

2018 YWCA TORONTO WOMEN OF DISTINCTION



MARGARET HANCOCK *Social Justice*

Margaret Hancock's work has created a ripple effect of inclusivity and social justice. When Margaret comes to the table she has the unique ability to harness the power of collective action to improve the lives of others. Her effective consensus building battles oppression and creates solidarity with social justice networks. Her work is guided by her core beliefs of equity, inclusion, and justice.

In 1997, Margaret became the first woman appointed Warden of Hart House at the University of Toronto. This assignment was not only momentous because she was a woman, but because her work left a long lasting and positive legacy. At a time when people were resistant to change, Margaret brought students together in support and celebration of inclusion and equity. The Hart House Lecture, established in 2001, has since been renamed the Hancock Lecture to honour Margaret's impact. When she left Hart House she had transformed the traditionally exclusive institution to one that was fully accessible and included a positive space program for LGBTQ students and student community kitchens.

Margaret is now the Executive Director of Family Service Toronto where she and her team provide front line services that address poverty, violence against women, elder abuse and help people with mental health needs and developmental disabilities.

She has also held positions as Executive Director of Toronto's Choice in Health Reproductive Health Clinic and served as Oxfam Canada's Board Chair for six years where the international development work focused on addressing poverty through gender justice in the Americas, South Africa, and the Horn of Africa. She has also addressed issues of women's poverty and homelessness in Toronto as a member and co-chair of the Board of Directors at Sistering.

In all of these positions, Margaret has acted with conviction and been at the forefront of transformative change. She has understood that true equity and justice would not be reached without understanding the lived experience of women who are underserved, marginalized or excluded by the barriers of race, income or gender identity. Her leadership and philanthropy reverberates through the fibres of all the organizations she has supported.

In all of Margaret's work one aspect is unchanging: she is resolute in her commitment to make sure justice is not just for some but for all.

