

Tribute to Mr. Paul Delage Roberge

Dear Friends:

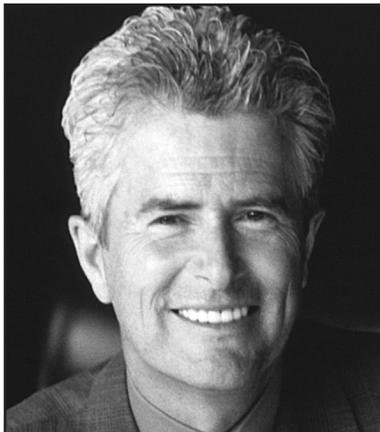
Being chosen as the personality of the year and guest of honour of the annual gala by the Board of Directors of the Fondation de la mode de Montréal is an exceptional honour that I willingly share with the entire team behind Groupe San Francisco and Les Ailes de la Mode.

All of us — no matter who we may be — are happy to be associated with a success; we enjoy embarking on new avenues that lead to the objectives we have set for ourselves.

By developing an exclusive project, focused on research and development in the Montreal fashion industry, the founders of the Fondation de la mode de Montréal were true pioneers, ready to disregard the prevailing economic climate of the time, and the industry's tarnished image, to convince and unite key players from every sector, including fierce market competitors.

I remember well the sweat and hardships that marked the organization's beginnings, a time when a handful of intrepid individuals, perhaps best described as dreamers, decided to take up torch while the Montreal fashion industry was undergoing a serious economic crisis and was deemed a soft sector, with all the implications such a description carried in the sociopolitical jargon of the time.

But their cause was worthy. Their constant battle to ensure that the new generation of creative talents, marketing experts and fashion industry executives would have access to the best schools on the planet, to the summits of fashion expertise, gradually contributed to revitalizing our industry, while also directly fostering our fashion companies in search of new markets.



Being selected as the guest of honour on the 10th anniversary of the Fondation de la mode de Montréal is an honour that is deeply touching. And I am all the more pleased that the recognition I am receiving is at the heart of an effort to prepare our industry's future generation for the challenges of tomorrow and to support a cause that is particularly dear to me. We enjoy a certain success, to be sure, and we are very glad of it —

but our relative success is an exclusive reflection of the strength of our team and its commitment. Therefore, it is with each and every member of the team that I share the foundation's recognition.

To the foundation's bursary winners of this year and to all those who have completed fashion programs in Quebec colleges and universities, I would like to say: a daunting challenge awaits you. Nothing can be taken for granted. We will need you to continue taking on the challenges of the future and to continue growing in a climate of fierce competition — factors common to all those active in the marketplace, both here and outside Quebec. The task is considerable, but I am convinced that with your passion, your energy, your talent and the support of the Fondation de la mode de Montréal, you can help us do more and do better still.

Paul Delage Roberge
President and Chief Executive Officer
of Groupe San Francisco