



Ask Me Anything: Women in Leadership
Courageous conversations on gender equality

Featuring: Tanya Alvaro, Darlene Bess and Isabelle Pelchat

Moderated by: Samantha Moonsammy and Melissa Michaud Camacho

Presented by: CCG Internal Communications, Event Management and Publications

Date and time: Tuesday, March 23, 2021 | 1pm - 2:30pm EST

Location: [MS Teams Live](#)

Audience: Open to all Government of Canada employees

To register: Complete the [registration form](#)

Feel free to [submit an anonymous question](#) for our guests speakers.

More information and resources can be found on the [Ask Me Anything: Women in Leadership intranet page](#).

For external DFO/CCG employees you can find more information and resources in this [google drive](#).

“Women belong in all places where decisions are being made... It shouldn't be that women are the exception.” - Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Event description

International Women’s Day

This year, the Government of Canada is celebrating International Women’s Day on March 8 through the theme of [#FeministRecovery](#). This is in recognition of the disproportionate impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on women -- including layoffs, lack of childcare, the increase in domestic violence, and increased unpaid work, and how recovery efforts must address and be rooted in women’s experiences.

Ask Me Anything: Women in Leadership

In line with this theme, the Coast Guard will host an Ask Me Anything (AMA) on Women in Leadership. We will discuss the importance of gender equality, impacts of being a woman in management, and the toll it can take on women being in the minority at the leadership table.

So let's dive in and hear from these inspiring public service colleagues!

Canadian Context

As we highlight these women and mark International Women's Day, it's a good time to stop and reflect on the Canadian context, especially in March 2021 following a year of global pandemic. In Canada, women are equal under the law and cannot be discriminated against based on their gender identity, but they do not always have "equality." For example, overall:

- Black women, Indigenous women and women of colour experience several layers of discrimination, as a result of their gender, ethnicity and other factors.
- Women in the workplace and at home have been disproportionately affected during the pandemic. It's clear that more women have lost their jobs due to lockdowns and many have had to make choices about work and childcare due to online school and daycare closures.
- For every dollar a man makes, a woman make 87 cents, even less if they also identify as a person of colour.
- Domestic abuse cases have risen dramatically as have other forms of hate and discrimination, often disproportionately directed to people who identify as women.

DFO-CCG Ask Me Anything series

This is the third in our [series of Ask Me Anything sessions](#) that are giving us a platform to share stories, listen, ask respectful questions and continue on our journey to becoming a more inclusive organization. Diversity comes in many forms: gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, age, culture, etc. These all contribute to an individual's uniqueness, talent and perspective. We know, through diversity, workplaces and communities are stronger, more successful and resilient. Though we are all different, we must also remember the bonds that unite us.

Please let us know if you need accommodations to participate and contact the [CCG Internal Communications Team](#) if you have any questions.

Meet our amazing guests: Tanya Alvaro, Darlene Bess and Isabelle Pelchat

Tanya Alvaro, Director of Maritime Security and Intelligence, Canadian Coast Guard

Tanya Alvaro is the Director of Maritime Security and Intelligence at the Canadian Coast Guard. She has a bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of Western Ontario and earned a Master's degree in War Studies from the Royal Military College of Canada. She also completed the National Security Programme from the Canadian Forces College.

Tanya was appointed as the Director of Maritime Security and Intelligence at the Canadian Coast Guard. In this capacity, she is responsible for delivering CCG's national maritime security program in support of Canada's national security policy and law enforcement agendas. This includes cyber threats, Arctic security, directing the Coast Guard's involvement in three interdepartmental regional maritime security operations centres, and the National Command Centre in Ottawa.

Tanya recently joined the Innovation, Planning and Engagement Directorate on short-term assignment as the A/Senior Director, Innovation, Reconciliation and Program Integration.

Tanya loves reading and baking (well established pre-COVID!), and has a keen interest in politics, and leadership in particular. She is passionate about professional development, offering mentorship and coaching over the years and fostering an environment of continuous learning.

Darlene Bess, CPA, CA; Director General, Financial Management and Chief Financial Officer, Finance Canada

Darlene Bess is the Director General, Financial Management, and Chief Financial Officer at the Department of Finance Canada. She was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba and raised in Brampton, Ontario and holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the University of Toronto.

Darlene launched her career with Price Waterhouse in 1993 and earned her Chartered Accountant designation in 1996. She has varied work experience in both the private and public sector in the fields of audit, internal audit, treasury management, corporate accounting and financial management. She worked at Shoppers Drug Mart Limited, Office of the Auditor General of Canada, Mitel Networks Limited, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Office of the Comptroller General, and Department of Finance Canada.

Darlene's passions include crossfit, nutrition, coaching basketball and mentoring women of colour. She is the Anti-Racism Champion at the Department of Finance and a strong mental health advocate.

Isabelle Pelchat - Superintendent Icebreaking, Escort and Flood Control

Isabelle holds a Bachelor of Technology in Nautical Sciences from the University College of Cape Breton and a Diploma of Collegial Studies in Natural Environment, Environmental Protection from the Cégep de Saint-Félicien. She graduated from the Canadian Coast Guard College in 2004 and began her career as a Navigation Officer in Central Region.

Over the past few years, she has held various positions including Marine Security Operations Analyst in Ottawa, Marine Coordinator at the Joint Search and Rescue Centre in Trenton, Operations Officer at the Regional Operations Centre in Sarnia and Montreal, and Arctic Operations Officer in Montreal. Since April 2015, Isabelle has held the position of Superintendent Icebreaking, Escort and Flood

Control and was also the National Icebreaking Program Manager in 2017 and 2018 in Ottawa, in conjunction with her current position.

As a mother of three young children (a grown-up of 7 years old and twins almost 3 years old) my activities and passions have varied over the last few years. As my wife is Peruvian, I am sensitive to integration, equality and acceptance. I am mainly interested in nutrition and physical activity, including HIIT training. I'm curious by nature, which pushes me to try new things: from capoeira initiation to maple syrup making. Mental health has been one of my major concerns for the past few years.