

Jill graduated from Montreal West High School in 1973 and chose to head west to continue her education at John Abbott College. The CEGEP component of Québec education was in its infancy and her cohort was the College's third. She received her Health Sciences diploma in 1975 and, during her two years at the college, she took part in an innovative program. The College had chosen to offer women's hockey as a varsity program at a time when the sport was barely in existence. Jill was a member of that team which helped lay the groundwork for John Abbott to play an important role in the development of women's hockey in Québec. The highlight of her second year was the undertaking of a major road trip by train to play a series of games in Thunder Bay, Regina and Calgary.

She chose McGill for her university education and earned a Bachelor of Science in 1978 with a major in mathematics. Her college athletic experience served her well at the university level and she was a member of the Martlets women's hockey team during her three years at McGill.

Jill selected John Abbott as her first choice of employment after graduation, a reaction to the enjoyment of her experience as a student and the opportunity to once again live in Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue. This was a time when the College also had a campus in Kirkland. A second-hand bookstore was an essential component of the College and Jill developed and managed a very successful operation in Laird Hall.

When the College became fully established on the Sainte-Anne's campus along with the addition of the Casgrain building in 1980 Jill took advantage of the opportunity to become a recreation technician in the Sports and Recreation department. This was an important role considering the college's commitment to equal sport opportunities for women and men. Furthering that goal Jill was an assistant coach for five years with the Islanders women's hockey team and then five years beyond that as head coach.

A few years later, Jill moved to the Student Activities department and soon after became the chairperson, a position she held through to her retirement in 2014. She played a major role in the development of the department as the 'go-to' operation of the college. It is the focal point of all student-oriented activities and her role as advisor to the student government and support offered to student initiatives was an essential component of the college's commitment to a holistic education. And, if anyone in the college sought assistance or advice for college projects, the Student Activities department was the place to go.

Jill continues to live on the western tip of the island and her love of hockey also stayed with her. She organized and played with the first women's hockey team to represent Québec at the 55+ Canada Games in Brampton, Ontario in 2016. Two years later, she played the same role for the games in St. John New Brunswick and the team won the gold medal.

Since her retirement, Jill has been a volunteer with the Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue recreation department and acts as the secretary for the Pointe-Claire Curling Club Day Ladies' Executive.



*Jill Gowdey*

EMPLOYEE