



## MARGARET ALLISON, GPC.D

**Director, Legal Services and  
Corporate Secretary  
Starlight Investments**

### *Fun fact:*

*I was never really a sports fan until I began working at Starlight and was invited with frequency to professional sporting events. I quickly became obsessed with the Toronto Raptors. Sadly due to COVID-19 I cannot attend live games, but I never miss a game sitting in front of the television wearing my "Spicy P" jersey and cheering them on. Let's go Raptors!*

### **Why have you joined GPC?**

GPC was initially recommended to me by external legal counsel as an organization that I might find provides valuable resources. After I became a member and attended my first GPC annual conference, I realized that GPC was much more than just a resource tool, that it would provide me with the opportunity to learn and discuss key governance topics with likeminded professionals. I also participated in the inaugural GPC-Education Program which provided me with the opportunity to strengthen my knowledge and deliver solid governance ideas and best practices that I continue to apply to my role. GPC also provides the ability to establish a network of governance professionals.

### **Why do you think GPC is an important organization for any governance professional to belong to in Canada?**

In addition to continuous learning and networking, GPC is an important organization for a governance professional to belong to as it is instrumental in promoting best-in-class governance practices and it is a leader setting the highest standards of governance in Canada.

### **What does governance mean to you?**

Governance is a set of standards by which companies must abide to in order to achieve best-in-class processes, this includes decision making, accountability and corporate behaviour throughout an organization. In order to implement strong governance, an organization must incorporate a solid strategic plan that encompasses risk management and performance management while ensuring transparency and accountability with both internal and external stakeholders.

# MARGARET ALLISON

## How did you get into governance and your current role?

I worked with a securities lawyer at a top-tier Bay Street law firm in Toronto for a number of years learning governance, securities and corporate law and applied that knowledge and experience as I moved into the private sector. I am currently the Director, Legal Services and Corporate Secretary of Starlight Investments, a private real estate investment and asset management organization that manages over \$20 billion of direct real estate and real estate investment securities for both public companies listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange and the TSX Venture Exchange, as well as for global institutions. Over the last several years I have worked to strengthen the governance policies and practices to reflect Starlight Investments' fiduciary duty and commitment to transparency and engagement with its stakeholders, while always considering the impact of our business on the environment as well as our social responsibility to its employees, tenants and communities.

## What is the most fulfilling part about your role in governance? What do you love most about your job?

The most fulfilling part about my role in governance is when I am able to implement a new policy or practice to strengthen our overall performance as an organization. I appreciate most that my colleagues share the same vision and dedication that guides me in my career.

## What do you believe is a key topic right now in the governance industry?

Diversity and Inclusion. There has been an increased focus on diversity beyond gender over the last few years and it is important to make this focus a priority in the boardroom and at the executive level. Inclusion and diversity create better management and decision making.

## Where do you see, or would like to see the role of governance in the next few years?

The governance role is always evolving and I believe boards and individuals will come to rely more on the governance professional as a leader and advisor.

## What is the best career advice you have received?

The best career advice I received was to never stop learning. Learning is knowledge and knowledge is power. Although cliché, with knowledge and power you can make a difference.