

Dr. Verna Skanes retired from the position of Professor of Medicine (Immunology) and Assistant Dean, Research and Graduate Studies in 1999, having contributed 28 years of service to Memorial University.

Since her retirement, Verna has actively contributed her expertise for the good of the University and the community on a variety of levels – provincially, regionally, and nationally.

Provincially, she has served as both member, and most recently, chair of the Newfoundland Quarterly Foundation. She also added her considerable expertise in health research ethics to provincial efforts to establish an arms-length provincial research ethics board. In 2000, at the request of the Department of Health and Community Services, she authored two white papers on the commercialization of genetics and governance of human research ethics. Later that same year, she organized and chaired an expert panel convened by government to provide advice on the establishment of an arms-length provincial research ethics board. These were significant contributions culminating in the recent proclamation of a Provincial Health Research Ethics Authority and its accompanying Health Research Ethics Board. Verna serves currently on that ethics board.

Regionally, Verna served for 2001-2006 as a member of the Atlantic Innovation Fund (AIF) Board which provides advice to the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and the Minister of Industry on the development of the AIF and its funding programs and on the selection of successful applications.

Nationally, Verna has made many contributions since her retirement. A founding member of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Blood Services, she chaired the Board of Directors from 2003-2009 having previously served as member and chair of their safety science and ethics and human resources committees. In 2008, Canadian Blood Services tied for the annual award by the Conference Board of Canada to the best governed organization in Canada.

Verna has been a Director of the Canadian Stem Cell Network Corporation since 2005 and, since 2009, has served as chair of the Board. She has been a Director of the Canadian MedicAlert Foundation since 2008 and since 2009 has chaired the Professional Advisory Committee of that organization. She has also, since retirement, continued active involvement with two of Canada's national granting councils, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC). In the case of CIHR, she has served as a consultant to that Council in the area of privacy and has also served as a member of the CIHR Institute Advisory Board for Circulatory and Respiratory Health as their ethics designate. In the case of NSERC, she has served as reviewer for the National Networks of Centres of Excellence program and has also chaired a number of Expert Panels for the review of applications under Networks of Centres of Excellence program and has chaired the NCE Selection Committee.

For her tireless efforts and outstanding contributions, particularly in the areas of health, health research, and human research ethics, MUNPA is pleased to recognize Dr. Verna Skanes with a MUNPA Tribute Award.