

REMARKABLE WOMEN

Honouring Women From Our Vancouver Communities



Photo by Robin Clarke; courtesy Leona M. Sparrow

Leona M. Sparrow

Leona M. Sparrow, born in Vancouver, has been connected with Musqueam all her life. She comes from a family rich with athleticism and community governance, which is reflected in her many achievements and commitments. A multi-talented athlete, Leona has competed in many different sports including swimming, softball, field hockey, basketball, and track and field. She participated in several Junior Olympic training camps and was a member of the Inter High Juvenile Softball championship team in 1963; champion Junior Basketball team in 1964; championship Senior Basketball teams in 1965 and 1966; and of the Senior Field Hockey champions, also in 1966. All the while, she was competing in the Vancouver and District Inter High school Track and Field competitions from 1961 to 1966.

Leona received her diploma in dental hygiene and acquired her Bachelor and Masters degrees in Anthropology at UBC. While working towards her degrees, she competed in university level athletics in shot put, discus, relays and javelin for five years and basketball for two years. She competed at National Championships and was a member of the BC International Track and Field Team in 1966 and 1967 and a member of the 1966 Marpole-Oakridge Queen's basketball team that won the Canadian Junior Women's championship. In 1967, Leona was awarded the Tom Longboat Medal for Outstanding Indian Athlete in British Columbia.

For 15 years, Leona served on Musqueam Chief and Council and worked as a consultant before returning to UBC and graduating from law school. She is now the Director of Musqueam's Treaty, Lands and Resources Department, and serves on several Aboriginal service providers' boards and committees including Vancouver Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society, New Relationship Trust, the Museum of Anthropology, and serves as Musqueam's liason to UBC.