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Times Change celebrated International Women's Day

The road to success has many setbacks

By Katie Didyk

Karlene Nation, told women at a networking breakfast for International Women's Day that she is like a "pit bull" when going after what she wants in life. "You have to manage your career and drive it forward, you can't let people get in your way or bring you down," said Nation, a CTV reporter and popular motivational speaker. "You can't be passive – you have to actively go after the things you want."

Nation was one of five dynamic speakers on the topic, Steps to Success, Friday March 7th, at Times Change Women's Employment Service at Sherbourne and Bloor, reinforcing the year's theme of Strong Women, Strong World.

Designed to inspire and motivate women seeking meaningful and satisfying work, the event also featured marketing and communications specialist Diana Bishop, children's author Rebecca Upjohn, writer/actress Carolyn Taylor and receptionist Tammy Monaghan of Shimmerman Penn, chartered accountants, who is also an entrepreneur running a home catering business.

Audience members gained insight into setting realistic goals and staying determined and focused. They were also encouraged to use Times Change's job search and career planning workshops to help them achieve their goals.



STRONG WOMEN TELL THEIR STORIES: *This panel of speakers inspired a room full of women at an International Women's Day event at the Times Change centre. From left they are – Tammy Monaghan, Diana Bishop, Rebecca Upjohn, Carolyn Taylor and Karlene Nation.*

Photo by Katie Didyk

Bishop, one of Canada's leading national and foreign TV news correspondents for 20 years described her personal and professional struggles to succeed. "What you have to remember is that everyone who has had success has also had challenges, problems, even failures. That's part of the process." She now runs her own marketing and communi-

cations business in Toronto. Many clients at Times Change are in-between jobs or rely on contractual work to support themselves. Taylor, whose work includes CBC's *The Hour* and *This Hour* has 22 Minutes, spoke of her experience with contract work and suggested ways to use time wisely between jobs. "Contract work gives you the

flexibility to build in time between projects to recharge, travel, and do other things. But the key is to save for the times when you're not working. When you are being paid, you have to live beneath your means – you can't live as if that paycheque is a regular one."

Upjohn, a former client at Times Change described being unemployed and how,

once committed to working from home, she learned to structure her time effectively. Her first published children's book, *Lily and the Paper Man* has been nominated for a 2008 Blue Spruce Award by the Ontario Library Association.

Times Change clients were encouraged to take care of their personal well-being

while searching for employment through volunteer work, low cost activities and surrounding themselves with positive and caring people.

Monaghan told participants that in a job interview, in addition to saying what you can offer your employer, ask what value the employers can offer you, to meet the needs of your family, for a positive life/work balance.

Participants enjoyed a special office yoga demonstration by Maggie O'Connor, former Times Change client and founder of the Union Yoga Studio at Carlton and Parliament in Cabbagetown. Support of friends, family, yoga teachers and the local community including Times Change, was fundamental in making The Union what it is today, she said. It was challenging to balance the long hours of starting a business with the rest of life and the financial risks that produced many sleepless nights, said O'Connor. What keeps her focused, she said, is the exciting path her work has taken her.

Times Change, a non profit agency since 1974, at 365 Bloor E., offers career and educational counselling, computer services and resource centre free of charge. For more information, see women@timeschange.org or call 927-1900.

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