



Stephanie McGrath named Chair of King's Board of Governors

For immediate release

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The Board of Governors of the University of King's College has named [Stephanie McGrath, BJ\(Hons\)'99](#), as its next chair. McGrath will succeed [Douglas G. Ruck, KC, BA'72](#), effective July 1, 2025. "I'm proud to pass the torch to King's alum and distinguished business leader Stephanie McGrath," says Ruck.



McGrath is currently Chief Strategy Officer at [VERB Interactive](#), a Halifax-based marketing and technology company that counts some of the world's largest travel and hospitality brands as its clients. She was recently named one of the [Top 50 Chief Strategy Officers in the U.S. and Canada](#). Prior to taking on the role of Chair, McGrath served as the President of the King's Alumni Association and was previously on the board of [Autism Nova Scotia](#).

"Stephanie has been a member of the King's Board of Governors since 2017 and has also done a wonderful job at the helm of our Alumni Association. She has a deep understanding and love of King's from the perspectives of a student, alum, administrator and leader. I'm so pleased to see her step into this new position on the Board," says King's President William Lahey.

McGrath credits her experience in the Foundation Year Program and her four-year journalism degree for helping her find her way professionally in Toronto immediately after graduating. She worked as an entertainment journalist for several national news organizations, including Canoe.ca, AOL and MSN Canada, as well as CityTV. She also penned a pop culture column for the *Toronto Sun* for several years, and her work appeared on CBC Radio, *Huffington Post*, and other Canadian digital publications.

Upon moving back to Halifax in 2008, she pivoted into marketing and public relations, including work with NATIONAL Public Relations, while maintaining one foot in the journalism world for a time with a technology column in the *Chronicle Herald*.

In addition to her Bachelor of Journalism (Honours) degree, McGrath completed the Seth Godin AltMBA program, the Content Marketing Institute's certification course, and the Writing with Style program at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity. She also attended the Video Storytelling workshop at KDMC Berkeley, University of California, Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism.

"Taking on this new role is personal to me, as I am honoured to help support the Board and, by extension, the university as it continues to send passionate, innovative and prepared people out into the world to make it better," says McGrath. "Doug was an exceptional Chair, and I am appreciative of his mentorship as I prepare for this role."

President Lahey notes the important strides that the King's Board of Governors made during Ruck's tenure as Chair "in overseeing an exciting period of change at King's that included strengthened partnerships with the Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotian communities—this was at the centre of Doug's vision for what King's could become."

During Ruck's tenure, the Board approved and oversaw the creation of a new MFA in creative writing and the reconfiguration of the School of Journalism into the School of Journalism, Writing & Publishing; the restoration and renovation of three residences; the renovation of another residence to create accessible on-campus housing; and the initiation of planning for a new building that will include modern learning spaces for journalism and creative writing, a new gymnasium and wellness centre, and a new residence. "The Board also played a critical role in steering the university through some difficult times, including the pandemic," says President Lahey.

Other outgoing Board members include King's alum and Halifax Regional Police [Chief Don MacLean, '90](#), who has completed a nine-year term as a Co-opted Member.

The King's Board has in recent years appointed other new members to prepare the university for an exciting and dynamic period of change as it expands the contributions it makes to Halifax, Nova Scotia and beyond. The recently appointed members are:

- [Dr. Alexa Bagnell](#) is Chief of Psychiatry at the IWK Health Centre in Halifax and a professor in the Department of Psychiatry in Dalhousie University's Faculty of Medicine.
- [Dr. Kathryn R. Burton, BA'98, DCL'23](#), is a distinguished King's graduate and member of the Mi'kmaq Nation who is currently a partner at Sparks Street Capital in Boston.
- [Rhema Ferguson](#) is the Advisor of Human Rights and Equity Services at Dalhousie and a former Equity Officer at King's.
- [Carolle Fernando](#) is a partner in the Business Law group at Cox & Palmer in Halifax.

- [Bruce Fisher, BA'83](#), is a distinguished King's graduate and a member of the Executive Board for the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) and past President of the Association of Municipal Administrators Nova Scotia.
- [Graham Flack](#) is a former Deputy Minister in five departments in the Government of Canada, including Employment and Social Development Canada. He is also a parent to a King's alum.
- [Nevin French, BA'00](#), is a distinguished King's alum who is Vice-President of Technology for Edelman Global Advisory in Toronto.
- [Dale MacLennan](#) has served as the Senior Financial Officer for myriad public organizations, including the City of Halifax and the provincial departments of Health, Business and Consumer Services, and Economic Development.
- [Jenn Thornhill Verma, BJ\(Hons\)'02, MFA'19](#), is a journalist reporting on fisheries, ocean issues and climate change.

President of the King's Students' Union [Ellie Anderson](#), [Pascal Cleland-Zarb](#) and [Erica Waugh](#) have also recently joined the Board as student representatives chosen by the King's Students' Union.

McGrath is looking forward to working with all Board members to effect positive change in the communities King's serves.

"Kjipuktuk/Halifax and Nova Scotia are shaped by the beauty of our ocean landscape, and by the diverse post-secondary institutions that help prepare all of us for the current reality, as well as for what the future may hold," she says. "It's an honour to be part of a Board and a university that is so deeply committed to linking journalism, publishing, history and philosophy to the complex challenges and opportunities of our time."

About the University of King's College

Established in 1789, King's College is Canada's oldest chartered university and is associated with Dalhousie University. A small and extraordinarily lively academic community located in Halifax (Kjipuktuk), Nova Scotia, King's is known nationally and internationally for its highly acclaimed interdisciplinary programs in the humanities, including its renowned Foundation Year Program, its professional programs in journalism and its fine arts programs in creative writing.
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