

# BUSINESS VOICE

HALIFAX'S BUSINESS MAGAZINE



## HALIFAX 2019 BUSINESS AWARDS

Celebrating excellence in our community

PAGE 18

### KICKING OFF 2019

Opportunities abound as we say farewell to 2018 **Pg 5**

### BURSTING WITH ENTHUSIASM

Doing 'brilliant' work and having fun **Pg 32**

### TAKING THE INITIATIVE

Grads put best foot forward **Pg 34**





# M&M

# FOOD MARKET

*Store may not be exactly as shown.*

## NEW NAME. NEW FOOD. NEW LOOK.

### Exciting franchise opportunities now available in Lower Sackville

M&M Food Market is looking for entrepreneurial-spirited food enthusiasts to partner with a growing market leader celebrating over 35 years of proven success, with close to 350 locations coast to coast!

#### **We offer our Franchise Partners:**

- The exciting opportunity to be part of a recently reinvented brand which reaches a broad base of consumers.
- **A diverse product line made with the finest ingredients so you can feel good about** selling to your loyal customers.
- **A comprehensive training program and ongoing operational support.**
- **Innovative and creative marketing programs.**

**For further information on how to become our newest partner, visit our website [www.mmfoodmarket.com](http://www.mmfoodmarket.com) or call 1-800-461-0171.**



## Over 100 stores now rebranded

Business Voice is published 11 times a year for members of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce and Metro Halifax's business community. Views expressed in Business Voice are those of the contributors and individual members, and are not necessarily endorsed by, or are a policy of, the Halifax Chamber of Commerce.

No part of this publication may be reproduced without written consent of the publisher. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, the publisher cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions that may occur.

Please address editorial enquiries and changes to information to:  
Halifax Chamber of Commerce  
100-32 Akerley Boulevard,  
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia B3B 1N1  
Tel: 902-468-7111  
Fax: 902-468-7333  
info@halifaxchamber.com  
www.halifaxchamber.com

#### Board of Directors

Cynthia Dorrington, Vale & Associates, Chair  
Margaret Chapman, Corporate Research Associates, Vice Chair  
Mark Fraser, T4G, Past Chair

#### Directors

Lori Barton, Beaumont Advisors Limited  
Robert Dean, MNP LLP  
Mark Sidebottom, Nova Scotia Power Inc.  
Gavin MacDonald, Cox & Palmer  
Paul Bent, Consultant  
Saeed El-Darrahali, Simply Cast  
Faten Alshazly, WeUsThem  
Stefanie MacDonald, Halifax Paper Hearts  
Captain David Mazur, Maritime Forces Atlantic  
Richard Butts, Clayton Developments Limited  
Michele Peveril, Nova Scotia Department of Business  
Brad Proctor, McInnes Cooper

#### Chamber Staff

Patrick Sullivan, President and CEO  
Nancy M. Conrad, Senior Vice President, Policy  
Colin J. Bustard, Director of Finance and Administration  
Becky Davison, Director of Marketing

**Business Voice is published by**  
The Chronicle Herald Custom Publishing Department

**Publisher:** Sarah Dennis  
**Vice President, Partner Solutions (NS):** Jeff Nearing  
**Manager, Custom Publishing:** Lindsey Bunin  
**Editor:** Lindsey Bunin • lbunin@herald.ca

**Layout & Design:** Peter Ross  
**Contributing Writers:** Heather Laura Clarke  
**Customer Relations Specialist:** Jennifer MacLean  
**Sales Executives:** Wanda H. Pridle, Karen Publicover  
902-426-2811 ext. 1163 • sales@herald.ca

**Cover Photo:** Paul Darrow

Copyright 2019 by The Chronicle Herald.  
All rights reserved. Reproduction of any article,  
photograph or artwork without expressed written  
permission from the publisher is strictly prohibited.

2717 Joseph Howe Drive  
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2T2  
Tel: 902-426-2811  
TheChronicleHerald.ca

#### Disclaimer

Business Voice magazine makes no warranties of any kind,  
written or implied, regarding the contents of this magazine  
and expressly disclaims any warranty regarding the  
accuracy or reliability of information contained herein.  
The views contained in this magazine are those of the  
writers and advertisers; they do not necessarily reflect  
the views of Business Voice magazine and its publisher  
The Chronicle Herald.

Publications Mail Agreement No. 40032112

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to  
Halifax Chamber of Commerce.

**HALIFAX  
CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE**



*The best advice I've ever been given is to focus  
on the success of others over my own."*

— Karim George, CEO, InTouch Communications

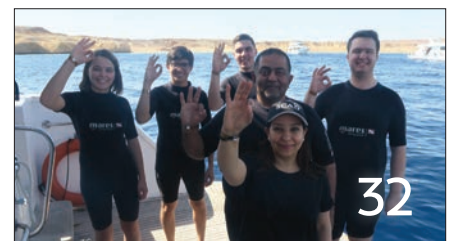
#### COVER STORY:

# 2019 HALIFAX BUSINESS AWARDS



## TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- 04 Events
- 05 President's message
- 06 New & noted
- 12 Members in the news
- 18 2019 Halifax  
Business Awards  
Celebrating excellence  
in our community
- 32 Profile: WeUsThem



#### SPECIAL FEATURE:

- 34 Workplace Wellness:  
Graduate to Opportunity  
program



# CHAMBER EVENTS

For a full and up-to-date list of our Chamber events, please visit [www.halifaxchamber.com/events](http://www.halifaxchamber.com/events)

## BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

DATE: January 15  
TIME: 4:30 – 6:30 pm  
HOST: Exchange on Hollis

## LUNCHEON

Don Mills, Corporate Research Associates

DATE: January 16  
TIME: 11:30 am – 1:30 pm  
LOCATION: Delta Halifax

## CHAMBER 101

DATE: January 16 and February 20  
TIME: 12 – 1:15 pm  
LOCATION: Halifax Chamber office

## LUNCH & LEARN

### LIGHTFORTYSIX

TOPIC: **Retail Shopping: Online vs. Brick & Mortar**

DATE: January 18  
TIME: 12 – 1:30 pm  
LOCATION: Halifax Chamber office

## 2019 HALIFAX BUSINESS AWARDS

PRESENTED BY: **RBC**  
DATE: January 24  
TIME: 5 – 9:30 pm  
LOCATION: Halifax Convention Centre

## ANNUAL STATE OF THE PROVINCE WITH PREMIER MCNEIL

PRESENTED BY: **NATIONAL**  
DATE: February 6  
TIME: 11 am – 1:30 pm  
LOCATION: Halifax Convention Centre

## SAVE THE DATE:

**A CANNABIS CONVERSATION**  
FEBRUARY 20, 2019

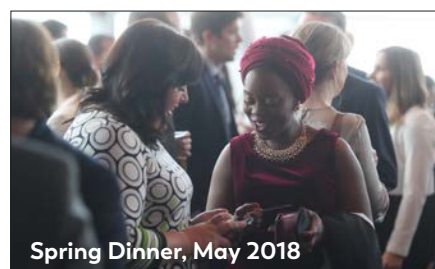
## AGM

APRIL 18, 2019

## SPRING DINNER

MAY 2, 2019

## MISS A CHAMBER EVENT THIS YEAR? Check out these snapshots:



THANK YOU TO OUR  
DECEMBER SPONSORS:

BOYNECLARKE  
LAWYERS | LLP



# Kicking off 2019

Opportunities abound as we say farewell to 2018

@prezhfxchamber



**PATRICK SULLIVAN**  
PRESIDENT & CEO

Well, here we are, swiftly pulled into 2019. I'd like to welcome you all to a brand-new year of growing, innovating, trying new things and celebrating change. 2018 was a great year in Halifax with announcements around the Ocean Supercluster, the completion of the Halifax Convention Centre and many other firsts. Your chamber had a great year as well with our members' support. We finished 2018 strongly, with our Fall Dinner focused on innovation, a full-day Wonder Women conference and an annual update from Mayor Savage on the State of the Municipality.

In December, the second Wonder Women event brought together women leaders in our community to share ideas, discuss challenges and lift each other up. It was amazing to see the powerful energy in the room and to learn from attendees the tangible skills they were able to acquire in networking, goal-setting and personal and professional planning.

In late November, Mayor Savage's uplifting presentation highlighted Halifax's incredible growth in the last few years. The Mayor's favourite comparison photo shows the Halifax skyline in 2012 and 2018, and the difference is, to say the least, significant.

The Halifax Index points to our second straight year of population growth and 1.7 per cent GDP growth. Our workforce is educated, with 38 per cent holding a university degree or certificate. We're looking forward to seeing continuous improvements on reducing red

tape and taxes and creating a frictionless business environment. We're kicking off 2019 on a high note!

As we enter 2019, January is one of our most exciting months of the year, not only for that refreshed feeling and budding opportunities, but thanks to the Halifax Business Awards.

This is our 19th year celebrating Halifax businesses. Every year, 30 finalists are selected from a vast number of nominees. We had a record-breaking year with more than 300 nominations! While we applaud our members and future members alike on all their successes all year round, the Halifax Business Awards shines the spotlight on a select few for the night.

The gala showcases a diverse group of businesses, from traditional businesses like retail to emerging industries like VR

technology. We believe this night inspires other businesses to come together and celebrate the triumphs. Running a business, from start-up to Globe and Mail top 1,000, comes with challenges. The gala recognizes the risk-takers and the dedicated employees who make Halifax a vibrant and growing city.

Take a look through our finalists on pages 20-31. What's different about them? What's similar? Their passion. Their drive. Their commitment to creating jobs, boosting the economy, and putting Halifax on the map.

We hope to see you on January 24, 2019 at the Halifax Business Awards to celebrate our city's diverse success and kick off what will be a great new year!

PS: Join us for the Annual State of the Province with Premier McNeil on February 6! ■

Presented by:

**HALIFAX 2019 BUSINESS AWARDS**

**COME ONE, COME ALL!  
JOIN US UNDER THE BIG TOP!**

**JANUARY 24, 2019 | 5-9 PM**  
**HALIFAX CONVENTION CENTRE**

**HALIFAXCHAMBER.COM**



# NEW & NOTED

We welcome our new Chamber members

## 4BLADE CONSULTING LTD.

4Blade Consulting Ltd. is a coaching company that specializes in business growth. We help business build a solid foundation for growth using a prescribed framework focused on people, strategy, execution and cash. One nick in the blade of propulsion can ruin your day. Let's make your business growth predictable, not a wild guess.

### Derrick Westhaver

Bedford, NS  
902-483-8324  
westhaver@4bladeconsulting.com  
EDUCATION & PROF.  
DEVELOPMENT – Coaching

## APPLEHEAD STUDIO PHOTOGRAPHY

### Liam Hennessey

1672 Barrington Street, Second Floor  
Halifax, NS  
902-233-8567  
liam@appleheadstudio.com  
www.appleheadstudio.ca  
PERSONAL CARE & SERVICES –  
Photography

## ASSANTE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT LTD.

Helping you develop your wealth one smart money decision at a time! Come meet us to see how our strategies can help you achieve your goals and dreams. We like to focus on “What keeps our clients up at night!?” It all starts with a conversation!

### Peter Skinner

3400 Dutch Village Road, Suite 102  
Halifax, NS  
902-880-4360  
pskinner@assante.com  
www.assante.com/advisors/pskinner/  
FINANCE & INSURANCE –  
Financial/Insurance Services

## AUTOMOTIVE SECTOR COUNCIL OF NOVA SCOTIA

The Automotive Sector Council (ASC) is an independent, non-profit organization responsible to a board of directors. We are the trusted hub for information and access to resources and industry intelligence for automotive service and repair businesses, employees, apprentices and students. We are the respected voice of workforce development and labour market information for Nova Scotia's automotive service and repair industry.

## Shannon Trites

192 Wyse Road, Suite 8  
Dartmouth, NS  
902-464-0168  
shannon@automotivesectorcouncil.ca  
www.automotivesectorcouncil.ca  
NOT-FOR-PROFIT GROUPS –  
Associations/Agencies

## BLENDER NETWORKS

### Nicole Dodge

120 Western Parkway, Suite 406  
Bedford, NS  
902-832-4800  
nicole@blendernetworks.com  
www.blendernetworks.com  
ADVERTISING, PR & MEDIA –  
Advertising

## BRICKWORKS LTD.

### Jordan O'Hearn

Halifax, NS  
902-499-7689  
info@brickworksinterlocking.ca  
www.brickworksinterlocking.ca  
HOME & GARDEN –  
Landscaping/Lawn Cares

## Atlantic Canada's Bed Bug Experts



## Guaranteed Bed Bug Solutions When You Need Results!

We eliminate bed bugs immediately, no harsh chemicals or sticker shock prices!



CONTACT US TODAY!

www.bedbugdetectives.ca  
902-818-1885  
brett@bedbugdetectives.ca

## BROWN BAG LUNCH CO.

Brown Bag Lunch Co. is a small family-run diner in Burnside, serving breakfast and lunch. We make our own baked goods, soups, salads and dressings. We offer a variety of hot and cold sandwiches, burgers and hot breakfasts, as well as daily specials. We also cater office lunches.

### Arto Arslanyan

20 Wright Avenue  
Dartmouth, NS  
902-480-8868  
brownbaglunchco1@gmail.com

www.brownbaglunch.ca

RESTAURANTS, FOOD & BEVERAGE – Restaurant

## BY + LARGE STUDIOS

B+L offers an integrated, partnered approach to design, made possible with years of local and international design experience. Our expertise covers all aspects of interior design, space planning and technical document creation. We create spaces that link art, graphics, objects and technology in innovative, meaningful and unforgettable ways.

### Jaime Black

35 Portland Street, Suite 5  
Dartmouth, NS  
902-404-0155  
jaime@byandlargestudios.ca  
www.byandlargestudios.ca

HOME & GARDEN – Interior Designers

## CHEBUCTO LINKS SENIOR SUPPORT ASSOCIATION

Chebucto Links Senior Support Association (Chebucto Links) works to enable older adults to remain in their community of choice and maintain their independence, dignity and sense of well-being by providing social and health promotional programs, information and resources.

### Jan Boswell

6670 Bayers Road  
Halifax, NS  
902-422-3525  
chebucto.links@ns.sympatico.ca  
www.chebuctolinks.ca

NOT-FOR-PROFIT GROUPS – Community Service

## CHOICE HEALTH CENTRE

Choice Health Centre is a multidisciplinary health care clinic offering chiropractic, physiotherapy, massage therapy, naturopathic medicine, orthotics and more. Working as a team to help resolve individual needs of our clientele, staying updated with the latest trends and research. We are the only physiotherapy/chiropractic co-owned health centre in Atlantic Canada!

### Saba Chishti

46 McQuade Lake Crescent  
Halifax, NS  
902-404-3668  
saba@choicehealthcentre.com  
www.choicehealthcentre.com

HEALTH CARE – Health and Wellness

## CLICK PRODUCTIONS LTD.

Click Productions is the leader in Nova Scotia for event, commercial and architectural photography. We also design posters, invitations, banners and any other print material for your events. Providing award-winning coverage of any event, to photo booth services, Click can cover all your photo and print material needs.

### Brian Larter

Halifax, NS  
902-880-3351  
brian@clickproductions.ca  
www.clickproductions.ca

PERSONAL CARE & SERVICES – Photography

## COOKE STORE FIXTURES

As a major supplier to the retail and commercial sector, Cooke Sales is uniquely qualified to assist you with your display and merchandising needs. From the smallest corner kiosk to the largest chain store, we have products and services (many available online) that will help you grow your business. Cooke Sales is an innovative leader in development of custom displays and merchandising systems. We've partnered with clients big and small to create beautiful and effective store interiors. Let us help you maximize your merchandising and sales potential. With over fifty years of service to the retail and commercial sector, Cooke Sales truly is THE EQUIPMENT STORE.

## Martin Look

420 Higney Avenue  
Dartmouth, NS  
902-423-8886  
martin@cookesales.ca  
www.cookesales.ca

SHOPPING & SPECIALTY RETAIL – Retail (General)

## DILLY DALLY COFFEE CAFE

An independent coffee cafe serving up caffeine and kindness seven days a week! Focused on local, market to table coffee, food, wine and beer! Offering breakfast, lunch and pastry made on site daily. Vegan and gluten free friendly. Looking for after-hours event space or catering? We can help you with that too!

### Laura Draeger

6100 Quinpool Road  
Halifax, NS  
902-407-5554  
laura@dillydallyeats.com  
www.dillydallyeats.com

RESTAURANTS, FOOD & BEVERAGE – Restaurant

## DILYTICS CANADA INC.

DiLytics has expertise and experience with building Business Intelligence, Data Warehousing, Data Integration and EPM based Analytics solutions. DiLytics has experience providing IT solutions in the public sector and has worked at the federal, state, city level and K-12 Public Education in the U.S. Our company has successfully implemented solutions in the verticals of pharmaceuticals, supply chain & retailers, shipping, semiconductors, etc. in the private sector. DiLytics provides solutions in various tools like Oracle BI, Tableau, MS Power BI, Incorta, Oracle Data Integrator, Informatica, MS SSIS just to name a few.

### Nachiket Parab

1959 Upper Water Street  
Suite 1301, Tower 1  
Halifax, NS  
902-223-4792  
nparab@dilytics.com  
www.dilyticsinc.com

COMPUTERS, IT & TECHNOLOGY – Software Consulting

## ELIZABETH SMITH MCCROSSIN, MLA, NS LEGISLATURE

### Elizabeth Smith-McCrossin

111 Victoria Street  
Amherst, NS  
902-661-2288  
mla@esmithmccrossinmla.com  
www.esmithmccrossinmla.com  
GOVERNMENT – Government

## FIX IT

Fix IT aims to help small businesses in HRM get the most out of their IT resources. We specialize in providing easy to use, reliable and secure IT solutions, so your business can collaborate easier without the steep learning curve that came with the solutions of yesteryear.

### Kyran McGowan

Halifax, NS  
902-478-4732  
kyran@fix-it.solutions  
www.fix-it.solutions  
COMPUTERS, IT & TECHNOLOGY – IT Products/Services

## FORRESTALL STUDIO INC.

Your company's creative content department! Business is an important and vital aspect of our daily culture. As such it's important to nourish your company's aesthetic character. Forrestall Studio provides all manner of creative content services: video production, animation, design, mural installation, creative consulting and much more!

### Frank Forrestall

Dartmouth, NS  
902-476-3006  
neverville@hotmail.com  
www.frankforrestall.com  
ARTS, CULTURE & ENTERTAINMENT – Video/Multimedia

## GEEBO DEVICE REPAIR

Geebo Device Repair Inc. is a locally owned and operated phone, tablet and computer repair company. Geebo retails all your needed accessories for these mobile devices too. Geebo is pleased to announce we are now offering small business and general consumer on-site IT solutions.

## Frank Merry

4 Gaston Road  
Dartmouth, NS  
902-717-4349  
frank@wearegeebo.ca  
www.wearegeebo.ca  
COMMUNICATIONS – Cellular/Wireless

## GLOBAL STORM IT CORPORATION

Small businesses or larger organizations: we can take on the management of all or some of your day to day IT needs. Our solutions include real-time remote support for every member of your team and a dedicated lead technician for on-site support when necessary. Get access to a personalized solution tailored to your needs and size of your business.

### Mariia Souchko

Halifax, NS  
902-200-6600  
mariia@globalstormit.com  
www.globalstormit.com  
COMPUTERS, IT & TECHNOLOGY – IT Products/Services

**Armco**  
GROUP OF COMPANIES  
Investing in the future.  
One community at a time.

armcocapital.com





## GREY SEA ARTIST & EVENT MANAGEMENT INC.

### Andree Gracie

Dartmouth, NS  
902-401-4939  
andree@greyseaeventmanagement.com  
www.greyseaeventmanagement.com  
EVENTS – Festivals/Special Events

## HALIFAX HURRICANES BASKETBALL CLUB

### Kevin Sanford

2717 Joseph Howe Drive  
Halifax, NS  
902-377-3052  
ksanford@halifaxhurricanes.ca  
www.HalifaxHurricanes.ca  
SPORTS & RECREATION –  
Recreation/Sports/Fitness

## INTRO FUEL MARKETING

Intro Fuel Marketing connects local brands with the region's most influential and followed brand ambassadors and influencers on social media. These personalities organically introduce a brand's message to tens of thousands of people within their target market. This new-age facet of marketing is word of mouth on steroids and is proving traditional marketing obsolete.

### Lucas Dower

Halifax, NS  
709-330-2526  
lucas@introfuel.com  
www.introfuel.com  
ADVERTISING, PR & MEDIA –  
Internet Marketing

## MORGAN RINGROSE WEB DESIGN

### Morgan Ringrose

Halifax, NS  
902-809-8624  
hello@morganringrose.com  
www.morganringrose.com  
COMPUTERS, IT & TECHNOLOGY –  
Web Design

## PEAK AUDIO VIDEO LTD.

### Mike Merrigan

2813 Agricola Street  
Halifax, NS  
902-455-7325  
peak@peakaudio.ns.ca  
www.peakaudio.ns.ca  
EVENTS –  
Audio/Visual Equipment/Services

## PICK EMPOWERMENT

Pick Empowerment assists individuals, teams and families grow to attain health and wealth goals. Mediums utilized to educate and support the growth process include various assessments, such as Social + Emotional Intelligence Profiles, consultation, interactive workshops and coaching. Let's design a unique package to empower you to reach your goals.

### Charlene Pickrem

Lower Sackville, NS  
902-225-5996  
cpick@live.ca  
www.pickempowerment.blog  
HEALTH CARE – Health and Wellness

## REACH ORTHOPAEDICS INC.

Reach Orthopaedics is a medical device company dedicated to the development and commercialization of its patented design — a shoulder implant to treat massive rotator cuff tears. It will minimize time in surgery and greatly reduce wait times. But most importantly, the implant will treat pain and restore shoulder function to patients.

### David Johnston

1796 Summer Street, Suite 4855  
QEII Health Sciences Centre  
Halifax, NS  
902-473-7766  
DGJohnst@Dal.ca  
HEALTH CARE –  
Medical Technologies

## REWHYS BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

REWHYS is a business consulting firm specialized in answering its clients business WHYS utilizing insights gained from their business data. REWHYS consists of highly experienced business professionals and data scientists whose mission is to enhance business decision making power of its clients. Business intelligence and analytics are main practice areas.

### Ehsan Belghis

Halifax, NS  
902-817-6325  
ebelghis@rewhys.com  
www.rewhys.com  
BUSINESS & PROF. SERVICES –  
Business Consulting

**Bluedrop**  
TRAINING & SIMULATION

Over 35 years  
of Training &  
Simulation  
experience



www.bluedropts.com



## SKY'S THE LIMIT EVENTS

### Stephanie Brown

Halifax, NS  
902-220-8018  
info@skystldesign.com  
www.skystldesign.com

#### EVENTS -

Event Planning/Management

## SNAPD HALIFAX/DARTMOUTH

Snapd Halifax/Dartmouth is a free monthly publication focused on community events including charitable activities, business openings, and restaurant openings. We have a readership of 50,000+ and we are distributed at more than 75 high traffic locations including Sobeyes, Superstore, Shoppers, ferry terminals and restaurants.

### Gary Jewett

Halifax, NS  
902-293-7442  
gjewett@snapd.com  
www.halifax.snapd.com  
ADVERTISING, PR & MEDIA -  
Marketing

## STARLITE SECURITY SOLUTIONS INC.

Starlite Security Solutions is a security consulting business, primarily focused on risk assessment and development of security plans and programs. We work closely with our clients to enhance the security posture of the venue, enhancing their credibility in the community and building liaisons with local police and emergency services. Also, we train security personnel in line with security plans to enhance sustainability.

### Jim Blackmore

Halifax, NS  
613-294-2109  
j10blackmore@gmail.com  
SAFETY & SECURITY -  
Security Consulting

## THE PR HIVE

The PR Hive is a boutique public relations agency specializing in helping organizations build relationships with those who matter most. We are a small company with the capacity to provide full spectrum PR services through collaboration with industry professionals who share our values of community, collaboration, trust, optimism and exceptional work.

### Heather Hanson

2085 Maitland Street, Suite 100  
Halifax, NS  
902-488-2892  
heather@prhive.ca  
www.prhive.ca  
ADVERTISING, PR & MEDIA -  
Public Relations/Affairs

## TUTOR DOCTOR HALIFAX

Tutor Doctor Halifax is now offering its award-winning, convenient in-home, one-on-one tutoring services to students of all ages and abilities throughout HRM. Tutor Doctor works with students on discipline skills as well as knowledge, a winning formula for long-term academic success. Contact us today for a free educational consultation.

### Shelley Brown

Middle Sackville, NS  
902-718-6392  
sbrown@tutordocor.com  
www.tutordocor.com/halifax  
EDUCATION & PROF.  
DEVELOPMENT - Education/Schools

## UPSWING SOLUTIONS

Upswing Solutions is a boutique consultancy that works with companies to develop purpose-led business and product strategies, measure their impact and tell their stories. We specialize in delivering high-impact strategies with actionable plans for companies that want to grow their business while improving their customers' and community's lives and our environment.

### Allison Murray

Halifax, NS  
902-240-0482  
allison@upswingolutions.net  
www.upswingolutions.net  
BUSINESS & PROF. SERVICES -  
Business Consulting



You got your printing where?

print local

902-423-6440

etc. PRESS  
etcpress.com



## VIRTUE HAIR STUDIO

Virtue Hair Studio is a beautifully designed hair salon located on the waterfront in Burnside, Dartmouth, created by three young women and master hairstylists who have each been in the industry for over a decade. Specializing in hair services and hair care needs.

### Melissa Taylor

44 Marketplace Drive  
Dartmouth, NS  
902-406-2106

mtay\_@hotmail.com

www.virtuehs.com

PERSONAL CARE & SERVICES –  
Hair Services

## WOMEN IN AEROSPACE CANADA ATLANTIC

Women in Aerospace Canada (WIA-Canada) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to expanding women's opportunities for leadership and professional development as well as increasing their visibility in the aerospace community by creating a professional network in Canada and across the globe.

### Eva Martinez

Halifax, NS  
902-233-0298  
atlantic@wia-canada.org  
www.wia-canada.org

INDUSTRIAL & MANUFACTURING –  
Aerospace

## YOUR ESTATE MATTERS LTD.

Your Estate Matters Ltd. helps clients plan and organize their estate so that their family will be in a good position to deal with their estate and, if needed, we can also provide the family with the expertise and support they need to administer the estate. Our goal is to ease the burden on families and executors at a difficult time.

### Mary Mason

300 Prince Albert Road, Unit 214  
Dartmouth, NS  
902-233-1798  
marymason@yourestatematters.ca  
www.yourestatematters.ca

PERSONAL CARE & SERVICES –  
Funeral/Estate Planning

## STUDENT MEMBERS

### Colleen Dort – Accounting, NSCC

Dartmouth, NS  
902-240-3497  
colleendort24@gmail.com

### Govinda Talluri – Master of Technology, Entrepreneurship & Innovation, SMU

Halifax, NS  
902-989-3030  
talluri@gmail.com

### Jingyi Shi – Accounting, MSVU

Halifax, NS  
902-457-6788  
shi.jingyi@msvu.ca

### Katrina Tomas – Interdisciplinary Design, NSCAD

Hammonds Plains, NS  
902-403-6026  
katrinamltomas@gmail.com  
www.katrinamltomas.myportfolio.com/  
work

### Sandeep Ganesh Raj – Master of Business Administration, SMU

Halifax, NS  
902-579-8907  
sandeepganeshraj@gmail.com

### Stuart Clow – Master of Business Administration, SMU

Halifax, NS  
902-209-5733  
clowstuart@gmail.com

### Are you a new member?

To submit your 50-word description for New & Noted, please contact Kayla Whalen, Administrative Assistant at [kayla@halifaxchamber.com](mailto:kayla@halifaxchamber.com) or 902-468-7111 within the first six months of membership.

Presented by:

HALIFAX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

NATIONAL

Trusted Partner. Bold Thinking.™

PREMIER STEPHEN MCNEIL

**ANNUAL STATE OF THE PROVINCE**

FEBRUARY 2019

halifaxchamber.com

# MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

How our members are growing Halifax



## HR LEADER JOANNE BROWN JOINS KBRs

**KBRs** welcomes Joanne Brown to the Firm's HR Consulting practice. As a Senior Consultant, Joanne's focus is helping organizations design, develop and implement HR systems and processes to achieve their goals. She has extensive HR experience within prominent Nova Scotia organizations, including VP of HR, Farmers Dairy; Executive VP of HR, High Liner Foods; and Head of HR, Shared Services, Pepper Financial Services Group. She joins KBRs's team of more than 60 professionals. [www.kbrs.ca](http://www.kbrs.ca)



## CONNECTING STUDENTS WITH THE BEST IN ATLANTIC BUSINESS

On Thursday, October 25, 2018, business learners and leaders united at **Mount Saint Vincent University** for the 44th Annual Business & Tourism Conference. The only university-based event of its kind exclusively for undergraduate business students in Nova Scotia, the conference featured keynote presentations by Kevin Robinson, CEO of Robinson's Cannabis and Alisa Alyward,

Regional Operating Officer, RBC. Patrick Sullivan, President and CEO of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce participated in the CEO panel, together with Sara Napier of United Way Halifax, Craig Lynk of Atlantic Corporation, Mark Lever of Saltwire Network, Marie Mullaly of Credit Union Atlantic and Doug Nugent of Enterprise Holdings.

## Get your message out on target and on time.

A full-service commercial printer with direct-mail capabilities, unique in Atlantic Canada, Bounty Print offers a wide range of services for all your printing needs including a newly installed wide format division.

Bounty's industry-leading team has the knowledge and experience to deliver great value and impact for your next print project.

**BOUNTY**PRINT  
YOUR FULL-SERVICE COMMERCIAL PRINTER

902.453.0300  
[WWW.BOUNTYPRINT.COM](http://WWW.BOUNTYPRINT.COM)







### NUTRI-LAWN HAS SOMETHING TO BARK ABOUT!

Paw' don the pun! This year, **Nutri-Lawn** wanted to raise the bar and nourish your lawn AND nourish the community by helping out our furry friends at the SPCA! A big thank you to all who aided in our support of Nova Scotia SPCA as part of our fall lime promotion. For every lime application booked this October, \$5 was donated to animals in need at the Nova Scotia SPCA! Because of you, we were able to donate \$600 to the Nova Scotia SPCA. Thanks for helping us support animal welfare in our community!



### AJ SIMMONDS JOINS HALIFAX PARTNERSHIP

AJ joined the **Halifax Partnership** recently as Program Coordinator for the Halifax Connector Program. He connects recent graduates and immigrants (Connectees) to business leaders in their industry (Connectors). Through these connections, Connectees expand their professional network and discover career opportunities in Halifax. AJ is from North Preston and grew up in Dartmouth. He believes his upbringing is the reason for his passion for helping others and having a positive impact on our region.



### NEW LOGO AND WEBSITE

**Pick Empowerment** is excited to announce the unveiling of a new logo and website on January 1, 2019. Establishing Pick Empowerment has been full of peaks and valleys but the passion to provide others unique approaches/strategies to grow and succeed burns bright. Pick Empowerment genuinely cares about your mental health well being. Join me and enhance your awareness of what Pick Empowerment can do for you, your team or family. Be empowered!



### BREAKFAST WITH A FASCINATING CANADIAN

The **Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21** welcomed Mr. John Risley, O.C. as the Museum's 21st "Fascinating Canadian." Mr. Risley's shared the touching story of his mother, a war bride who arrived via Pier 21 in 1946, and the strong values she brought

to Canada. He continued with a call to action for support of immigration and diversity in our workplaces and communities. More than \$20,000 was raised for the museum through this fundraiser and support of our sponsors.



### POWER OF THE PURSE

Power of the Purse proved successful in Halifax for the second straight year. The event welcomed 200+ women for a day of inspiration and stories at the Atlantica Hotel. As presenting sponsor, RBC made it possible to put three women through the DFSH entire suite of offerings, including the Employment Retention Program. Pictured above are: Kimberley Bourgeois (far left), Client of **Dress for Success Halifax**, Maria Gallagher (centre), Marketing Volunteer and Brenda Saunders/Todd, Executive Director. "These events provide a platform for us to share the work we provide in our community, as we continue to lift women up," says Julie Wisen, Board President. [www.dressforsuccess.org/halifax](http://www.dressforsuccess.org/halifax)



### EASTER SEALS NS ANNOUNCES NEW LOCATION

**Easter Seals NS** announces their new location, located at 22 Fielding Avenue in Burnside. Our new facility expands our employment and skills training programs through an increase in the space for Easter Seals NS and our social enterprise New Leaf Enterprises, its life and jobs

skills training program. We have also added an onsite retail space for sales of gifts, crafts and home decor products created by program participants. Our new onsite cafe will open to the public in early January.



### BLUE NOSE MARATHON WELCOMES NEW DIRECTOR

The **Scotiabank Blue Nose Marathon** is excited to announce and introduce you to their new Director of Sponsorship and Expo, Rochelle Locke. Going forward, Rochelle will oversee all sponsorship and expo sales for the Blue Nose Marathon, which will be held from June 6-9, 2019. If you are interested in exploring opportunities for your organization to be involved in the Blue Nose Marathon, please contact Rochelle directly at [rochelle@bluenosemarathon.com](mailto:rochelle@bluenosemarathon.com) or via phone at 902-496-1889.

## PrecisionBioLogic

### PRECISION BIOLOGIC GROWS

**Precision BioLogic** has acquired Ancaster, ON-based Affinity Biologicals. "The acquisition marks an important step in the development of our company," says Paul Empey, President and CEO of Precision BioLogic. "The two organizations serve a similar market with complementary product lines, which will allow us to better serve existing customers and develop new products for hemostasis and thrombosis research and diagnostics."

### Personalized home care



Support is just a  
phone call away.  
**1.877.289.3997**

**Bayshore®**  
Home Health



#### Everyday Care

Companionship, meal preparation, housekeeping, errands, home check-in visits, outings and appointments



#### Essential Care

Medication reminders & support, assistance with eating, dementia care, respite care and personal care



#### Enriched Care

Nursing, hospital bedside care, serious injury care, foot care, palliative care and much more!

[www.bayshore.ca](http://www.bayshore.ca)





## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE GOES TO WORK

Employers want to support others and keep them safe from domestic violence but they don't know how to start the conversation. "Even if you are not aware, chances are that your employees, coworkers and clients have missed work time to deal with their partner's abusive behavior," says Heather Byrne, Executive Director, **Alice House**. Fifty-three per cent of workers affected by domestic violence report they've been stalked while at work. Education is the key to prevention. [education@alicehouse.ca](mailto:education@alicehouse.ca)



## RECOGNIZE YOUR POTENTIAL LAUNCHES ONLINE TRAINING COURSE

**RYP** is thrilled to announce its first online training course, Gratitude @ Work. [www.recognizeyourpotential.thinkific.com](http://www.recognizeyourpotential.thinkific.com). Gratitude is truly on the leading edge with amazing benefits on physical and mental health. Gratitude also improves productivity by 60 per cent. When deciding to take our training online, we wanted to start with the topic we are most passionate about and with the greatest impact for today's workplace! We also have a new free 30-minute training video on Leading to Inspire. "I have had a lot of fun working with Crystal Picard Design & Marketing on this amazing project" says Floria Aghdamimehr.



## 20 GAME FLEX PACKS



Experience the exhilaration of Halifax's best live sports entertainment. Use your flex pack to treat your business associates, employees or customers to a night out, or give the gift of basketball to your favourite charity.

There are endless ways to use your 20 Game Flex Pack.

## THE CHOICE IS YOURS!

Use all 20 vouchers at once, one at a time, or mix it up throughout the season. Each voucher is redeemable at the Ticket Atlantic Box Office for a Lower Bowl Ticket to any 2018/19 Regular Season Home Game.

ALL  
FOR JUST  
\$320

+HST

YOU SAVE

24%  
OFF

REGULAR SINGLE  
GAME TICKET PRICE  
INCLUDING SERVICE  
CHARGES

ORDER YOUR  
CORPORATE FLEX PACK TODAY!

902.377.3052

[info@halifaxhurricanes.ca](mailto:info@halifaxhurricanes.ca)



### BIG MOVE FOR KITCHEN DOOR CATERING

**Kitchen Door** is very excited to announce they are moving to 110 Higney Avenue in Dartmouth after 10 successful years in Bedford. Their new home will include an expanded retail area and “The Studio,” a dedicated cooking event space that will host public experiential cooking

classes and private events. The new space will allow for continued growth and expansion in high-quality off-site catering across the Maritimes. Visit their talented team in early 2019 for a delicious bite or hands on class.



### RIDING FOR RESEARCH INTO TYPE 1 DIABETES

Our **JDRF Revolution Ride** was held on Oct. 5 was a HUGE success! We raised more than \$25,000 in support of research into type 1 diabetes! Teams of five participated with each person riding for seven minutes and encouraging some friendly competition among colleagues. There are many ways this ride can be tailored to meet your organization’s wishes, and we can even bring the bikes to you! For future information for next year visit [www.jdrf.ca/get-involved/jdrf-revolution-ride-early-interest-form-2019](http://www.jdrf.ca/get-involved/jdrf-revolution-ride-early-interest-form-2019).

BEIJING | SHANGHAI | SUZHOU | HANGZHOU

# JOIN US FOR ANOTHER ADVENTURE IN CHINA

SEPT. 25 – OCT. 5, 2019  
11 DAY TRIP FOR ONLY  
**\$2,299\***

CONTACT [EMMA@HALIFAXCHAMBER.COM](mailto:EMMA@HALIFAXCHAMBER.COM)  
OR VISIT [HALIFAXCHAMBER.COM/CHINA](http://HALIFAXCHAMBER.COM/CHINA)

**HALIFAX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**





## GREATER ACCESS TO RADON TESTING

Last year, the **Lung Association of Nova Scotia** introduced the Radon Detector Library Loan program, providing access to short-term radon detectors through libraries across the province. Where November was radon awareness month, the Lung Association worked with the NS provincial libraries to put 20 more devices into circulation, providing greater access to radon testing for even more Nova Scotians. For more information on this program or how to test for radon in your home, visit [ns.lung.ca](http://ns.lung.ca).



## NEW DEMENTIA RESOURCE FOR BUSINESS

**Always Home Homecare** is excited to launch a new resource called 'How to Be a Dementia Inclusive Business'. It includes information on the warning signs of dementia, communication tips, ideas for how to make your physical space more inclusive, and more! With our aging population, dementia is expected to increase. Learn more about dementia and what you can do to help your customers who live with this condition. Email Rosanne Burke at [rosanne@alwayshomecare.ca](mailto:rosanne@alwayshomecare.ca) to get your copy!

## SUPPORTING LOCAL RESEARCH

With the support of our generous donors, the **Lung Association of Nova Scotia** has been supporting high-quality lung health research at both a national level, as well as locally through the Legacy Research Grant. In November, LANS presented \$25,000 to local researcher, Dr. Zhenyu Cheng, for his research: Boosting host immunity against *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* lung infection. In the last six years, LANS has contributed to funding 365 projects with more than \$14.3 million invested. Visit [ns.lung.ca](http://ns.lung.ca) for info.

## ELECTED TO ACADA BOARD

Eva Martinez, VP of Women in Aerospace Canada and VP of In-Service Support at PAL Aerospace, has been elected to the **Atlantic Canada Aerospace and Defence Association (ACADA)** Board of Directors, representing Nova Scotia. ACADA is a collaborative organization representing the interests of the aerospace, defence, marine and security industries in Atlantic Canada. As a member of the Board, Eva will facilitate strategic industry development in the region while promoting the Atlantic Canada brand locally, nationally, and internationally.

## LUNCH MADE EASY!

The holidays are over, we are all tired of turkey so let **Pete's Frootique and Fine Foods** provide you with quick, healthy and delicious lunch options. Enjoy our award winning salads and sandwiches without the wait. You can skip the line, but not the flavor by ordering online or through our app. Just click, pay and pick up without the wait. Cold weather and snow keeping you at your desk? Our online ordering now has delivery. For more information, visit [www.petes.ca](http://www.petes.ca).

## CRYPTOCURRENCY FOR THE MASSES!

By January 2019, **LIFE** will be two years ahead of the world in adopting cryptocurrency for the mass market. A free app will give spendable/storeable cryptocurrency as a loyalty program, plus three to 10 per cent discounts on brand-name everyday shopping. For a couple hundred dollars, members will receive monthly residual income based on every purchase made, just for sharing the free app! Ernie Robinson, of Robinson International, asks, "Who wouldn't want to do that?" 2019 promises to be a fabulous year!



## POWER HR EXPORTING LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Susan Power, Owner and CEO of **Power HR**, Halifax based leadership development firm has been invited to present at the CPHR Alberta Annual Conference in Edmonton in April 2019 on the topic of Cultivating Leadership - the ROI of Leadership Effectiveness. Increased

Leadership Effectiveness results in 9 per cent higher gross margin on average, and 37 per cent higher revenue per employee. The word "inspire" means to breathe life into. Check out our new podcast: [anchor.fm/inspired-leadership](http://anchor.fm/inspired-leadership). [www.powerhr.ca](http://www.powerhr.ca)

## Are you launching a new business or product? Celebrating a new partnership?

The Halifax Chamber invites you to share your Members in the News story in Business Voice. Upload your content here: [halifaxchamber.com/business-voice](http://halifaxchamber.com/business-voice)

\*Note: we do not publish event promotions.



**THE HALIFAX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE** is pleased to present this year's Halifax Business Award finalists. Now in our 19th year, and sponsored by RBC, this event allows us to showcase Halifax's best and brightest business leaders and entrepreneurs. Businesses and individuals are judged by a panel spearheaded by Gina Gale, Senior Vice-President with BDC. We have dedicated this issue to profiling the incredible individuals who have made it to the finalist stage. These pages don't do their hard work justice, but they do provide a sample of who these individuals are. We hope you enjoy getting to know this year's finalists and book Thursday, Jan. 24 to celebrate with us at the 2019 Halifax Business Awards gala.

To view the full interviews with this year's nominees, please visit our website: [www.halifaxchamber.com](http://www.halifaxchamber.com)

Presenting  
Sponsor:



Thank you to The Exchange on Hollis  
for hosting the 2019 finalists  
for this year's photo shoot.

Photos by Paul Darrow





# HALIFAX BUSINESS AWARDS 2019



# NEW BUSINESS of the year finalists



Sponsored by:

**BOYNECLARKE**   
LAWYERS | LLP

## New Business of the year finalists

L-R: *Jake Moore, Co-Founder and CEO, Nanuk Technologies, Graham Collins, President, Compass Distillers, Lisa Brow, Co-Owner, Tart and Soul Café, Mike Gillespie, Partner & Co-Founder, New Scotland Brewing Co.*  
*Missing: Sonia Gillies-Da Mota, Co-Owner, Vandal Doughnuts*



### COMPASS DISTILLERS

#### What inspired you to open a new business?

We were inspired to open our business by the amazing craft distillers around the country and in the US; we saw an opportunity to make great spirits here at home using local ingredients to their fullest potential, an idea we have used in making award spirits such as our Spring GINS — an all Nova Scotian gin, awarded 2018 “Product of the Year” by Taste of Nova Scotia. Our compass keeps us on track to making the best, honest and most truly Nova Scotian spirits.

#### How did you get your start?

Starting a distillery is a challenge in financing, followed by an exercise in engineering, a lot of construction, followed by some distilling R&D. Once we picked an amazing location in the heart of Halifax, the rest flowed from that, with the project expanding and suffering a few bumps and delays along the way. We have been fortunate to work with amazing folks who have grabbed on to our vision and pulled in unison.

#### What is your proudest accomplishment?

We have had a few, but one of our proudest accomplishments was the first distillation — a rum, the first to be distilled in Halifax in modern times. The project until then had been a big construction project, which overshadowed the ultimate goal of distilling, so it was an excellent milestone to be able to turn on the equipment and distill some spirits. Finishing construction and starting distilling felt like graduating university and getting that first serious job, one journey had come to an end and the big leap to the next level had started.



### NANUK TECHNOLOGIES

#### Tell us one thing people may not know about your business?

We are a young company; all of us are under 25. For the past three years, we've been developing our skills, working to bring innovative virtual reality solutions to the market. A significant amount of this skills development, including research and groundwork, was done while our core team attended university.

#### How can we encourage youth to explore entrepreneurship as a possible future career?

Entrepreneurship is for people who don't feel they fit particularly well into slots that society places them in. It isn't about promoting entrepreneurship; it's about encouraging people to find what makes them the happiest, and helping them reach their full potential. Doing what you love will pull you towards a happy future as long as you let it. Don't be scared to follow that feeling; in fact, do yourself a favour and do everything in your power to pursue it.

#### What has been the biggest challenge to being a new business?

Growing a new business is always difficult; the odds are stacked against you, so to speak. We're a brand-new business that specializes in brand new technology that's trying to break into the real estate market, arguably one of the most traditional markets in the world. At Nanuk Technologies we are tasked with paving the way for a brand-new market. We have made our biggest challenge our biggest inspiration and motivation, and we won't be stopping anytime soon.





**NEW  
SCOTLAND  
BREWING  
COMPANY**

**NEW SCOTLAND  
BREWING CO.**

### **Who/What inspired you to open a new business?**

Kevin and I had our New Scotland Clothing brand created and always thought it would align well with craft beer. When we met Mike (our business partner and brew master), and tried his beer recipes, we were excited and motivated to start working on a business plan together to see if we could make it work ... and we did!

### **How did you get your start?**

Our friend, Mike Gillespie, was brewing beer on the side with a desire to be an entrepreneur. Kevin and Mike were chatting one day and got on the topic of going into business together combining the New Scotland brand and Mike's beer recipes and knowledge of business. It started to become more of a reality as we met on a regular basis (over a beer or two of course!) to start pulling together a business plan. About two years later, we were pouring beer from our new tap room! Exciting times!

### **What is your proudest accomplishment?**

To be recognized by the Halifax Chamber of Commerce and become a Finalist for New Business of the Year!

### **Do you have any tips for people who are thinking about starting their own business?**

Keep an open mind and ask a lot of questions to other entrepreneurs. Also, be open for taking advice. There isn't a lot of room for error when getting a business off the ground. Working with an experienced mentor can help minimize any detrimental mistakes.

### **How can we encourage youth to explore entrepreneurship as a possible future career?**

Hire and engage them in the daily business activities. Work closely with them on tasks and talk to them about your story and experiences during the building of the business.



**TART & SOUL  
CAFE**

### **Why did you choose Halifax?**

Neither of us are from Halifax originally — Lisa is from Havre Boucher, Nova Scotia and Saf is from Richmond Hill, Ontario — but we both arrived here in 2005 and have been here ever since. Halifax is full of amazing people and ideas, and a bustling, vibrant community. So many incredible entrepreneurs are out here creating jobs for themselves and we are lucky to know so many of them. There is so much love in this city, so much capacity for community building, and so much room for growth.

### **Tell us one thing people may not know about your business?**

We love our little cafe in the south end, but what people might not know is that we also wholesale to many different places across the HRM ranging from Spryfield (The Raven Espresso Boutique) to Sackville (Apartment 3) to Dartmouth (New Scotland Yard Emporium) and a few on the peninsula, too (Weird Harbour, Glitter Bean, The King's Galley, Scotia/Nova Pharmacy, and Atomic Cafe)! Our wholesale clients are the BEST and we don't know where we would be without them.

### **Where do you see your organization in 10 years?**

In 10 years, we hope Tart & Soul is a thriving wholesale bakery and cafe. We also hope to be doing work that enriches the community: baking classes, nutrition/cooking workshops with sliding scale admission, and supporting small, local businesses whenever possible. We want to provide jobs for a solid group of people and a workplace that promotes wellness, self-efficacy and excitement. We want to support other entrepreneurs who are starting out, including offering consulting services for new start-ups.



**VANDAL  
DOUGHNUTS  
INC.**

### **Who/What inspired you to open a new business?**

Vandal came to life very synergistically. Making the doughnuts began as a fun, creative outlet — which so happened to be cheaper than therapy — and snowballed very quickly into a full-blown business.

### **How did you get your start?**

We started by trying out and doing decently well at two other business' together before starting Vandal. We used what we learned through our other ventures to knock it out of the park with Vandal.

### **Why did you choose Halifax?**

We both have strong roots here in Halifax. It's our home and there would really be no other choice!

### **Tell us one thing people may not know about your business?**

All new staff are required to take the Harry Potter house-sorting quiz upon being hired. Turns out Hufflepuffs make great bakers and doughnut decorators and Slytherins/Ravenclaws make for great managers.

### **What is your proudest accomplishment?**

Our proudest accomplishment has been the overall high level of love and engagement we've received from the community. We have never seen anything like it before!

### **How can we encourage youth to explore entrepreneurship as a possible future career?**

We found that entrepreneurship was never something that was held to the same degree of importance as other potential careers when we were coming up through the education system. We think it would be important to start there, but also as business owners to reach out and provide mentorship to those who are beginning and need help demystifying the process.

# SMALL BUSINESS of the year finalists



Sponsored by:



## Small Business of the year finalists

L-R: Kevin Sullivan, CEO, Appili Therapeutics Inc., Karen Campbell, Co-Owner, Totally Raw Pet Food, Scott Saccary, Co-Founder, New Scotland Clothing Co., Leah Boody, President, Pineapple Bytes, Heather Rankin, Co-Owner, Sommelier, Obladee, A Wine Bar



### APPILI THERAPEUTICS

#### Where do you see your organization in five years?

We envision Appili Therapeutics operating as an established pharmaceutical company headquartered in Halifax and impacting patients and healthcare professionals globally. We'll be a major force in the global fight to combat the drug resistant bacteria that threaten our way of life. We plan to have at least two novel infectious-disease-fighting therapies available to patients. Revenue from these programs will fuel the development of additional transformational life-saving R&D programs, and we will continue to support the burgeoning life-sciences sector in Halifax.

#### How is your business contributing to making Halifax a better place?

We are creating highly skilled well-paying jobs, training a new generation of biotechnology leaders, and recruiting drug development experts to the region. With growing industry awareness and global engagement, we are catalyzing the growth of Halifax's life-sciences sector.

#### Why did you choose Halifax?

I (Kevin) grew up in Dartmouth and did undergraduate work at Dalhousie. Connections to family and friends, and the impressive entrepreneurial support systems, made Halifax a great city in which to found Appili. Halifax has everything a small biotechnology company needs: world-class universities, a great talent base, incubator programs, and modern lab facilities. We have been able to recruit and retain top local talent, who enjoy a great quality of life here in Halifax.



**NEW  
SCOTLAND  
CLOTHING  
COMPANY**

**NEW SCOTLAND  
CLOTHING CO.**

#### What has been the biggest challenge to being a small business?

In my opinion, managing our inventory and cash flow. In a small business, there isn't much room for error, so it is important to educate, ask questions and avoid any potential mistakes before they happen, if not, it could be detrimental. Working with a mentor is a great way to help navigate through challenges like this.

#### Does your business engage youth and/or immigrants? What does that bring to your business?

All of our employees are young adults. They run the daily sales operations of our business at our retail locations. They also have different roles within the business to manage important tasks such as social media, customer service, inventory, merchandising, analyze existing clothing designs, and to help create new ones. They are the ones that keep our business running day to day so that we (Scott and Kevin) can focus on creating new business opportunities for growth.

#### How is your business contributing to making Halifax a better place?

We build relationships through connecting and collaborating with other entrepreneurs with the goal to create opportunities for Nova Scotians and add depth to industry in Nova Scotia. We give generously to fundraising initiatives and volunteer our time with non-profit groups. We spread NS's spirit wherever we go and are contributing to the tourism market. A majority of our sales come from X-Pats abroad and tourists returning to their country with our NS branded clothing. We feel that we are NS ambassadors and that makes us very proud of what we do.





## OBLADEE, A WINE BAR

### What would you say is your organization's proudest achievement?

I hope this is not too pessimistic an achievement, but I would say our proudest moment was when we saved Obladee from an uncertain future by taking our new landlord to Supreme Court for unlawfully trying to increase our rent once he took ownership of the building. The court ended up ruling in our favour (and we also won to have our expenses covered). This was a long and taxing ordeal, and it reminded us both of the erratic and fragile nature of this industry, and of the general lack of support and protection for tenants in commercial lease agreements. On a positive note, it highlighted our physical and mental toughness, our intelligence, intuition and demonstrated the lengths we are willing to go to protect our business.

### What brings customers back to you?

I think customers come back to us because they trust us. They trust us to make them feel good, they trust that the wine will be solid, that their server will know their stuff, that the food will be well thought out and that the space will be clean and inviting. I think "consistency" is an undervalued term in the hospitality industry — it is kind of unsexy to talk about — but it is unquestionably what brings people back.

### Why did you choose Halifax?

We chose Halifax firstly because we were both from here. I had been away for over 20 years, and Christian for about 10 and there was a desire on both of our parts to return. We also chose Halifax because of opportunity. We were both coming from larger cities where markets were already saturated and leaseholds were completely unaffordable. Halifax provided an accessible, penetrable market, adequate population, reasonable commercial rents and at that time, few competitors in the type of space we were looking to occupy. We could get in on the "ground level" so to speak — the city seemed primed and ready for what we were about to do.



## PINEAPPLE BYTES

### What would you say is your organization's proudest achievement?

Pineapple Byte's proudest achievement has been our ability to launch a new brand and create a culture where clients, vendors, business partners and employees feel respected and appreciated. Over the past three years, we have successfully recruited and retained additional employees growing our workforce by more than 40 per cent. Employee surveys continue to reinforce the success we have achieved in developing a positive culture.

### If you could follow in the footsteps of a successful business, which would it be and why?

There are so many successful businesses it really is hard to pick just one. Rather than follow in the footsteps of a successful business, I would like to see Pineapple Bytes follow the footsteps of a successful leader. Darren Nantes has led a number of successful companies in Halifax including G3 Galvanizing, Twin City Painting and Guildfords Group to name a few. Darren's ability to see opportunity, develop and execute strategy and lead teams is exemplary. His businesses employ hundreds of people and operate with professionalism and integrity. Darren's quiet contributions to charitable organizations are a testament to his character.

### Where do you see your organization in five years?

I expect to continue to expand our operation over the coming years. With clients coast to coast, I expect to have offices elsewhere in Canada and to be recognized as the leading provider of business management solutions to retail and hospitality clients.

### Why did you choose Halifax?

I can't imagine having a head office anywhere else. Despite attending university in Ontario and working in Bermuda for four years, I always knew I would come back to my roots. I have always been a believer that opportunities can be created anywhere if you're willing to work hard and be creative.



## TOTALLY RAW PET FOOD

### What would you say is your organization's proudest achievement?

As the owners of Totally Raw Pet Food, we are very proud to have dedicated our careers to providing our customers with a clean, pure and simple approach to pet wellness. We started Totally Raw Pet Food to bring holistic and healthy pet nutrition options to the mainstream pet food market. Our proudest achievement is experiencing and participating in the pure joy of our customers' stories and photos of their happy, thriving, canine and feline companions.

### If you could follow in the footsteps of a successful business, which would it be and why?

Totally Raw Pet Food identified a void in an emerging market and seized the opportunity to fill the space with a quality product that takes advantage of unique Atlantic Canadian resources. We have looked to Acadian Seaplants as a local success story that followed a similar business opportunity. Acadian Seaplants' innovative use of local agri-food resources like seaweed has successfully transitioned from a tiny Nova Scotian family operation to become one of Nova Scotia's leading exporters and a global industry leader.

### Where do you see your organization in five years?

At Totally Raw Pet food, we aspire to be the Canadian and Nova Scotian brand that helps revolutionize the global pet health market. We are planning now so that by 2023 we will be exporting Totally Raw Pet Food products to Asia, the US and Europe from our local production and distribution facility. We will have branded products in stores across Canada and will have our own stores throughout Atlantic Canada's urban communities.

# EXPORT BUSINESS of the year finalists



## FIRST CATCH FISHERIES CO., LTD.

### What is your organization's biggest achievement to date?

Since our establishment in 2016, our company has sent 36 cargo charter planes from Halifax, Nova Scotia to China. Currently, three cargo planes are scheduled per week, each plane carries 220,000 pounds of seafood. In addition, our company has expanded investment with a warehouse with more than 29,000 square feet of high-standard venue at the airport. We have completed the renovations inside and outside of the building to make it the largest cargo centre for live seafood in Atlantic Canada.

### What is your favorite region or country to do business with?

Until now, our company's main target market was Asia with the Chinese market as the centre. The Chinese seafood market, especially the imported seafood market, has maintained a rapid growth trend. China is considered to be the largest market for seafood consumption in the future.

### What has been the biggest challenge you have faced as an exporter?

Each target country sets its own import policy, standard and information requirements. Failing to meet the requirements may lead to serious consequence. With the assistance from our local CFIA Halifax office, we are able to provide the most accurate information for the designated market, ensuring the seafood products we export are the freshest and most vibrant.



## INTERTALK CRITICAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS

### What is your favorite region or country to do business with?

More than 90 per cent of our business is done in the United States, although each region provides its own diversity and culture, much like here at home in Canada. Oregon is very similar to Nova Scotia in terms of its topography and climate (which means it is beautiful!), but you cannot beat California for a place to visit, especially in winter time.

Sponsored by:



## Export Business of the year finalists

L-R: Mike Johnston, President & CEO, REDspace, Chris Oldham, President, InterTalk; Chris Burns, President & CEO, Novonix  
Missing: Moog Focal Technologies, First Catch Fisheries Co. Ltd.

### What has been the biggest challenge you have faced as an exporter?

The recent surge in Nationalism across many countries, especially with our partner to the South, has caused a great deal of uncertainty within export markets — will the doors remain open to us? Will other countries allow disputes with the United States to impact their buying decisions with Canadian companies? Although it is challenging to witness this trend, it is vital that we maintain our course regarding exports and recognize that the world cannot thrive without mutual trade and exporting.

### What do you feel is your biggest contribution to the local business community?

InterTalk is doing its part in promoting Halifax as a strong technology and innovation centre — we tout the fact that our city boasts multiple high-end universities, creating a young, talented workforce, access to both North American and European markets and perhaps most of all, the right attitude toward serving our customers. Halifax is becoming a well-known destination for sourcing high-quality products and services and great place to visit!





## MOOG FOCAL TECHNOLOGIES

### What inspired your company to become involved in export?

Moog Focal is primarily an export business. We are known for innovative, high-performing and customized products designed for the harshest marine and defense markets. The vast majority of these opportunities reside outside of Canada, and indeed worldwide, therefore, requiring a strong focus on export. It was clear when the company started more than 30 years ago that in order to show continued growth, we needed to find and delight customers worldwide with our solutions to their challenging problems.

### What is your organization's biggest achievement to date?

Moog Focal has had many achievements and it has been amazing to grow from our early roots of being connected to the Nova Scotia Research Foundation to a company well known worldwide. Our employees are very proud for being known in the marine market as one of the top-performing, high-quality and customer-centric companies in the industry. From having products used to help find the Titanic to expanding our global reach and impact, we have lots to be proud of and a bright future ahead.

### What has been the biggest challenge you have faced as an exporter?

Moog Focal's biggest challenge as an exporter is understanding and adapting to both the macro-economic conditions, as well as the specific nuances for the many unique regions we deliver our products and services to around the world. As well, geo-political influences, such as trade agreements also make being an exporter difficult at times. It takes a strong passion, significant persistence, as well as a flexible strategy in order to export to a wide range of end markets and regions.



## NOVONIX

### What inspired your company to become involved in export?

Novonix was founded to provide equipment and services to the growing lithium-ion battery market. This is a global market with large investments in research and manufacturing of lithium-ion batteries occurring across Asia, Europe and the United States. Therefore, to service this market it meant targeting and exporting to customers around the world, while being located here in Halifax.

### What is your organization's biggest achievement to date?

Novonix's biggest achievement to date would be the recognition of its work and products by companies in international markets. Novonix secured an equity investment from Contemporary Amperex Technology Limited (CATL), the largest lithium-ion battery manufacturer in China in 2016. In 2017, Novonix was acquired by a battery materials supplier from Australia looking to expand its capabilities. Attracting this type of interest means the work we are doing locally matters significantly to the industry on a global scale.

### Why did you choose Halifax?

We started Novonix from work we were doing at Dalhousie University and Halifax was home to the founders. Although we were targeting such a vast international market in the lithium-ion battery sector, no matter where the company was situated, it would be necessary to ship products around the world, so we did not have to leave Halifax. We were also very happy to find a reliable local supply chain and establish a network of companies we can work with to further advance our aggressive growth strategies.

## REDSpace

### What inspired your company to become involved in export?

REDSpace has been involved in export from the beginning. When I moved back to Nova Scotia, after going to school and working in Boston, I had a number of relationships that I brought with me. I realized quickly that by hiring smart people and building strong relationships with our clients, I could do this type of work from anywhere — so why not do it from home?

### What is your favorite region or country to do business with?

Our oldest and most productive patch has been the United States. In recent years, we have expanded into other markets, in part by adding value to the international arms of our large US clients. We support an industry that is emerging and evolving globally, and we're keen to build relationships in other countries that also need our capabilities and experience.

### What is your organization's biggest achievement to date?

I'm really proud that I've been able to help REDSpace achieve global success while bucking many of the more negative trends in our industry. Unlike other IT shops, we run projects to ensure people only work Monday to Friday, 9 to 5. We've shown we can live outside the urban centres, but still work for the world's leading entertainment brands. Junior and senior staff are incented to critique and learn from each other, helping us achieve a level of collaboration and selflessness that's rare in our industry. All of this has led to staff and client retention rates that are twice the industry average or better. We've grown a density of world-class talent here that our clients say they simply haven't seen before and it's setting us apart. Our people trust each other, and I'm proud that I've earned their trust. And as someone born and raised in the province, who left for a decade, I am probably most proud that I've been able to give 170 people meaningful careers and another reason to stay here in Nova Scotia.



# INNOVATIVE BUSINESS of the year finalists



Sponsored by:



**DALHOUSIE  
UNIVERSITY**

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT  
Rowe School of Business

## Innovative Business of the year finalists

*L-R: Brett Newcombe, Vice President, Operations, BBD Thermal Remediation, Matthew MacDonald, Chief Engineer, InterTalk, Monique Pellerin, Marketing and Proposal Coordinator, Bluedrop Training & Simulation, Gregg Curwin, CEO, TruLeaf. Missing: Jeremy Koenig, CEO, Athletigen Technologies Inc.*



### ATHLETIGEN TECHNOLOGIES INC.

#### What is your organization's proudest accomplishment?

Athletigen's proudest moment was launching our newest product, the ALTIS Sport Performance Report, a DNA product created in partnership with the world-class coaches and athletes at ALTIS, a track and field centre in Phoenix, Arizona, home to dozens of Olympic athletes and coaches from 30 countries. Through ALTIS, we learned to optimize how DNA information can be explained to athletes and their coaches, ensuring that DNA is integrated optimally, so as to help each athlete define their individual path to success.

#### What inspired your business's innovation efforts?

When I was 15 years old, my mother was diagnosed with MS. She told me, "Don't worry, it's not genetic," triggering a mission to both save her and a two-decade long accumulation of specialized knowledge focused on understanding the balance between nature and nurture.

While completing my PhD at Dalhousie in biochemistry and molecular biology and captaining the track team, I combined my studies with my athletic passion and pondered, 'What if in addition to understanding the role of DNA in the pathology of disease, we also studied human capability?'



### BBD THERMAL REMEDIATION

#### What inspired your business' innovation efforts?

Our president, Brian, a cancer survivor and a veteran pest control technician, was determined to find a chemical-free treatment option that worked. He was growing increasingly tired of the repeated service calls for chemical sprays, knowing he would ultimately be back as the bed bugs had built up a chemical resistance to the pesticides being applied. BBD Thermal is one of the only pest control companies in the country that has created and built their own thermal remediation system.

#### What is your organization's proudest accomplishment?

BBD's proudest accomplishment is our community support (Adsum House, Parker Street Furniture Bank, Metro Turning Point, Shelter NS, Riverview United Church). From the beginning, we have had one goal in mind — help those in need! Pest control has been an excellent platform for us — we have helped individuals that were prisoners in their own homes (fear of being judged and/or spreading the issue), to helping families whose children were being turned away from school because of a problem at home.

#### What advice would you give to another business that wants to embrace innovation?

Find something you are passionate about and that you could see yourself pursuing for the long term. Due diligence is paramount — do your homework and leave no stone unturned. Monitor the competition — can you provide superior results, a more cost-efficient product/service or an alternative that is safer for the environment? Ensure you have the right people in the right seats on the bus (the bus being your business).





## BLUEDROP TRAINING & SIMULATION

### What inspired your business' innovation efforts?

Our innovation efforts are based on our constant efforts to add value and adapt to our customers new training requirements. In this era of mobile and digital technologies, it is important to adapt our training to ensure that we keep new trainees motivated. More specifically, millennials.

### What is your organization's proudest accomplishment?

We started from a blank sheet of paper to create a new generation of rear crew trainer using VR and body tracking technologies and we are having success in creating a new breed of simulators for rear crew mission training. We have a simulator in Philadelphia at Boeing's Chinook's manufacturing plant, we have a Hoist Mission Training System in Shearwater for the CH-148 Cyclone helicopter and we will be announcing further sales in Canada and in the United States in the very near future. Bluedrop is becoming a household name in the industry.

### What is something new that's happening at your company?

We are beneficiaries of a Strategic Innovation Funding project from Industry Canada that will provide stable funding for innovation for the next five years. Through this development, we will be able to use big data analytics to provide real time, objective feedback to trainees based on data. This will revolutionize how trainees are assessed and how training can be continuously improved. We're now becoming a widely recognized company in the domain.

### What is your definition of innovation?

Innovation, for us, is survival. In the domain we're in, if we do not innovate we will step backwards and disappear. Innovation keeps us at the forefront of our domain. But more importantly, it helps us to continue to satisfy the needs of our customers.



## INTERTALK CRITICAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS

### What inspired your business' innovation efforts?

For us, innovation is not new. We have focused on the "new and exciting" since our inception, 21 years ago. Our products support first responders — police, fire and EMS personnel who put their lives on the line every day. We are driven to innovate products and solutions that protect them and allow them to work faster, with no mistakes. If we do well, we save lives. If we screw up, people can die. For us, innovation is not an afterthought. It is wired into our being.

### What is your organization's proudest accomplishment?

When my business partner and I formed our company back in 1997, we had three aspirations: (a) to make a living; (b) to have fun and (c) to create a place for our friends. Our proudest accomplishment is in the creation of just such a company, where our friends, both new and old, have joined us to realize the vision of the founders.

### What advice would you give to another business that wants to embrace innovation?

Start! The enemy of innovation is procrastination. Find the funding. Find the talent. Find the time. And just do it!

### What is something new that's happening at your company?

Last year, we created a separate organization within our company to foster leading-edge innovation. We call it InterTalk Innovations and Research (IIR), which just happens to be the electrical equation for POWER. We know that what powers every company is innovation. It just turns out that our company has the POWER of Innovation even in its name!



Farming. Anywhere.®

## TRUELEAF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

### What inspired your business' innovation efforts?

TruLeaf was founded to deliver local, fresh and nutritious food to Canadians. Gregg Curwin, TruLeaf's founder, had a background in healthcare and was deeply disturbed by what he saw in the industry. He believed that producing nutritious food year-round via vertical farming, was the most effective way to make an impact on the public health crisis he witnessed during the decades he worked in the industry.

### What is your organization's proudest accomplishment?

TruLeaf began as many innovative and leading-edge companies do, with a unique solution to a complicated problem. With a desire to transform how Canadians source and eat nutrient-dense leafy greens, TruLeaf built a small-scale research facility in Truro, NS. Fast forward five years, the proof of concept for a GoodLeaf vertical farm (the name of the consumer-facing brand) was complete and the Smart Farm System® created. The GoodLeaf brand launched in local Atlantic Loblaw's and specialty food retailers in 2016. Over the last three years, we have grown a strong fan base with Atlantic consumers and restaurants and are proud to say we have dramatically improved the accessibility of fresh, leafy greens for Atlantic Canadians, even in the harshest winter months. We have set our sights on expanding our network of farms across Canada and we are now nearing completion on one of the largest commercial vertical farms in North America, situated in Guelph, Ontario. Ontarians will be able to enjoy our fresh, nutrient-dense leafy greens this Winter 2019.

### What advice would you give to another business that wants to embrace innovation?

Surround yourself with people who compliment your skillset, invest in R&D, be tenacious and look to other industries for inspiration. Entrepreneurship, as many have said, is a marathon not a sprint.

# BUSINESS of the year finalists



Sponsored by:



## Business of the year finalists

L-R: *Matt Rogers, President, Bishop's Cellar, Chantal Webster, Vice President, Minuteman Press, Tony Nahas, President & CEO, Mezza Lebanese Restaurant Group, Adam McLean, Vice President, Development, Armco Group of Companies. Missing: VistaCare Communications*



### ARMCO GROUP OF COMPANIES

#### What would you say is your organization's biggest achievement?

Building a North American-wide real estate portfolio from Halifax.

#### How have you helped Halifax grow?

Armco has built hundreds of affordable homes across Halifax, including recent developments in Spryfield and Eastern Passage. Secondly, Armco is a leading developer of iconic Halifax landmarks, such as the former World Trade Centre and the Willow Tree Tower. Thirdly, Armco is an innovative P3 partner with government on school construction and maintenance.

#### What is something new that's happening at your company?

Armco is directly investing in the construction of an entire new community, The Garrison, in Eastern Passage. This community will provide affordable housing, with modern amenities, to families in the area.

#### Why did you choose Halifax?

Armco started in Halifax. We have been a significant part of the development scene here and continue to invest in the future of Halifax. Even as we expand across Canada and the US, we chose to retain Halifax as our home base.

#### What one piece of advice would you give to a new business?

Be passionate about what you do.



### BISHOP'S CELLAR

#### How have you helped Halifax grow?

Local businesses are more than economic drivers, they are part of our community's unique identity and cultural fabric. We are intentional in our commitment to Halifax; working to strengthen our city by being good neighbours and helping to co-create a vision for a vibrant city. To do so, we focus our energies on three areas: 1) Tirelessly promoting local producers to our retail and restaurant customers. 2) Sourcing products and services from local businesses. 3) Giving back to our community.

#### What would you say is your organization's biggest achievement?

Long-term retention and development of our specialized staff. Our continued growth and success has provided our employees the opportunity to flourish and expand their roles within our organization. Subsequently, they have stayed and built their lives here in Halifax. We are very proud of the fact that over one-third of our team has been with Bishop's Cellar for more than 10 years. The success of our business is directly related to our ability to retain our incredibly talented employees.

#### What is something new that's happening at your company?

We're excited to announce that, after 15 years, we are expanding our retail space in Bishop's Landing. Downtown Halifax is thriving, with thousands of new residents choosing downtown as their new home, and we're thrilled to contribute to its continued revitalization.

Building on the foundation of exceptional customer service and knowledgeable staff, our larger retail footprint will offer consumers a streamlined store layout, an improved pick-up in-store experience and expanded product selections. We believe in the future of Halifax and we can't wait to share our vision with our customers and partners in the coming months.





## MINUTEMAN PRESS

### What would you say is your organization's biggest achievement?

Our growth. Eight years ago, I met my wife and they had a staff of six, including her father and brother. By the end of 2018, we will be more than 30. There is no end to this family's dedication and determination to be the number one printer in Halifax and number one Minuteman in Canada. We are currently number two in all of Canada for the franchise.

### How have you helped Halifax grow?

Jobs is the big one here, I think. We have provided many people with jobs and many are still with us. That directly impacts the local economy as they spend what they earn here, supporting other businesses both small and large.

### What one piece of advice would you give to a new business?

Honestly? Hard work. If you are going to start a new business and are not prepared to give it your all ... it will not last. We work long days, weekends and sometimes do not get to go away on vacations. Why? Because we are passionate about the work. So ... BE PASSIONATE about the work you are doing, then it won't seem so much like work. That pride you feel at the end of that long day will resonate into longevity as a business.

### Why did you choose Halifax?

The Maheux family was born and raised in the Halifax area. It was a no-brainer to serve the public and area they knew so well.

### What is something new that's happening at your company?

We just expanded again! We closed on two companies in January and have now hired a salesperson to field the extra work. Our clothing division is one of the fastest growing areas of our company and a dedicated person to that is paramount. So we are excited to see where this takes us in this exciting new branch of our work here in the community.



## VISTACARE

### What would you say is your organization's biggest achievement?

Over the years, we have grown to become one of the top North American communications contractors.

We have a strong reputation for on-time delivery and expertise in large-scale fibre optic builds that sets us apart from the competition.

### What one piece of advice would you give to a new business?

Have a vision, a plan and a strategy — and then be willing to adapt, change and evolve as new challenges arise. It is important to know your strengths, as well as your weaknesses — know what you don't want to do or need to improve on, always measure and manage along the way.

### How have you helped grow Halifax?

We've put a lot of focus into building quality careers based from our head office, here in HRM. By centralizing our North American support services from our Bedford head office, we have created a wide range of positions from administration to executive management.

### Why did you choose Halifax?

The company was started, here in Halifax, with just a handful of people and a couple of trucks. As we grew and expanded across Canada, we wanted to ensure that we maintained our Halifax roots. Plus, the work ethic of Atlantic Canadians cannot be beat!

### What is something new that is happening at your company?

This past year we have really started to grow our business in the US. Prior to 2018, we had a handful of employees working stateside from project-to-project, but this past year, we have built a solid foundation and we are now working with several customers in several different states.



## MEZZA

### What would you say is your organization's biggest achievement?

Our organization's biggest achievement would have to be the success of our recent move to begin franchising. Within the past year we have developed a robust franchising plan and have successfully franchised four locations: Sydney, Upper Tantallon, Dalhousie Student's Union and Cole Harbour. Each of these locations exceeded our expectations and we're incredibly proud of our franchise owners. Hopefully we can keep us this momentum as we move into the new year and continue bringing Mezza to towns across Nova Scotia and even across the border into other Maritime provinces.

### What one piece of advice would you give to a new business?

My one piece of advice to any new business would be to never stop innovating. Risks have to be taken to try something different or new. The moment you stop innovating your business, someone else is getting ahead of you. It is a crucial to be pushing the envelope and exploring new technologies to stand out from the crowd.

### Why did you choose Halifax?

My parents immigrated to Halifax in the '60s so while my family's roots have always been in Lebanon, I was born in Halifax and it has always been my true home. I couldn't imagine working or growing my business any where else. I have been serving great food to the Halifax community since I was 16 years old and I have no plans on stopping.

### What is something new that's happening at your company?

There is a lot on the go for 2018! Mezza will be releasing a whole new product line, franchising into New Brunswick and our complete nutritional information will be available to our customers. These are just a few things people can expect in 2018 and we can't wait to show everyone what we've been working on.

# BUSINESS LEADER of the year finalists



Sponsored by:



## Business Leader of the year finalists

L-R: Joe McGuinness, Co-Owner, *Legendary Hospitality*, Myrna Gillis, Founder and CEO, *Aqualitas*, Karim George, CEO, *InTouch Communications*, Joyce Carter, President & CEO, *Halifax International Airport Authority*, Tony Nahas, President & CEO, *Mezza Lebanese Restaurant Group*,



**JOYCE CARTER,**  
PRESIDENT AND CEO, HALIFAX  
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT  
AUTHORITY

### What would you say is your biggest accomplishment to date as a business leader?

With the support of my Executive Management Team and our Board of Directors, I've strategically positioned Halifax Stanfield for ongoing growth. As a result, our airport has achieved continual passenger growth and cargo growth, made significant capital investments in the facility to meet current and future demands and generated ever-increasing economic contributions to our region. In 2017, Halifax Stanfield was worth \$3 billion annually to the provincial economy, an increase \$1.71 billion from 2014 when I became CEO.

### What leadership advice would you give an up-and-comer?

Don't let failures get you down. It might seem easy to throw in the towel when things don't go according to plan, but that's not how success is achieved. Failure tests your character, teaches you lessons and uncovers your strengths and your weaknesses, revealing more about yourself than successes. Failure is a fundamental part of learning and of success. What matters is how you deal with failures when they come your way.

### What steps does Halifax need to get to the next level?

We must continue to embrace innovation and strive to transform our community and organizations into something bigger and bolder than perhaps we've ever envisioned. We're doing that by evolving our airport into a larger, more strategic hub. As the closest continental airport in North America to Europe, Halifax Stanfield is well positioned to evolve into a gateway to and from Canada, complementing existing hubs in eastern Canada by implementing new non-stop flights to Europe, with feed from services in Canada and the United States.



**MYRNA GILLIS,**  
CEO, AQUALITAS INC.

### What would you say is your biggest accomplishment to date as a business leader?

My biggest accomplishment to date has been leading a diverse and talented team in an unprecedented industry, which is anticipated to grow into a \$200-billion global economy. We have been able to buildout, license, organically certify and fund the largest cannabis production facility in Nova Scotia. While doing so, we have developed innovative cultivation technology in partnership with leading Nova Scotia universities, all while remaining true to our values and vision, which embraces renewal through environmental sustainability, economic development and the promotion of wellness.



### What's the best business advice you've ever been given?

The best advice I've ever received is to know when to let go and pivot. You can't fix everything and sometimes dwelling on a problem too long can prevent you from moving forward in a much better direction.

### What leadership advice would you give an up-and-comer?

It is very important that you love what you do. This will continue to inspire you to do great things even when you are faced with overwhelming obstacles. Passion for what you do will also give you a tremendous sense of satisfaction and accomplishment when you hit the milestones that you set for yourself and your company. Surrounding yourself with like-minded people makes a path forward exceedingly rewarding, fun and meaningful.



**KARIM GEORGE,**  
CEO, INTOUCH COMMUNICATIONS

### What's the best business advice you've ever been given?

The best advice I've ever been given was to focus on the success of others over my own. I see, very clearly, that my success is completely dependent on the success of others. If my goal is to help my staff and clients reach their goals, I will reach my own in return. There's also a great deal of satisfaction in helping others succeed, so even when success doesn't come quite as quickly as you'd like for yourself, you still enjoy the journey.

### What steps does Halifax need to get to the next level?

Halifax needs to continue to increase opportunities for mentorship and support for new businesses of all sizes. We need education and programs in place to encourage people to take risks, partner on new initiatives and invest in opportunities. Halifax is a great place to do business, with plenty of support, but there's always room for improvement.

### If you weren't in this line of work what would you be doing?

It's very difficult to imagine myself not working in the marketing and video production industry, but if I wasn't, I know I would still be an entrepreneur and business leader as that's my greatest passion. Perhaps, I would be involved in business development, maybe working in the investment or financial industry.



**JOE MCGUINNESS,**  
CO-OWNER, LEGENDARY  
HOSPITALITY GROUP

### What would you say is your biggest accomplishment to date as a business leader?

Working with my business partners in creating four separate companies, consisting of more than 200 skilled and dedicated employees, focused on the singular mission of delivering Legendary Hospitality Experiences to all of our guests.

### What's the best business advice you've ever been given?

Attract, hire and retain the best employees that buy into the company's vision and mission and provide them with the training, guidance and support to bring the company to that desired future state.

### What leadership advice would you give an up-and-comer?

Learn who you are first, assess your leadership style and from there, inspire by vision and passion in everything you do.

### What steps does Halifax need to get to the next level?

Identify ways and means to have financial capital invested, here, in Halifax. Make our city more attractive to investors to create employment for Nova Scotians and allow them the opportunity to stay here and work.



**TONY NAHAS,**  
PRESIDENT AND CEO, MEZZA  
LEBANESE RESTAURANT GROUP

### What would you say is your biggest accomplishment to date as a business leader?

Our biggest accomplishment as a business leader was opening our first Mezza franchise location in Sydney, NS in 2017. This was the culmination of years of preparation for our company as we prepared our system and business to become a franchise model. We were thrilled to have our first franchise location open without a hitch. We then proceeded to open three more franchises that year and we are gearing up for several more in the years to come.

### What's the best business advice you've ever been given?

The best advice I've ever received was from my father — it was simple, but set me on a path for the rest of my career. He'd remind me everyday to just "work hard." As the saying goes, "hard work beats talent when talent fails to work hard." Focus on the hard work and the talent will follow.

### What leadership advice would you give an up-and-comer?

Up-and-comers need to remember that their road to success will be challenging. They will face their fair share of ups and downs and will be moving at a million miles a minute to get to their ultimate goal. But while they're focused on their end goal, don't forget to stop and enjoy the journey along the way. It's often the journey that creates the lasting memories and friends — the goal is just a moving target.

### What's next for you?

The next steps in our business will be taking our organization from a Nova Scotia-based restaurant to a nation-wide franchise system with Mezza locations in every beautiful town in Canada.



# WeUsThem bursting with enthusiasm in 2019

‘Who says you can’t do brilliant work while you are having fun?’ **By Heather Laura Clarke**

**W**hen Faten Alshazly traveled from Halifax to Egypt to deliver a keynote in front of 6,000 delegates from 64 countries, she decided to make it a team-building exercise and bring along all of her employees.

They went diving in the Red Sea and drove ATVs through the desert mountains. They also launched a new web platform for NSCAD from the lobby of their hotel — increasing NSCAD’s recruitment numbers by 60 per cent.

“Who says you can’t do brilliant work while you are having fun?” says Alshazly. “We got a taste of what it was like to take a break and celebrate our collective success as an agency — and recharge as a group — but also continue to support our clients the world over.”

Alshazly is the Chief Creative Officer and Principal of WeUsThem Inc. — an international agency with a global client roster. The firm is known for its devotion to being “a family first, an agency second,” and has a policy where if someone needs to stay late, everyone stays to work as a team.

They’ve come up with creative solutions for tourism, healthcare, hospitality, academia, food and beverages, fashion and cause-based organizations. Alshazly says they’re “always working to build the next big beautiful authentic customer experience.”

They ran the Canada 150 campaign for Global Affairs Canada and collected birthday wishes to Canada from all over the world. More than 150,000 fond

memories and emotional submissions were shared online and with the Prime Minister last Canada Day.

Alshazly says it’s important for WeUsThem to promote social good, which is why they built interfaces for youth justice and supports and worked on strategies for affordable housing. Just in the last year, they’ve been recognized nationally and internationally for their work in mental health and addictions, heart health and healthy lifestyles.

Alshazly herself was recognized as of Canada’s Top 100 Most Powerful Women this year by the Women’s Executive Network. It’s the second time she’s made the list and this time it’s for their Trailblazers and Trendsetters category.





**“** We travel extensively, but at the end of the day, there is nothing like coming home and enjoying a hot cup of cocoa on the waterfront or walking down Spring Garden Road.”  
**— Faten Alshazly, Chief Creative Officer, Principal, WeUsThem**

She was also named the Female Executive of the Year in Canada by the Stevie Awards — which recognize women in business globally — at a ceremony in New York in late November. Alshazly says it was “a tremendous honour” to be celebrated with illustrious women from Australia, Africa, Europe, Middle East, Asia and North America.

“This global award is a testament not just to my work, but that of WeUsThem,” says Alshazly. “It speaks to what we are doing to further business, but also our communities locally, nationally and internationally.”

About 80 per cent of WeUsThem’s client base is outside of Atlantic Canada, but Alshazly says the team’s happy to call Halifax its home base.

“We travel extensively, but at the end of the day, there is nothing like coming home and enjoying a hot cup of cocoa on the waterfront or walking down Spring Garden Road,” says Alshazly. “We truly are appreciative of our home that provides for the fast pace of a faster city with the slow pace that we hope to have at home.”

They recently partnered with RBC and Cox & Palmer to provide a day of free consultations on marketing, advertising, PR and communications. More than 55 organizations attended Halifax’s inaugural AdFree30 in November, and Alshazly says it was wonderful chatting with them

about their unique situations and offering advice.

The world of marketing is always evolving and she believes “navel-gazing can get you into a rut,” so WeUsThem has also focused on how they can offer something different.

“It keeps us always looking for new ways to deliver on organizational objectives and pain points we are presented with,” says Alshazly. “We see each project as a way to communicate differently, engage authentically, and positively quantify the measurable difference of what it means to work with WeUsThem.”

The agency is so committed to keeping things fresh and exciting that Alshazly says sometimes the challenge is getting their clients on board with their big ideas — and they may have to go with a more traditional approach.

“This balance of pushing the envelope, while staying within firm and strict guidelines, sharpens our minds to build solutions for every type of client,” says Alshazly.

She believes it’s this balance that’s enabled them to work with clients in 140 countries. Just this year, they have signed contracts to start work in Jamaica, Hawaii and Geneva, and they now work on every continent except Antarctica.

“We’ll get there, too,” jokes Alshazly. “We’re just waiting on the penguins to call back.” ■

# THE EXCHANGE <sup>2</sup> HOLLIS

KITCHEN  
— & —  
SOCIAL

Halifax's  
newest

lunch destination

1579 HOLLIS STREET

+1.902.421.8847

www.xoh.ca

# Taking the initiative

No job posting required for Kisserup International Trade Roots' latest hire **By Heather Laura Clarke**

Allison Thorne, a recent graduate, decided to send a cold email to a company that wasn't hiring.

Maria Calcano, vice president of Kisserup International Trade Roots Inc., says they were surprised when Thorne reached out.

"She'd heard about our company and really wanted to work with us," says Calcano. "We weren't looking to hire anyone, but she was so enthusiastic."

Luckily, Kisserup International Trade Roots was one of the first companies to participate in the Graduate to Opportunity (GTO) program, which offers eligible employers up to 35 per cent of a grad's first year salary and 12.5 per cent of a grad's second-year salary.

Calcano says hiring a recent grad was a smart move for Kisserup International Trade Roots because it's expanded their team's talents and opened them up to new

opportunities.

"It's helpful to have the perspective of an employee who's just starting their career," says Calcano. "They're coming to the table with fresh ideas and a lot of energy."

The GTO program helped more than 720 grads get jobs in their fields in Nova Scotia over the past three years alone. For the first time in 32 years, more youth are moving to the province — or moving back — rather than leaving.

"Halifax is a really nice city — a good size with lots of opportunities, but with that East Coast feel," says Thorne, who is from New Brunswick and holds a Masters in Global Business from the University of Victoria.

Calcano says without the GTO program, hiring Thorne would have been "more of an obstacle."

"When you hire a new graduate,

they're new in the field and you need to invest in their professional development," says Calcano. "The GTO program allowed us to have these activities in place for Allison to do in the beginning, so she was able to hit the ground running."

Thorne started in February as an International Trade Coordinator. "I love that Kisserup is based in Canada but works in more than 90 countries," says Thorne. "Our office in Halifax is like a little United Nations — six people all with different nationalities, which is the greatest way to learn about different cultures."

Calcano and Thorne believe that more companies could benefit from the GTO program and save significantly on the first two years of a new hire's salary.

Learn more about how GTO can help you hire fresh talent by visiting [novascotia.ca/programs/graduate-to-opportunity](http://novascotia.ca/programs/graduate-to-opportunity).

“YOU GIVE THEM  
ADVICE AND THEY GIVE YOU  
**PERFORMANCE, ENERGY AND  
ENTHUSIASM.** THERE IS SO  
MUCH TO BE ACHIEVED  
WITH YOUNG TALENT”

JOHN READ, CEO, FUNDY LANGUAGE ANALYTICS

*The Graduate to Opportunity Program provides salary contributions to small businesses, start-up companies, social enterprises, and non-profit organizations to help hire a recent grad. To breathe new life into your workforce, visit [NOVASCOTIA.CA/GTO](http://NOVASCOTIA.CA/GTO)*

**SOMAYEH KAFIAE**  
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND MACHINE LEARNING DEVELOPER  
FUNDY LANGUAGE ANALYTICS

**NOVA SCOTIA**



# Big drops in water consumption

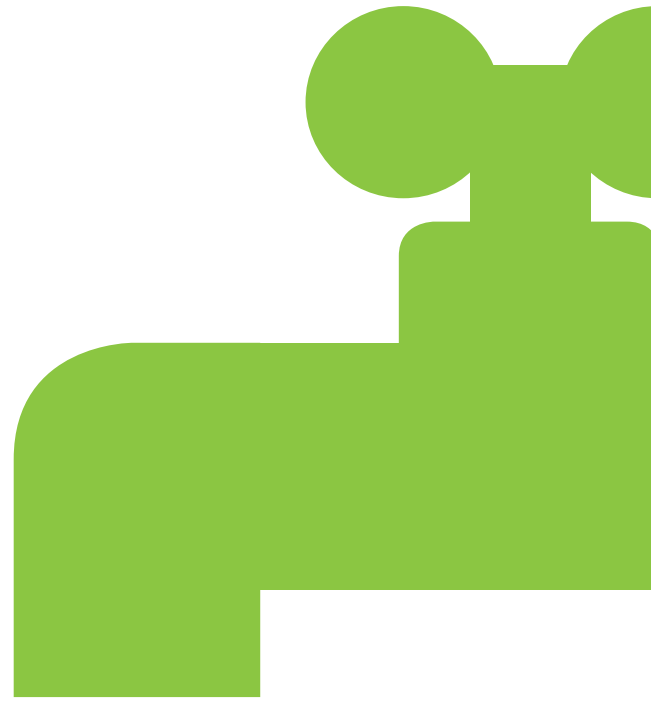
Over the past nine years,  
the Scotia Square complex  
has **reduced water  
consumption** by 38%,  
or over 24 million gallons.



Every building in our complex is  
proudly BOMA BEST Certified Gold

SCOTIA  SQUARE

SCOTIASQUARE.COM  



2017  
**40,417,520**  
gallons

2008  
**64,696,940**  
gallons

# Impact with Purpose

## in your professional career

Certificate programs build your management, communication and conflict resolution skills.



Learn from Sobey School's internationally-recognized faculty, or from business leaders in your community.



The CPA-Accredited MBA (CPA Stream) is a part-time program designed for working professionals who aim for a leadership position.



Learn in the company of fellow professionals. Peer-to-peer learning deepens your experience.



What impact will you make?  
Contact us now.  
1.800.877.0874

Bachelor of Commerce | MBA (full-time or part-time) | MBA (CPA Stream) | Master of Finance | Master of Technology Entrepreneurship and Innovation | Master of Applied Economics | Co-operative Management Education | PhD Business Administration | Executive and Professional Development | Custom programs



Halifax, Nova Scotia

[sobey.smu.ca](http://sobey.smu.ca) or [trainatsmu.ca](http://trainatsmu.ca)