

# WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

"I'm proud to empower female leaders, support communities, and help Canadians achieve lifetime financial security and live healthier lives. I'm alive today because of fundraising, research and advocacy. This gift guides me to make a difference – personally and professionally – each and every day."

## Kate Nazar

Vice-President, Strategy & Market Development, Group Retirement Services Sun Life Canada



*As a market development leader, why are you passionate about bringing solutions to plan sponsors?*

It's incredibly rewarding to support our plan sponsors, helping to drive value and appreciation through workplace retirement and savings plans. We're an extension of their human resources and investment teams. Staying close to our clients enables us to provide innovative solutions that address changing priorities and plan objectives.

My passion and motivation come from seeing the direct impacts of the diverse products and solutions we create. We're focused on expanding the adoption of group TFSA's to address broader savings goals and enabling auto-enrolment for DCP's and group RRSP's to boost participation. We're also expanding our mobile capabilities to make it easier to access information and take action. We're doubling down on our efforts to build a partnership ecosystem to deliver new capabilities as trends rapidly change. This includes involving partners to support debt counselling, student loan repayment, digital wills, RESP's and wellness.

Through innovation and actionable insights, we're able to drive better wealth outcomes for the benefit of plan sponsors and plan members – and that's powerful.

*How has the pandemic influenced workplace savings programs, and what trends are evolving in the marketplace?*

When markets crashed in early 2020, they tested the resolve of plan members to stay the course and remain invested. At the height of market volatility, we worked across channels to educate plan members about the importance of maintaining long-term focus. It worked: 97% of plan members stayed the course. Meanwhile, the plan-level data and analytics we provided to plan sponsors gave them comfort that their members were in great hands. This ultimately allowed them to focus on their core businesses during a challenging time.

The pandemic created a perfect storm of crises. This led to a more holistic focus on plan sustainability across areas such as wellness, sustainable investing and retirement readiness. One emerging trend is a focused approach to plan design that incorporates a wellness solution such as Sun Life's myWellness Rewards platform, which is designed to reduce financial, physical and mental wellness risk factors among plan members. Also, with a heightened focus on ESG globally, we've been supporting plan sponsors with our proprietary ESG evaluation framework and an industry-first sustainability playbook.

*What role do advocacy and community work play in your life?*

As the leader of CAP's in Canada, Sun Life has the privilege and responsibility to be the voice of our clients with policy-makers and regulators. Having spent the past

26 years in the pension space, I'm committed to making the industry stronger through active involvement and advocacy. I'm a member of the Association of Canadian Pension Management National Policy Committee and the Financial Services Regulatory Authority of Ontario (FSRA) Stakeholder Advisory Committee for Pensions. Most recently, I contributed to the FSRA Technical Advisory Committee on defined contribution (DC) plans.

As an 18-year survivor of late-stage ovarian cancer, I'm equally passionate about community involvement. Through Ovarian Cancer Canada's Survivors Teaching Students program, I share my journey with medical-school students. And, in late 2020, I joined the board of directors for Unsinkable to help educate, empower and support adults and youth with mental health challenges. I see this leadership role as complementary to the impactful work I get to do every day at Sun Life.

Finally, as a coach, mentor and advocate, I support developing female leaders within Sun Life and through the Scala Network and The A Effect, two organizations that help propel female ambition.

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"I'm focused on improving workplace equity and visibility for women and members of the LGBTQ+ community. It's the right thing to do, and we know organizations achieve stronger business outcomes when their employees can be their authentic selves at work. [ . . . ] As leaders, we need to advocate for change and innovation both in new solutions for clients and by supporting people in their careers."

## Marie-Chantal Côté

Vice-President, Market Development, Group Benefits Sun Life Canada



*As a market development leader, why are you passionate about bringing solutions to plan sponsors?*

Much of my passion comes from the challenge of meeting the evolving needs of our clients amidst the sheer pace of change. If the pandemic has taught us anything, it's that health matters. And we're truly on a mission to help Canadians live healthier lives. But how do we do that, exactly?

That's where my passion and commitment come in, because we need both if we're going to adapt to a changing world. We're working continuously to improve healthcare access, lower drug claims costs, and increase options and support for workplace mental health. There's more on the horizon, including the use of artificial intelligence to identify conditions and improve treatments to new approaches for disability coverage.

Through dedicated advocacy and mentorship, Kate Nazar and Marie-Chantal Côté are leading Sun Life Canada toward a bright and innovative future. They're paving a new path in the health and wealth industries. As two influential and dynamic leaders, they're creating more diverse, inclusive and sustainable workplaces.

*How has the pandemic influenced workplace benefits programs, and what trends are evolving in the marketplace?*

The pandemic has put a spotlight on the importance of workplace benefits in general. Our collective health has become front and centre. The pandemic has also highlighted an urgent need to expand the traditional healthcare model.

The most notable expansion area is virtual care. The need for Canadians to connect virtually with healthcare professionals has never been more apparent. That's why we partnered with Dialogue, the leading telemedicine provider in Canada, to launch Lumino Health Virtual Care.

Another key pandemic trend that's here to stay is the growing awareness of mental health issues and the need for more support. This is especially important in the workplace. Mental health remains the leading cause of workplace disability and the fastest growing benefits claim type.

We've accelerated and broadened our drive to provide mental health solutions that are more accessible and personalized. For example, we built a free digital mental health strategy tool kit for organizations of all sizes. We also expanded Lumino Health Virtual Care to include online access to mental health treatment.

*What role do advocacy and community work play in your life?*

I'm a strong believer in the importance of giving back to my community and within Sun Life. I've been supported throughout my life and career by different leaders and mentors, and it's a great joy of mine to be able to support others in the same way.

Within Sun Life, I'm focused on improving workplace equity and visibility for women and members of the LGBTQ+ community. It's the right thing to do, and we know organizations achieve stronger business outcomes when their employees can be themselves at work. Like many industries, ours has a long road ahead to ensure we have diverse representation in our organizations.

Within my community, I'm a board member and chair of the Client Services Committee of Retraite Québec. I'm involved with several industry and community boards, including the Fondation Jeunes En Tête, an organization that helps young people with mental health conditions. My involvement in community advocacy is some of the most satisfying work I do.

As leaders, we need to advocate for change and innovation both in new solutions for clients and by supporting people in their careers. We need to evolve our industry to make the world a better place.

