

Meet ten women who have changed Canadian politics

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Equal Voice, an Ottawa-based group dedicated to getting more women involved in Canadian politics, will issue awards Thursday and Friday to 10 women and three men who have “changed the political landscape for women”

It is a list that excludes Prime Minister Stephen Harper, while including former Conservative B. C. senator and federal cabinet minister Pat Carney.

The non-profit, non-partisan group will be dishing up the honours at a conference in the capital city, at an event titled, “Leveraging Women’s Leadership for the 21st Century: Changing the Game”

The event marks International Women’s Day, as well as a 10th anniversary for the organization, which is working to change a situation in which 77.5 per cent of members of Parliament elected in the last federal vote were male.

Women being feted, aside from Carney, are: former Ontario Liberal MP Jean Augustine; former Prince Edward Island Liberal premier Catherine Callbeck; Nellie Cournoyea, former nonpartisan Northwest Territories premier; Roberta Jamieson, CEO of the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation; Senator Marjorie LeBreton, who leads the government in the Senate; Alberta Conservative Senator Elaine McCoy; former NDP leader Alexa McDonough; Quebec Liberal Senator Lucie Pepin; and former New Democrat MP and B. C. cabinet minister Penny Priddy.

“As trailblazers, these women have been role models, mentors and an inspiration to the many who have come after them,” according to Equal Voice.

The trio of male political leaders to be singled out for “championing the cause of electing more women in Canada” are former Conservative prime minister Brian Mulroney, former Liberal prime minister Jean Chretien and current NDP leader Jack Layton.

Carney, who has held the senior-most posts in government — serving as national energy minister, minister of international trade and president of the Treasury Board during the Mulroney era — has often remarked on how the achievements of female politicians are overlooked or erroneously attributed to men.

Carney was largely responsible for the Atlantic Accord and the free-trade agreement with the Americans, but had great difficulty getting the credit she was due.