

Leta Best



You Can Be a Role Model

Mentors and coaches offer emotional, educational, and social support to the many people in their lives. I see a mentor as an experienced and prudent adviser, while to me, a coach is a tutor or trainer who prepares students for examinations and athletics. Mentors and coaches have direct contact with people and are very involved with their lives.

Many of my mentors have been my coaches, also. Often these roles overlap. My father was both a mentor and a coach in my business training. Frank L. Kitto played a great role in the development of my career and my willingness to serve The Society of Notaries Public.

A very personal mentor of mine is a member of the Zonta Club of Victoria, Sannee MacFarlane. When things were not going well in my life, Sannee encouraged me to carry on and succeed. She may not have even known just how important she was to me. Over the years I have had many opportunities to look back and realize just how big a difference she made to me.

Role models are quite different. A role model does not have to be someone you know or even someone who is still living, but can be someone you admire for all kinds of different qualities. My role models would include Amelia Earhart,

Mother Teresa, and The Honourable Iona Campagnolo, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia. Each of these women brings a special quality to my life: Amelia, courage; Mother Teresa, heart; and Iona, motivation and the ability to effect change.

You, too, can expand on your horizons and, as people like to say today, "Think outside of the box."

A lot of people don't know that Amelia Earhart was a social worker. And a truck driver. And a photographer. And a fashion designer. And a nurse's aide, scrubbing hospital floors during WWI. She was all of those—besides being the first woman to fly solo around the world . . . almost.

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Mother Teresa said about love: "Don't think that love, to be true, has to be extraordinary. What is necessary is to continue to love. How does a lamp burn, if it is not by the continuous feeding of little drops of oil?" Work hard on all aspects of your life, but don't forget to feed the most precious aspects.

At a recent dinner celebrating The Young Women in Public Affairs Awards for the Zonta Club of Victoria, Iona Campagnolo stated:

Today, women need all the skills and tools of the trade in which they seek to assert themselves. In addition to education, women benefit from community contact, from being volunteers, and from learning at first hand the needs of our Society, which they seek to serve. There are rewards in public life, but it is harsh and difficult, while the rewards of community participation are less public; in my experience they are richer and deeper by far. With support such as is given by Zonta and as exemplified by the exceptional young women receiving awards tonight, the road to public policymaking can be secured for the "best and the brightest" of either gender leading to a continuity of enlightened and enabled leadership!

While many of us aspire to greatness, few achieve great heights. It is, however, within each of our grasps to make a difference.

Be a mentor, be a coach, and by natural extension, you will be a role model. ▲