



Politician —Public Representative

SALARY RANGE (2017): \$127,000

I've devoted my life to the service of my community, and it's a privilege to be a decision-maker at the table of our provincial legislature. My career began with more of a focus on early childhood support, but—as corny as it sounds—I wanted to make more of a difference. I took my experience with student council into the formal political realm and I put my name forward for office. Running for election is always hard, but it's something I've felt compelled to do. I wasn't prepared at first for the criticism and pessimism, but now I've come to embrace it as part of the critical process of choosing representatives. I do my best to know the citizens in my constituency so that I can represent them in good faith and with accurate information. My family has been very supportive in this process—we've lost a bit of privacy, but in return we've been able to make a meaningful contribution to shaping our future. My psych background has proven useful in helping me to navigate conflicts, understand stakeholder viewpoints and manage competing interests. I love getting involved with special interest groups and empowering community members to effect change. Much of my work is committee-based, and I attend a lot of meetings, political events and community functions. Understanding people is at the root of everything I do.

The Tip: Be true to who you are, but never stop learning. When I listen with the goal of understanding, my thinking evolves and my knowledge expands. A great leader must also be an excellent listener.

PRIORITY KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

Evidence-based Decision Making

- Debate, deliberate and discuss ideas based on principles of evidence, equity and justice
- Accountable and transparent
- Set priorities and take action

Advanced Research & Analysis Skills

- Critically analyze reports
- Synthesize information from multiple sources

Knowledge of Human Behaviour

- Employ conflict-resolution skills and de-escalate emotionally-charged situations
- Appreciate diverse points of view
- Expertise in change management

Advanced Communication Skills

- Excellent verbal skills; able to communicate to a diverse audience
- Motivational; able to inspire and persuade others

Inter-personal Skills

- Embracing of diversity, committed to equity and principles of justice
- Work within a multidisciplinary team
- Effective in working within committee structures

Intra-personal Skills

- Thoughtful, patient, visionary
- Commitment to civic involvement
- Effective stress-management strategies

	<p><u>Additional Skills</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong organizational skills • Expertise in governance and policy development
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BUILDING BLOCK EXPERIENCES:

<p>Education & Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Arts (Psychology) with a minor in justice studies • First aid and level-C CPR training • Completed non-credit Childcare Orientation Course (registered as a Level 1 Child Development Assistant) 	<p>I am interested in advocacy, justice and political action, especially around human rights and the rights of children, so a minor in justice studies was a great fit for me. I took one non-credit course to get my Level 1 child development assistant certification and also took a few electives in political science as part of my degree. I think I was asked about this combination in every interview I had early on. It gave me a lot to talk about.</p>
<p>Employment Experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University bookstore, front-end staff • Part-time community worker for GlobalFest helping to coordinate guest services and programming. • Part-time after-school childcare program staff member • Full-time team lead for after-school program • Outreach coordinator for community programming for a not-for-profit agency 	<p>I have worked a lot with young people over the years and I thought about going back for more training in early childhood education. When I took on the leadership role though, I found that I liked coordinating our licensing process to enhance safety and services, and I enjoyed developing policies to support employees. I became more politically active around this time, and together these interests pushed me towards a life in public service.</p>
<p>Community Experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active in student government in university • Volunteered with school food bank. I put together hampers and delivered produce boxes. • Volunteered for events put on by the Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination (linked with the Alberta Human Rights Coalition) • Volunteer for the folk festival • Volunteered for political party on their young leaders sub-committee working on campaign support and as an election advocate • Served on board of governors for arts council, and later was a member at large for board of directors of a local college 	<p>Volunteerism for me started on campus and grew from there. I aimed to be part of one government-sponsored coalition before I ran for election, and I'm glad that I had that experience. Serving on a board of governors is a privilege that I took very seriously. Leadership should not be taken lightly.</p>
<p>Contextual Experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I joined the debate team in junior high and was on the board of governors for my students' association in my undergrad. I ran for a vice-president position, but wasn't elected. 	<p>The more you get involved, the more you want to be involved. I think that's still true for me today. I can't imagine being in a position where I'm not helping the community in a tangible way. I still do a lot to support children, but now it's more at the policy level and within my</p>

- I grew up in a large family with a lot of relatives nearby. Being around children was just part of the experience and thinking about a career that involved children was natural.

own family.

Relationships:

- Family connections continue to be fundamental to me
- I met one of my city counsellors by fluke. We were both volunteering for our city's folk festival and we spent a lot of time together during that summer. She told me about her experience on city council and her passion for helping communities. She had some practical knowledge that was very valuable.

My cousin was very active in his university council and I think that had an influence on me in my early high school days. Once you get a little involved, it's easy to get more and more involved until it's just part of what you do and who you are. I can't imagine not being up to date on political matters, city debates and local concerns.