



Hazel Gillespie remembered



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Recently, the community investment world lost an incredible friend and mentor Hazel Gillespie, perhaps best known for her years spent at Petro Canada, passed away on February 14 after three difficult battles with cancer. She was

Throughout her career, Hazel embodied the very best of community investment practices. She saw the big picture of what Calgary and the surrounding area could be, and rolled up her sleeves to make it happen. Hazel gave generously of herself and her time to mentor others in the field, dedicating herself to the continuous growth of the people and organizations she encountered.

In 2017, the Hazel Gillespie Community Investment Leadership Award was created by some of Hazel's many friends to celebrate and encourage the professionalism of community investment practitioners across the greater Calgary area. The award is given annually as part of AFP's National Philanthropy Day Awards and honors the very best of Hazel's qualities, including outstanding professional leadership, a keen and influential strategic vision and the ability to create partnerships that have a significant impact on our community. Nominations for the award will open in May.

Simply put, Hazel was a pioneer in the community investment field. Known for her tireless and ethical, Hazel uniquely gained a solid reputation as dedicated, hands-on and focused. Judy cVean, who worked with Hazel at Petro Canada and spent countless hours with her during the past few years, clearly articulates the impact that Hazel had on the field of community investment. She changed what was once the occasional company check-up going out in response to a need, into a discipline with ethics, guidelines, strategy, impact and recognition.

One of Hazel's greatest legacies was her role in

business and use it for the good of community, she presses cVean. She worked to shape corporate community strategies that she believed had integrity and genuine good purpose, and then she looked for the best partners in the community to align with that strategy. Who needed the support of the company.

cVean adds that Hazel was always strategic about creating partnerships. She knew they had to make good business sense as well as community sense, but she also believed that compassion and generosity were integral to decision making.

What was so effective about the partnerships Hazel created

There were so many outstanding partnerships that Hazel initiated while at Petro Canada with Alberta EcoTrust, Lunchbox Theatre's Stage One Festival, the Community Heart Initiative and of course the Calgary Food Bank. A partnership now in its 11th year. Hazel's ability to forge genuine relationships ensured that everyone involved had an equal voice at the table. Marilyn Daniels, Senior Manager of Community Investments and working at Royal Bank of Canada and inaugurated Hazel Award dinner in 2017, speaks of Hazel's generosity of time and spirit. Her gift was in her ability to connect with others, says Daniels. She always had the time to help.

Daniels emphasizes Hazel's dedication to each cause she undertook. She always took the time to understand the issue at hand. When she believed, she really believed.

As Hazel herself wrote in her obituary, cancer brought her a clear recognition of what is most important in life: family, friends, love, and compassion for each other. May we all strive to keep that same compassion in our hearts, our minds and our community investment practices.

“With Hazel, heart and mind were both present at the table.”

Judy cVean

establishing a collective of like-minded people in the profession. cVean highlights Hazel's seemingly endless ability to persevere and tenaciously to build bridges between business and community. As her influence within the sector increased, Hazel worked tirelessly to mentor others in the field and build capacity in the non-profit and community investment sectors together.

Hazel loved Petro Canada, the people, the values, the potential to take the best of

while at Petro Canada. She didn't just provide funding, comments Jim Stanord, former President and CEO of Petro Canada. She worked with those organizations and allowed their activities to flourish, not as a watchdog, but as a mentor.

Stanord also points to Hazel's integrity. She approached everything and everyone with equality and total fairness. She was always honest to her principles, and she made sure everyone knew that they were