



Join us for a District wide celebration which brings together female leaders both in industry and Rotary sharing bold ideas, history and women in Rotary and business. These trailblazers are sure to invoke our Rotary spirit and inspire us all with the work they have done over the years!

Be sure to join us at 6:30 pm, Monday March 8. Limited virtual capacity, maximum of 500, please reach out to district7070iwd@gmail.com for an invite to this district event over Zoom. There will be a quick meet and greet before we start the presentations, be sure to have something to drink on hand for a celebration toast.

Dr. Sylvia Whitlock



While she is perhaps best known for being the first woman ever to become president of a Rotary club, she did a lot more besides. She actually served as club president twice at her Rotary Club of Duarte and at various times served as club secretary, treasurer and Foundation Representative. At district level, she chaired the Ambassadorial Scholarship Committee for six years, has been assistant governor, presenter at Institutes and a speaker at Rotary Clubs, Conventions and meeting in the US as well as overseas. Sylvia is a recipient of many awards including the Rotary Foundation District Service Award. She has supported an orphanage in Mexico, sunk wells in Nigeria and raised nearly \$90,000 to educate girls in India. She is a multiple Paul Harris Fellow and benefactor. A world traveller, Dr. Whitlock talked about how thrilled she was to have met the Queen in Nigeria, Jamaica and Calcutta. At the urging of many supporters, she eventually wrote a book describing the history of Rotary admitting women to its membership.

Sylvia's career spanned with over 40 years as an educator and then a second career as a family therapist.

Valarie Wafer - RI Director



Valarie K. Wafer had a 27-year career as a Tim Hortons restaurant owner, one of Canada's iconic restaurant brands, where her restaurant operations were widely recognized for their inclusive hiring practices, particularly the employment of people with disabilities. Valarie joined Rotary in 2005. She has served as an RI training, 2018 Toronto Convention Host Organization Committee member, assistant regional Rotary Foundation coordinator, and RI president's representative. She has led a vocational training team focused on youth suicide and depression, audited Rotary Foundation grant projects in Tanzania and Kenya, and volunteered during a 2012 National Immunization Day in India.

Sherry Colbourne



Sherry Colbourne is a Canadian entrepreneur with decades of experience in Ontario's high-tech sector. Her career has taken her to the far corners of the world in pursuit of building strategic business relationships for the companies she has served. As CEO, Sherry guides the direction and growth of Spark Centre and advocates for an international approach to the development of Durham Region's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Sherry is a strong believer that entrepreneurship brings diverse cultures and people together and that the opportunity for Durham Region lies in its roots as an innovative and diverse region.

Nadine Pemberton



Nadine Pemberton is a coach, lawyer and diversity and inclusion educator, who lives in Sheffield, England. Nadine has extensive experience in front line, senior and executive leadership roles spanning regulatory, criminal law and civil law fields across the UK government. Throughout her career Nadine has specialized in strategic organizational development, team change and transformation; and has a well-established and proven commitment to equity and inclusion in all areas of her work. Nadine recently founded Pemberton+ Coaching and Consulting, where she works internationally as a change consultant, helping people, teams and organizations on the cusp of change gain the freedom they need to flourish. Nadine has been a Rotarian for eight years and is currently an Assistant Governor in District 1220 (East Midlands & South Yorkshire). She is formerly an assistant governor for Rotary in London and Past President of Westminster International Rotary Club. Nadine also founded Rotarians against Racism, a global community of Rotary family, friends and supporters, all committed to being a voice for peace and to taking action in the fight.