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Author: Jillian Kilfoil

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150 Profiles: Jillian Kilfoil

By Jillian Kilfoil

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:Jillian Kilfoil

Current role in the sector: Executive Director, Women's Network PEI

Years working and/or volunteering in the nonprofit sector: 10 years working, 15 years volunteering.



What was your first job in the sector or a defining moment?

My first job was immediately after completing my undergraduate degree. I was 21 full of optimism and naiveté and was hired as a Project Leader for Katimavik. It was my entry point into a world that I didn't even know existed and I am grateful every day for that opportunity.

Describe your desk/workspace.

My desk is a bit messy at the moment because it is the week of our audit and there is a lot going on!

Normally it is covered in multicoloured pens and post-its as well as two beautiful orchids and some beautiful art sculpted by one of our board members. We are lucky that many local feminists and artists donate their work to us and it helps us to create a warm and welcoming environment in our office!

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

I try to soak up as much information as possible. Nonprofit...and fearless! or NonprofitAF (formerly [Nonprofit With Balls](#)) has been an excellent source of information. I also really enjoyed the book *Getting to Maybe* by Brenda Zimmerman, Frances Westley, and Michael Quinn Patton and I haven't read it yet, but sitting on my desk is the *Happy Healthy Nonprofit* by Aliza Sherman and Beth Kanter.

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

I am always reflecting on the sector and I think there is much that can be done and improved. Two things that I am very passionate about are evaluation and self-care. They aren't really related but I have a particular interest in supporting nonprofits to be able to leverage evaluation methods and data for the good of their organization. Reclaiming the evaluation process from the ground up better equips organizations to evaluate their programs, track their best practices and communicate the impact of their work. I am also constantly surprised by how intensely nonprofit employees dedicate themselves to the cause. So many people are doing emotionally exhausting frontline care they are working with low capacity and remuneration and they continue to persevere and support those in need. I am constantly wondering how we can better support the people who are supporting the people.

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