us at philanthropistprofiles@gmail.com