



Yellowknife
CHAMBER



TRAILBLAZERS

SYMPOSIUM

The main title 'TRAILBLAZERS' is in a large, bold, black, distressed font. Below it, the word 'SYMPOSIUM' is written in a smaller, black, dotted font. A graphic of an arrow with a cross-hatched fletching is positioned to the left of the text, pointing towards the right.

Featuring Clara Hughes

International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity.

Explorer Hotel, March 8, 2023

11:00am	Trailblazers Registration	
11:20am – 11:23am	President Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce	Trailblazers Symposium Opening Remarks
11:23am – 11:25am	Deanna Cornfield, Northwestel	Remarks from Lunch Sponsor
11:25am– 11:27am	Claire Tincombe, Managing Director of Det'on Cho Environmental	Remarks from Partner Sponsor
11:27am – 11:30am	YK Chamber, Executive Director	Speaker Introduction
11:30am- 12:30pm	Clara Hughes	<p>Open Heart, Open Mind</p> <p>From one of Canada's most decorated Olympians comes a raw but life-affirming story of one woman's struggle with depression. In a world where winning meant everything, her biggest competitor was herself.</p> <p>In 2006, when Clara Hughes stepped onto the Olympic podium in Torino, Italy, she became the first and only athlete ever to win multiple medals in both Summer and Winter Games. Four years later, she was proud to carry the Canadian flag for Team Canada as they participated in the opening ceremony of the Vancouver Olympic Winter Games. But there's another story behind her celebrated career as an athlete, behind her signature billboard smile.</p>

		<p>While most competitive athletes devote their entire lives to training, Hughes spent her teenage years using drugs and drinking to escape the stifling home life her alcoholic father had created in Elmwood, Winnipeg.</p> <p>She was headed nowhere fast when, at sixteen, she watched transfixed in her living room as gold medal speed skater Gaétan Boucher effortlessly raced in the 1988 Calgary Olympics. Dreaming of one day competing herself, Hughes channeled her anger, frustration, and raw ambition into the endurance sports of speed skating and cycling. By 2010, she had become a six-time Olympic medalist.</p> <p>After more than a decade in the grueling world of competitive sports that stripped away her confidence and bruised her body, Hughes began to realize that her physical extremes, her emotional setbacks, and her partying habits were masking a severe depression. After winning bronze in the last speed skating race of her career, she decided to retire from that sport, determined to repair herself. She has since emerged as one of our most committed humanitarians, advocating for a variety of social causes both in Canada and around the world. In 2010, she became a national spokesperson for the Bell Let's Talk campaign in support of mental health awareness, using her Olympic platform to share the positive message of the power of forgiveness.</p> <p>Told with honesty and passion, "Open Heart, Open Mind" is Hughes' personal journey through physical and mental pain to a life where love and understanding can thrive. This revelatory and inspiring story will touch the hearts of all Canadians.</p>
12:30 pm– 12:45pm	YK Chamber, Executive Director	Closing Remarks and set up for lunch
12:45pm – 1:30pm	Lunch	

Clara Hughes

Six-Time Olympic Medalist | Mental Health Advocate

After spending half her life striving to be the fastest person in the world, six-time Olympic medalist Clara Hughes decided to switch gears and “slow down to the pace of a human being.” This led her to hike over 16,000 kilometres, where she discovered the healing power of movement. In her candid, personal talks, Hughes explores how movement can change lives, and draws from her experience living with depression to inspire audiences to face their fears, find their voice, and become the champions they’re meant to be.

Hughes is the only athlete in Olympic history to win multiple medals in both summer and winter Games, representing Canada in both speed skating and cycling. In addition, she served as Team Canada’s flag-bearer at the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games.

As the founding spokesperson for Bell Let’s Talk, a campaign designed to end the stigma attached to mental illness, Hughes helped jumpstart the conversation on mental wellness. In 2014, she completed a 110-day national bicycle tour through every province and territory in Canada called “Clara’s Big Ride”. She covered more than 11,000 kilometres, visited 105 communities, and hosted over 235 events to raise awareness for mental health. She is also the author of the bestselling memoir, *Open Heart, Open Mind*.

Over the course of her distinguished career, Hughes has won countless awards and accolades. She was awarded the International Olympic Committee’s Sport and Community Trophy, honoured with a star on Canada’s Walk of Fame, inducted into Canada’s Sports Hall of Fame, and named a member of the Order of Manitoba and an Officer of the Order of Canada. In 2022, she was named an Olympian for Life in recognition of her making the world a better place by promoting the Olympic Values at every stage of her life.

In her effort to lead a life in motion, Hughes has completed the “Triple Crown” of long distance hiking — the Pacific Crest Trail, the Continental Divide Trail, and the Appalachian Trail — and continues to this day, to find deep meaning in outdoor adventure pursuits.



Photo Credit Simon Baker

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