

Nancy Retzlaff BIO



My name is Nancy Retzlaff and I'm putting my name forward for a position on the ASHA board of directors. I was first introduced to standardbred horse racing when my sister Janet married Doug Stout in 1973. Doug was a driver and trainer and the time and is a trainer still today. While I was just a kid, I recall spending summer holidays at the tracks in both Calgary and Edmonton where I attended the races with my sister. One summer at Stampede Park I worked in the "numbers" room washing and distributing race numbers. Another summer I worked in the race office at Marquis Downs in Saskatoon creating and printing licenses. My dad, Gordon Retzlaff, fell in love with the sport and owned many horses throughout the years. Below is a win photo from 1974 at Northlands Park.



NORTHLANDS PARK
Northridge
October 12, 1974

From left to right: childhood friend Shannon, my dad Gordon Retzlaff, my sister Janet Stout, me (light purple jacket) and my brother-in-law/driver Doug Stout

I grew up in Saskatoon and graduated from the U of S with a degree in Commerce with majors in marketing and general business. After graduation, I launched my career in bio-pharmaceuticals when I joined Bayer Healthcare in Calgary, Alberta. I climbed the corporate ladder and move to Toronto and then to New York City in 2001. I have more than 20 years of experience working in Corporate America for Fortune 500 companies including Pfizer and Merck. I held positions of increasing responsibility, led a number of pharmaceutical launches in both the US and globally including Japan and Europe and built and led high-performing teams. I've served on a number of bio-pharmaceutical boards and am currently a consultant and advisor in the industry.

I believe my experience as a bio-pharmaceutical executive would be an asset to the ASHA board of directors. Some of my relevant skills and experience include:

- Complex, diverse stakeholder management and negotiations.
- Negotiations with high-level government officials.
- P & L responsibility for multi-billion-dollar businesses.
- Marketing experience including public relations, digital and social media marketing.

In 2020, I returned to Canada to be closer to family and launched my second career. I became co-founder and CEO of Okoa Animal Health, Inc., an e-commerce companion animal health business. I set up company operations, launched the Okoa Pet brand and built the company from scratch to a 7-figure profitable small business.

Even more notably, when I returned to Canada my dad encouraged me to follow in his footsteps of horse ownership. In 2021, I attended the ASHA yearling sale with my dad and became co-owner of 3 horses with my nephew Derek Stout. My dad passed away in July of 2022 and I am proud to carry on his legacy of passion for the horse racing business and horse ownership. In 2022, I purchased 2 more yearlings, and am currently co-owner of 5 young standardbred horses.

In short, I am confident that my executive leadership experience, business acumen and passion for horses and the sport would be an asset to the ASHA board of directors. I would be delighted to serve and leverage my skills and expertise to continue to build standardbred horse racing in Alberta.