

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## Vancouver firefighters to ignite females' firefighting passion

**Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services joins Coast Guard and Navy in announcing new Operation: This IS You! hands-on experience events for BC girls and women**



*Vancouver, BC- Dec 18, 2017 – Applications are now open for new Operation: This is You! events to be held in early 2018. New agency partner Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services (VFRS) will offer select females first-hand experience of a day in the life of a firefighter.*

Activities include: hazardous materials decontamination, auto extrication, live fire demonstration, technical rescue with rappel from a burn tower and a heavy urban search and rescue drill. Lunch will be provided by VFRS. For more information, or to apply visit [www.achieveyanything.ca](http://www.achieveyanything.ca)

The firefighting event is one of a series of hands-on experience events organized by the Achieve Anything Foundation. The free events are being hosted by VFRS, Canadian Coast Guard, Royal Canadian Navy and other agency partners keen on improving gender diversity within their organizations and promoting opportunities for women in what many still perceive as “non-traditional” fields.

“VFRS is proud to link arms with Operation: This IS You hands-on event with Achieve Anything Foundation, scheduled for May 12th, 2018!” says Tyler Moore, Deputy Chief, Planning and Technical Services / AGM. “We are excited to work alongside you and dig deep into what this diverse profession is all about. Our career opportunities expand far greater than putting out fires and kicking in doors! We will ignite your passion in ways you never knew Firefighting could do.”

Other new upcoming events include:

- Day sail on the Navy warship HMCS Ottawa - departing from Vancouver, BC Jan 27
- Canadian Coast Guard / Fisheries & Oceans Canada - SAR & Science at Sea to be held at the Institute of Ocean Sciences, Sidney BC Feb 3
- Search & Rescue with Canadian Coast Guard - Hovercraft Base, Richmond BC Mar 31

“Coast Guard is excited to partner again with Achieve Anything Foundation,” said Joanne McNish, Regional Director Fleet, Canadian Coast Guard. “For girls and women who like working with their hands, enjoy being out on the water, or are interested in protecting our oceans, there are so many career options with the Coast Guard. Join us on February 3, 2018 to try your hand at some of mariner skills you’ll learn and see what we have to offer. You are going to be amazed!”

**The Achieve Anything Foundation** is a federally incorporated not-for-profit organization with a mission to inspire female future leaders in STEM (science, technology, engineering & math), and STEM-based fields such as Aviation, Aerospace, Marine & Defence. With the mantra *“From shop floor to top floor”* the Foundation employs a unique hands-on approach towards changing perceptions and addressing gender disparity in high tech fields.

“Since the number of women in Aviation, Aerospace, Marine & Defence as well as other STEM-based industries remains low, the result is that few females have other females in their network to share their experience and passion for these fields. In day to day life, women generally don’t “see” themselves reflected in these areas, and this is continually reinforced in the media and social media”. Says Achieve Anything president and founder Kirsten Brazier. “Therefore, if women are not aware of these opportunities, it is unreasonable to expect them to be interested in pursuing STEM-based fields. We’ve implemented Operation: This IS You! to develop this network of experience by providing year-round experience events for females in the applicable agency or industry partner’s native environment.”

This hands-on approach has proven very successful for the Foundation’s signature event **The Sky’s No Limit – Girls Fly Too!**, held annually during the week of International Women’s Day. Since 2012 the family-friendly, free event has been enjoyed by over 45,300 participants and 7,127 free flights provided to female first-time fliers. Over the past 3 years the events have been supported by two female NASA astronauts: Wendy Lawrence and Heide Stefanyshyn-Piper.

In March 2017 the RCMP, Canadian Forces, Canadian Coast Guard, US Air Force and US Navy deployed \$257.6 Million CAD in assets to the event. Civilian partners deployed \$47.8 Million in assets, including the operation of \$9.8 Million in helicopters to provide free flights to female first-time fliers. Despite the inclement weather, 15,000 people from Canada and the US participated over the two-day event. Over 20,000 are expected at the 2018 event. Please visit [www.girlsfly2.ca](http://www.girlsfly2.ca) for more information.

Brazier is a professional pilot from the Lower Mainland, BC and she holds Airline Transport Ratings for both aeroplanes and helicopters. With over 24 years of flying experience, Brazier has enjoyed a diverse career flying across Canada, US and the Caribbean on wheels, floats, skis and skids as well as two-crew operations in both aeroplanes and helicopters.

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