

Board of Directors Being Presented for 2022



JOHN BIRDCGENEAU, CALGARY, AB

John Birdgeneau spent 35 years in the Energy Industry in a progression of technical and leadership roles with Imperial Oil, Numac Energy and Nexen Energy. He was responsible for capital budgets, operations, strategy and new technologies in a variety of Business Units. On an industry scale, John was a member of the Shareholders Steering Committee, Sub Committees on Strategy, and Governance for COSIA, a collaborative technical innovation alliance. He holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Geology from McMaster University and received Executive Education training at Thunderbird, Insead and Said-Oxford. John has always valued the power of teams and collaboration between groups to realize better results while having a little fun on the way. He was involved with Alpine Ski Racing for a number of years and recently has been fortunate enough to have been hiking in over a dozen countries often ending up at a winery. John and his wife, Barb have been members of the Opimian Society since 2009, now as a Director he brings his experience to Opimian and keeps learning about all things wine!



DAVID CONWAY, ST. JOHN'S, NL

David Conway is a lawyer and wine enthusiast from St. John's, NL. He and his wife Courtney served as Area Representatives for over seven years, during which time they were married and started a family. David is currently the chair of the NL Labour Relations Board. Prior to this, he practised in the fields of labour law and administrative law. David graduated from McGill University (B.A., Economics) and the University of New Brunswick (LL.B.), before being called to the Ontario Bar and the NL Bar. David has appeared at all levels of court, including the Supreme Court of Canada. He has presented educational seminars to various groups throughout Canada, is an instructor in the NL Bar Admission Course, and has instructed at Memorial University of Newfoundland. David has significant experience in working with not-for-profit organizations and he has served on various boards. David and his wife Courtney both share a love of wine, dining, travel and being parents to their three wonderful daughters.



ROB DAVIS, TORONTO, ON

Rob is a Tax Partner with KPMG in Toronto with over 30 years of diverse tax and finance experience that he brings to his clients. Rob obtained his CPA, CA in 1992. He is currently a member of the Board of Directors of KPMG Canada where he serves as Deputy Chair. Rob has spent 24 years in KPMG's tax practice, where he has gained extensive experience in international structuring for global expansions and IP migration. He has extensive experience conducting transfer pricing analysis for multinational enterprises with respect to advisory, planning, audit and compliance matters. Rob has assisted clients in identifying and implementing transfer pricing strategies that have generated substantial value in achieving their business and tax objectives. Rob has spent six years outside of KPMG in diverse industry sectors, such as automotive, real estate, marketing services, software, broadcasting, and manufacturing. Rob's experience in consulting and industry provides a unique, well-rounded perspective and understanding of the firm's clients' practical requirements. Rob has been a member of Opimian since 2007.



CRAIG FAULKNER, VANCOUVER, BC

Craig Faulkner and his wife, Cindy joined Opimian in 2016 and have enjoyed meeting other members and always look forward to the new cellar releases. Mr. Faulkner was the co-founder of Canada's dominant financial web portal, Stockgroup (a publicly traded company) and led its technology teams as its Chief Technology Officer and Director. Craig also served on the advisory board for a non-profit that provides supportive housing in the Vancouver area. Currently, Craig works with a variety of clients in the financial, service and retail space as the CTO at Unilogik Systems. In addition, Mr. Faulkner has served on the advisory board for www.shopandshout.com (an influencer marketing platform) from 2018 in a mentorship capacity. Craig Faulkner holds a BA from Trinity Western University, has also completed the Not for Profit Essentials course for board members offered by ICD / Rotman School of Business and the WSET Level 1 course in Wines.



CAROL FITZWILLIAM, MONTRÉAL, QC

Carol A. Fitzwilliam is the retired founder of Fitzwilliam Legal Recruitment and Fitzwilliam Third Sector Recruitment, two Canadian executive search firms dedicated to the legal profession and not-for-profit sector, respectively. She has served as a director of several non-profit organizations, including the International Women's Forum, YWCA Canada, YWCA de Montréal and Centennial Academy. She is currently Chair of the Governance Committee of the Board of Directors of the Société du Palais des congrès de Montréal, a provincial crown corporation and Past Chair of the Board of Directors of Masters Swimming Canada. Ms. Fitzwilliam holds an undergraduate degree in English and French literature from Sir George Williams University and a law degree from Université de Montréal. She is a retired member of the Quebec Bar, a certified director (ICD.D) and a member of the Institute of Corporate Directors. Carol and Frank have enjoyed being Opimian members since 2007.



ALAN KERR, KAMLOOPS, BC

Alan has been a wine enthusiast and Opimian member for many years. He is currently the CFO and Vice President, Finance and Corporate Services with the British Columbia Lottery Corporation. Alan's travels have afforded him the opportunity to visit wine regions in France, Australia, Eastern Europe, South Africa, California and British Columbia. Particularly memorable events have been the opportunity to visit the French Navy's four-story underground wine cellar in Toulon and touring small family-run vineyards in Croatia in 2015. After an extensive career with the Royal Canadian Navy with a variety of leadership responsibilities in finance and supply chain management, Alan accepted new responsibilities with Atco Structures & Logistics in 2012. His last appointment with Atco was General Manager and Managing Director of Atco Frontec Europe based in Budapest, Hungary. Alan has served in a number of volunteer capacities including President of the Officer's Mess for HMCS Bytown in Ottawa, Treasurer and Board member with H.O.P.E. (Helping Other People Everywhere), and with the Recreation Association of the Public Service of Canada.



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WINE CLUB DE VIN



TWYLA LAAKSO, CALGARY, AB

Twyla has been a professional communicator for more than three decades and has provided strategic communication services for some of the most wellknown brands in Canada including Suncor Energy, Colliers International, Air Canada and Fairmont Hotels (as Canadian Pacific Hotels & Resorts). She holds a professional accreditation from the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) and is certified in the Prosci method of change management. Prior to launching her own business more than a decade ago, Twyla served in senior management roles directing corporate communications functions. In the years preceding her corporate work, Twyla worked as national account director for several highly regarded advertising agencies including TBWA Chiat Day and BBDO. In her current role as Director of TLCommunications, Twyla enjoys exercising her experience and skills for the benefit of clients who require strategic planning and communications activities directly aligned with organizational goals. Twyla believes serving as a Director with Opimian will allow her to unite her professional experience with her personal passion for great wines and gourmet cookery and she looks forward to making a meaningful contribution to the Club.



RICHARD MCCAMMON, STRATHROY, ON

Richard McCammon is a successful entrepreneur and business leader. He founded a world leader in electronic transactions specializing in payment solutions for SAP. The company was acquired in late 2019. Now, Richard brings this experience to an aerospace start-up as President and CEO. Richard is considered a subject matter expert in the payment card practices and security and has spoken many times at industry forums. He is an executive board member for the Southwestern Ontario Chapter of the Institute of Corporate Directors (ICD), is a member the Southwest Ontario Angels and of the Space Committee of the Aerospace Industries Association of Canada (AIAC). He holds a Master's of Applied Science in Chemical Engineering from the University of Waterloo and has worked in many different industries. He, also, earned his ICD.D from the Institute of Corporate Directors. His 35+ years as a Scout and Scouter provide his moral compass. Tarja, his wife, and he have visited wineries on every continent and look forward to visiting many more with the Opimian Wine cellars filling the gaps.



CYNTHIA PETERS, PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY + BROCKVILLE, ON

Cynthia Peters is the owner of From the Farm Enterprises Inc. – a culinary experiential company. She hosts “field to table” cooking classes, and curates private culinary wine & food tours. Awarded as one of Canada’s Signature Experiences, From the Farm Cooking School has been in operation since 2010. Cynthia also leads culinary enthusiasts to the Languedoc (Occitanie) region of France - Women’s Culinary Adventures. She is the author of The Art of Herbs Cookbook. As a volunteer, Cynthia has served on a number of non-profit Boards over the past 20+ years, including, the Ontario Association of Food Banks, Taste the County (Chair of the Board), Slow Food the County (Vice-Chair), and FoodShare Toronto. Prior to opening her business, Cynthia was a senior executive for 25+ years where she led innovative, enterprise-wide strategies for fund development, corporate communication, marketing and brand management. Cynthia and her husband Brian, currently reside in Ontario’s newest designated wine region (DVA) - Prince Edward County. This summer they will be heading “down the waterway” to Brockville to their new “old” home, an 1827 Georgian stone manor. Cynthia joined Opimian in 2019.



LYNN ZUREL, ST. JOHN’S, NL

Lynn Zurel is a CPA, CA and holds the ICD.D designation from the Institute of Corporate Directors. She is also a proud graduate of Memorial University holding a Bachelor of Commerce (Honours) degree. Lynn has had the privilege of serving in leadership roles on the Boards of a wide variety of national, provincial and local not-for-profit organizations. Lynn has a well-developed passion for, and love of, wine acquired through the enjoyment of many wine tours in France and Italy and through tastings with friends, old and new. She has also successfully completed the ISG Wine Fundamentals Certificate Level II from the International Sommelier Guild.