

Mitchell good fit at Bow Valley College



DAVID PARKER

David Mitchell has joined Bow Valley College as its vice-president college advancement and chief external relations officer. It's a role Mitchell is well-suited for given his broad professional background that spans the private, public and education sectors.

Bow Valley College president and CEO Sharon Carey introduced me to Mitchell at the school's recent student awards ceremony, where I asked about his background. I had to book an appointment for a longer chat as there was not enough time to discuss all he has achieved.

Mitchell was born in Montreal but grew up in Vancouver and graduated from Simon Fraser University.

Canadian political history has long been a passion of his. He holds a Master's degree in Canadian and American history and has written a good deal on the subject. His best-known work is the biography W.A.C. Bennett and the Rise of British Columbia.

Mitchell's own involvement in politics began as a deputy clerk in the Saskatchewan legislature, followed by a five-year term in B.C. as the Liberal MLA for West Vancouver/Garibaldi. During

his time with the official Opposition in Victoria his main interests were advanced education, resource management and labour relations.

His political spell was followed by a position as vice-president external relations at Simon Fraser University where he helped raise funds to develop its downtown eastside Vancouver campus.

Headhunters came knocking and Mitchell was off to Ontario for a five-year term to help raise the profile of the University of Ottawa where \$250 million was raised in just four years. Another Canadian university came calling and he accepted a similar challenge as a vice-principal at Queen's.

For the past six years, Mitchell was president and CEO of Public Policy Forum in Ottawa, an independent, non-governmental organization dedicated to improving the quality of government.

During that time he initiated the organization's annual Western dinner that was launched in Calgary with former premier Peter Lougheed in attendance to present an award in his name.

Mitchell made many friends in Calgary, some of whom drew his attention to the Bow Valley College opening.

He researched the position, and with the irresistible draw of two young grandchildren living here, made the decision to apply.

Already impressed with Bow Valley College, he was astonished to learn 93 per cent of its gradu-

ates find employment within a year in their field of choice.

His responsibilities include fundraising, marketing and communications, business development, non-credit courses and government and alumni relations.

Mitchell has joined a fine institution as a member of a staff and faculty of 600-plus and a student enrolment of around 16,000.

He will be busy, but as a former board member of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver Marine Aquarium, Ottawa Symphony Orchestra, the Great Canadian Theatre Company and a current fellow and governor of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society, I expect he will be recruited to a Calgary organization before too long.

NEWS AND NOTES

Caesar's Steak House, which has served Calgary customers for almost 45 years, is still run by the founding families — and now by a second generation.,

Many faithful customers have been helped over the years by Gladys Young. She's retiring next week as administrator/receptionist, a position she has held since the restaurant opened.

Young deserves a nice goodbye from the patrons she has served so well over all of those years.

David Parker appears Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Read his columns online at calgaryherald.com/business. He can be reached at 403-830-4622 or by email at info@davidparker.ca