

BUSINESS VOICE

HALIFAX'S BUSINESS MAGAZINE

PAGE 12

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2021
BUSINESS AWARDS

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“What we can accomplish together is so much greater than what we can accomplish alone.”

— Sara Napier, President and CEO of United Way Halifax

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COVER STORY: 2021 HALIFAX BUSINESS AWARDS



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Celebrating excellence in our community



CHAMBER EVENTS

For a full and up-to-date list of our Chamber events, please visit www.halifaxchamber.com/events

CHAMBER 101

DATE: Wednesday, January 20
TIME: 12 – 1:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Halifax Chamber office,
32 Akerley Blvd.
Virtual options available

2021 HALIFAX BUSINESS AWARDS

PRESENTED BY: RBC
DATE: Thursday, March 25
TIME: 5 – 9:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Halifax Convention Centre
In-person and virtual opportunities available

SAVE THE DATE: ANNUAL STATE OF THE MUNICIPALITY

PRESENTED BY:
RBC and Halifax Partnership
DATE: February 2021

WONDER WOMEN CONFERENCE

DATE: Friday, February 19

PINTS + POINTERS

DATES: March 10, April 28, May 26

KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR OUR WEBINAR SCHEDULE AT HALIFAXCHAMBER.COM/EVENTS.

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Thank you!

To our partners at the Evergreen Festival

The Halifax Chamber was thrilled to work with **CEED**, **ISANS** and the **YMCA** to support new, immigrant and Indigenous artists and vendors.



A BIG thank you to the organizers for their quick thinking that allowed everyone to enjoy the festival safely!

HALIFAX
CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE

EVERGREEN
Festival

Bring on the new year

Reflect on lessons learned, move forward with fresh perspective

@prezhfxchamber



PATRICK SULLIVAN
PRESIDENT & CEO

WELCOME TO 2021!

A new year ushers in new goals, new plans, new friends and an overall sense of renewal. And although we can't shake off 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic continues its impact on our region and the globe, we can still take a breath and properly welcome this new year.

Let's start this year off with accomplishing a goal right away: go easy on yourself. An ongoing pandemic makes everything seem a bit tougher because it is! So, as you plan and prepare for the year to come, please recognize the hardships we have all faced — some much more than others. Keep a community-focused mindset and remember that community includes you.

The pandemic speaks for itself; it's been a very difficult year. I want to take just a moment to highlight a small positive: refocusing our priorities. At the Halifax Chamber of Commerce, we know our priority is our members. It's providing new and improved services to make their lives easier and to save them money. It's advocating on their behalf and being the voice of business in front of all levels of government.

We strive to do everything we can for our members and for the business community, but this past year has allowed us to focus our efforts on what the members needed. We heard quickly from members that what they needed was information — and we got to work.

We collected updates from the government and updated our members almost every day. We sought out member

experts on a number of topics to answer questions from businesses quickly and made it accessible to everyone for free. We partnered with government and SimplyCast to provide a free digital platform to all our members, helping them streamline their back-to-business plan. I urge you to take this month to ask yourself, "What's my priority?"

If 2020 taught us anything, it is to take time to check in on your priorities. They will ebb and flow as the months move on. Let go of the ones that don't

quite matter much anymore. Just like the Chamber shifted away (temporarily) from in-person events to focus on high-quality virtual content, you can spend your energy on the projects, goals and hobbies that you can accomplish with the world on hold. When thinking about how you can implement those priorities, be kind to yourself. Not everything needs to get done tomorrow. Move forward cautiously and optimistically.

Happy new year!
We're in your corner. ■

“

**We are delighted to
announce our new
Membership Sales
Manager: Cindy Mann!**

Cindy has 4+ years' experience working with our diverse membership. Thus, her familiar face is a natural choice to take over this role. Cindy is passionate about making connections and supporting our 1,700+ members as they thrive and grow.

PATRICK SULLIVAN

PRESIDENT & CEO

HALIFAX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



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**HALIFAX
CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE**

NEW & NOTED

We welcome our new Chamber members

2 DOORS DOWN FOOD + WINE

2 Doors Down is a contemporary Canadian restaurant with locations in downtown Halifax and Dartmouth Crossing. Focusing on locally sourced, seasonal ingredients, we serve fun and creative dishes in an unpretentious, modern setting. We also focus on seasonal cocktails, craft beer, cider and offer an approachable wine list. Available for private bookings and events.

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NOT-FOR-PROFIT GROUPS – Community Service

ARTHUR'S URBAN MARKET

With offerings like our artisan bakery, we strive to inspire a more European-style approach to grocery shopping, where a daily trip to the market is as important as enjoying the meal itself. It's all a part of sharing our passion for food with our customers, helping them make healthier and informed choices.

Gillian Murphy

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SHOPPING & SPECIALTY RETAIL – Grocery

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Robert Belliveau

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Allison Davis

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spencerhouse.ca

NOT-FOR-PROFIT GROUPS – Community Centres

STUDENT MEMBER

Crystal Hirtle – Bachelor of Commerce, Dalhousie University

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chirtle@dal.ca

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NOT-FOR-PROFIT GROUPS – Fundraising

Are you a new member? To submit your 50-word description for New & Noted, please contact Mandi Bowser, Administrative Specialist, 902-468-7111 or mandi@halifaxchamber.com within the first six months of membership.



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MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

How our members are growing Halifax



FIRST IMPRESSIONS REJUVENATION CLINIC OPENS SECOND LOCATION

Deborah Hart, CEO and Nurse Practitioner, has been delivering rejuvenation medicine and health-care services throughout Atlantic Canada, Canada and internationally for more than 25 years. Passionate about health and wellness, safety and education, her mission is to empower people to attain their highest level of well-being and self-confidence. The second location in Bedford also offers individualized treatments for rejuvenation and vitality, including professional skincare, injectables, men's and women's sexual health, skin tightening, fat removal and more. Hart educates doctors and nurses through the Atlantic Training Institute for Aesthetic Medicine and the Atlantic branch of the Canadian Board of Aesthetic Medicine. Hart is recognized as a sought-after expert in rejuvenation medicine services and as an expert speaker for national and international specialist associations.

SIX FINALISTS ANNOUNCED FOR BIONOVA'S YOUTH PITCH COMPETITION

BioNova has named six student finalists for its BIC Junior youth pitch competition for the health and life sciences sector. The competition inspires Nova Scotia's high school students to create a business idea for the health and life sciences sector that has real commercialization potential. With the support and guidance of BioNova, as well as sponsors **MNP** and partners Brilliant Labs and **BBI's** Business is Jammin', students are given the knowledge and skills necessary to create their business idea and pitch it to a panel of judges during BioPort. The winner of the pitch competition will be rewarded a cash prize of \$2,000 to go toward their business initiative or education.

LAKECITY WORKS CEO NAMED TO CANADA'S TOP 40 UNDER 40

BNN Bloomberg is proud to announce the 2020 recipients of Canada's Top 40 Under 40 award, a celebration of the top up-and-coming leaders in the country. Among the leaders is **LakeCity Works'** CEO, Liam O'Rourke. A Nova Scotian who returned home to help develop his sector, O'Rourke brings a wealth of

experience from his work in Montreal, where he launched an innovative social enterprise production house providing creative opportunities to individuals on the autism spectrum. He is an ambitious, energetic and authentic leader who is keen to play a key role in reshaping the economy through social entrepreneurship. Congratulations!

PROPELLER ARCADE OPENS EXPANSION AND ADDS AN INDOOR BEER GARDEN

Arcade fans will now enjoy a major expansion including a second games room and an indoor beer garden housed in the working brewery, beside the tanks and brewhouse. "This project has been a dream for many months and we're excited to reveal it, finally," says Ian Matheson, **Propeller Arcade** Manager and partner. "Thank you to our many supporters who reached out during lockdown and have returned since we reopened." The expansion spreads the arcade's footprint more than 300 per cent, increasing capacity and growing the collection to 30 plus games. The indoor beer garden features picnic tables and lighting design to feature the tanks and brewhouse that make up the Gottingen Street brewery.



OFFICE INTERIORS ANNOUNCES ACQUISITION OF DPT COMMUNICATIONS

Office Interiors is excited to announce the acquisition of dpt Communications of Moncton, NB. The acquisition will allow Office Interiors to expand their service and support team across south-western New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, as well as provide dpt customers with access to the expanded range of office furniture and technology products offered by Office Interiors. dpt Communications has been selling, installing and servicing telephony and voice-processing systems since 1996. “We are very pleased to welcome dpt members and their customers to our team,” says Jim Mills, President and CEO of Office Interiors. “Our shared objective of providing great solutions and the best customer experience made this acquisition a logical next step for both parties.”

APPILI THERAPEUTICS JOINS CONSORTIUM IN ADVANCING AVIGAN TABLETS FOR THE POTENTIAL TREATMENT OF COVID-19

“To address the ongoing threat of COVID-19, we must not only identify effective agents through rigorous clinical evaluation; we must also ensure they are widely available, which is a particular challenge in COVID-19, where billions of people from every corner of the globe are at risk from this threat,” says Dr. Armand Balboni, CEO of **Appili Therapeutics**. “This consortium is designed to do just that, with world-class expertise not only in drug development, but also in manufacturing and commercialization to support access. We are thrilled to join this group of industry leaders in their global effort, contributing our drug development expertise and extensive experience with Avigan® to accelerate its development on a globally co-ordinated basis. We look

forward to the timely outcomes of our ongoing and soon-to-be initiated late-stage clinical trials to evaluate Avigan® as the first orally available anti-viral treatment option for COVID-19.”



ELSIE MORDEN NAMED TOP 30 UNDER 30

In Atlantic Business Magazine’s second annual list of 30 Under 30 innovators, they celebrate young Atlantic Canadians who live and work in the region, shaping our future prosperity. Congratulations to Elsie Morden, Activist and Founder of the **No Time for That Anti-Bullying Society**, a registered Canadian charity since 2015 that develops presentations to school-age children and youth about bullying prevention, mental health awareness and youth empowerment. Through funding sources that include grants and donations, she’s given presentations to more than 600 Canadian schools at no charge to the institutions themselves.

WORKSHOP SUCCESS CELEBRATED

The Family Knife is celebrating a big win during challenging times, launching their Profitable Marketing Workshop. “We created this program to help business owners achieve their dreams,” says Joel Kelly, President of The Family Knife. “We were confident we were onto something big, but the results have exceeded our biggest hopes.” At the end of the first year in offering, clients have not only hit their goals; they’re finding new footholds in their markets and rekindling the love they had for their businesses. For The Family Knife, it’s been a labour of love and a journey that’s just getting started.

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DGHF WELCOMES NEW STAFF MEMBER

The **Dartmouth General Hospital Foundation (DGHF)** is pleased to welcome Kiana Pace, graduate of the University of King's College and NSCC, as their new Communications and Marketing Officer. The DGHF is so happy to welcome her to the team! The foundation has been a driving force in connecting community and hospital and has positively impacted and supported the delivery of exceptional patient care at the Dartmouth General Hospital through investments in equipment, facilities and programs. To learn more about the DGHF and its programs, visit dghfoundation.ca.

SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISER AT EASTER SEALS NOVA SCOTIA

With many of **Easter Seals Nova Scotia's** fundraising events cancelled in 2020, we are ecstatic about the success of Kartbahn 250 last Nov. 12, in collaboration with Kartbahn Indoor Racing. This unique go-karting event saw seven teams race to complete 250 laps — all in support of Nova Scotians with disabilities. Kartbahn 250 enhances team collaboration and communication and fosters innovative relationships, making it the perfect team-building opportunity. New racers Atlantic Tiltload, Top Coat Automotive and returning team MacDonald Maniacs took the top three spots. We're looking forward to a bigger, better Kartbahn 250 this year. Interested teams for 2021 should stay tuned to our social media.



GROWTH EVEN THROUGH A PANDEMIC

Parkwood Home Care has expanded. Lorna MacMillan, President of Parkwood Home Care, takes great pleasure in announcing that Mackenzie Corkum and Jennifer MacDonnell are now employed by Parkwood Home Care. The business has grown and therefore provided the need for a full-time Scheduler (Corkum) and a full-time

Finance/Office Manager (MacDonnell). "There is a powerful driving force inside every human being that, once unleashed, can make any vision, dream or desire a reality," said entrepreneur and author Tony Robbins. At Parkwood Home Care, this has proven true. MacMillan began the business single-handedly and now employs more than 55 people, several of which have full-time hours. The team at Parkwood Home Care is excited for the future.





HALIFAX
BUSINESS AWARDS

2021

THE HALIFAX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE is pleased to present this year's Halifax Business Awards finalists. Presented by longtime supporters of the business community, RBC, this event allows us to showcase Halifax's best and brightest business leaders and entrepreneurs. Despite a very tough year for all, these businesses and leaders have much to celebrate. 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 join us to celebrate at the 2021 Halifax Business Awards gala — whatever that looks like!

To learn more about the finalists, please visit: halifaxchamber.com/awards

Presenting
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NEW BUSINESS of the year finalists



New Business of the year finalists

Mubdu Alali, Bloxo Inc.; Katherine Hosker, Little Eden Bakery & Café; Stephanie Folahan, Premier Accounting and Tax Inc.; Bradley Farquhar, Purple Cow Internet; Mike McCarther, Verge Technologies.



BLOXO INC.

What inspired you to open a new business?

The motivation to start Bloxo was both extrinsic and intrinsic. As a newcomer in Halifax and someone who enjoys sports, I found it hard to join and find people to play with. I have always been interested in social entrepreneurship and having a positive impact on people. I wanted to create a socially conscious

enterprise that I was passionate about that the world needs, while also resolving the issue that I faced. Developing Bloxo has allowed me to pursue my passion for sport, business, tech and helping people.

Why did you choose Halifax?

I believe Halifax is an ideal city to be in as a newcomer. I was never seen as an outsider and instantly felt welcomed and connected with the community. I have always felt supported in Halifax. It is a good market to start a business in for us because of the diversity, inclusion and accessibility to parks, fields and other recreational facilities. With our goal being to expand internationally, we see real value in getting our start in Halifax.



LITTLE EDEN BAKERY & CAFÉ

What is one thing people may not know about your business?

Every baked good is handcrafted by the owner and baked fresh daily! I created most of the recipes myself over the last 10 years, based on the local ingredients I can access each week.

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

Young people should learn more about entrepreneurship in school. Unless you know someone who has a business, you don't know this is a path you can choose. They can learn that opening a business is a risk, but the risk is worth the reward. I love my job, my work and my business and that's not something a lot of people get to say. I enjoy the fact that people really love my product, but just as much, I am proud they are buying it in the cafe that I opened and operate. Even through a global pandemic, I don't regret starting a business. It's by far been the most challenging and fulfilling thing I've ever done in my life.



PREMIER ACCOUNTING & TAX INC.

What is your proudest accomplishment?

There are a few things, but the biggest would be having the courage to leave the safety net of a structured paycheque my previous nine-to-five job provided me and my family. Most recently, I have received instructor certification and was approached by the Department of Labour and Advanced Education to do teaching projects around the province.

Do you have any tips for people who are thinking of starting their own business?

Honestly, just jump in. There will never be a perfect time or situation, so you need to be the one to make your own stars align.



VERGE TECHNOLOGIES INC.

What inspired you to open a new business?

From early years, I have always had the desire to own and build something unique. Specifically, in the industries we work within, I have long believed there is opportunity to bring more value to our customer base through an increased professional services focus. Technology can make or break an organization and Verge's purpose is to truly understand our customer, then provide the correct solution to help them compete better.

Where do you see your organization in 10 years?

Verge Technologies has aggressive growth plans to grow into the premier integration company across Atlantic Canada and beyond, who Atlantic Canadian companies will depend on for their communications, collaboration and security technology. Building out our Atlantic Canadian offices and service coverage to provide local representation and support across all major hubs. In addition to physical growth, truly mastering and separating ourselves with formal, professional services and managed service offerings that make our customers compete better using technology solutions by Verge.



PURPLE COW INTERNET

How did you get your start?

Starting out, we didn't have an internet background and, therefore, we had to learn and build everything from scratch. After much research, long nights and Google searches, we hired some of the best people in Canada to help build out the software and network. This team brought Purple Cow to life as a new internet service provider here in Nova Scotia. It took roughly a year to pull everything together. Once things were in place, Purple Cow was launched on May 3, 2019.

What has been the biggest challenge of being a new business?

When you start a new business and you're growing fast, it's very much like flying a plane while doing maintenance on it at the same time. You have to learn quickly and adapt. Although this has been a big challenge for us, it's also extremely rewarding to learn so much so quickly.

SMALL BUSINESS of the year finalists



Small Business of the year finalists

Andrew Feenstra, Cyclesmith; Mahmoud Mirmehrabi, Solid State Pharma Inc.; David Tonen, BeResponsive Media; Tim Rice, The Rounds; Rayleen Hill, RHAD Architects.

cyclesmith

CYCLESMITH

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

2020 proved to be one of the hardest years to operate due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We assembled an amazing management team that guided some of the hardest-working individuals and accomplished record sales growth... and did it while keeping all our staff, customers and community safe. When

the province of Nova Scotia announced operating restrictions, the team planned out how we could pivot and continue to operate safely.

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

We support many charities throughout the community covering a very wide spectrum of societal issues. Our support for the QEII Foundation's Ride for Cancer helped raise \$1.26 million that stays in our community to help fight cancer. During 2020, we also knew other local businesses were not faring as well as we were, so we made sure to support them by purchasing from them, getting take-out from our favourite local restaurants and supporting them any way we could.



SOLID STATE PHARMA INC.

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

Successful businesses are people-oriented and operate on a strong culture. People should be the focus, not profit. This attitude will, in turn, result in robust and healthy company growth. To us, successful businesses are the ones that develop and raise their own people who live by the company's cultural values. This is Solid State Pharma.

What brings customers back to you?

Trust. In our field, clients will not continue to work with you just because they like you. They must trust that you are doing everything you can to deliver reliable results, as it has a direct impact on the patients waiting to receive these drugs. The willingness of our team to go above and beyond to deliver solutions to our clients is one of the biggest contributors to our repeat business.

BERESPONSIVE MEDIA

BERESPONSIVE MEDIA

Where do you see your organization in five years?

We envision having a significant national footprint as a digital marketing and marketing automation leader in Canada. We love serving companies in Atlantic Canada, but see national scalability as an achievable next step. The more businesses we can help, the stronger our company will be and the more community impact we'll have!

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

Our team includes two new immigrants to Canada in key corporate roles. As the son of immigrants myself, I have immense respect for the immigrant journey and sacrifices made to build a life in a new country. We're also committed to developing the next generation and keeping talent in Nova Scotia and have hired co-op students and recent graduates. The work ethic and talent developed through these team members have been key contributors to our success.



THE ROUNDS

Where do you see your organization in five years?

Making a global impact on knowledge transfer in medicine. Connecting medical professionals to peers and thought leaders to research, evidence and clinical experience is critical to advancing patient care.

What has been the biggest challenge of being a small business?

Taking time off! Every employee contributes so much every day that having enough staff to handle the workload can be challenging. So, we do our best to ensure that people block time for themselves and also create wellness initiatives so we take care of everyone's mental, physical and social health.



RHAD ARCHITECTS

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

Our female-led boutique architecture firm is carving out a niche market for custom single and multi-unit residential, commercial interiors and unique cultural/tourism projects. We are doing this amidst an industry that is predominately, historically, male-dominated at the senior levels and now often commodified with large multinational firms. Our vision is to design projects that are transformative, thoughtful and distinct, regardless of scale. We believe that our style and delivery is unique to the industry.

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

We are fortunate that our daily work, due to its very nature, can have a broad and meaningful impact on the vibrancy of the many communities where our design work takes us. We are able to use our skills, knowledge of the city and human-scaled design focus to improve the ever-evolving urban fabric of Halifax. Specifically, volunteer projects like our two urban garden interventions in north end Dartmouth and our investment in downtown Dartmouth have injected delight to underutilized places.

EXPORT BUSINESS of the year finalists



**Export Business
of the year finalists**

Rebecca Cable, Admiral Insurance; Neville Ashleigh, CGI; Sean Court, Beaumont Exhibits; Saar Fabrikant, b4checkin; Lister Li, First Catch Fisheries Co. Ltd.



ADMIRAL INSURANCE

What inspired your company to become involved in export?

Admiral Halifax is unique, as we sell a U.K. service to the U.K. market. So, in that sense, we are not exporting a product. However, we are exporting our

labour and the biggest motivator for doing this between Halifax and Wales has been an ability to provide the service to our customers that they have come to expect, slightly more economically than can be done in the U.K. and in a time zone that allows us to extend our opening hours.

Do you have any advice for other businesses that want to start exporting?

Do everything you can to strengthen and build upon the link that exists between your business and your customers. If a different culture exists, do what you can to transplant that culture across borders. Embrace it and it will come through in the service your staff deliver.



CGI

What do you enjoy most about working with international markets?

I like the diversity it brings to my career and the opportunities it presents to my team. I like that I can live here in Halifax and still have the ability to work with our clients from anywhere in the world, bringing them solutions that were developed here in Nova Scotia by our talented team of consultants. I very much enjoy that I can live in Nova Scotia and still conduct business with large, global organizations.

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

Our business is highly dependent on human capital and, as such, this remains one of our largest challenges. We have



had to develop strategies to overcome this challenge, such as working with academic institutions in our regions to attract bright, new talent, as well as immigration to welcome new members to our communities. In addition to this, we have a welcome home strategy that helps identify people from our communities that may have moved away, but would be interested in returning to Halifax.

BEAUMONT EXHIBITS

BEAUMONT EXHIBITS

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

I think our awareness, contacts and services we offer globally at events are big assets to companies locally. Chances are we know quite a lot about the specific trade shows local companies are going to and we're happy to share our info and knowledge.

What do you think Halifax needs to do in order to grow?

I think Halifax is currently doing a terrific job and that it is critical to continue building infrastructure that caters to young professionals and young families, so they look at Halifax as a place they can settle and call home, rather than somewhere they only work for a few years.



B4CHECKIN

What is your organization's biggest achievement to date?

Pre COVID-19, securing InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) as the only supplier for their hotels' contactless payments.

Since COVID-19, adjusting to the pandemic by pivoting and finding new opportunities.

What is your favourite region or country to do business with?

For trade-show effectiveness, I love cities like New York, Miami and Las Vegas, as they blend business and social quite well. But, generally speaking, it's hard to beat a business meeting with Caribbean hotels or resorts in person, as a lot of those meetings tend to be outdoors with beautiful background views.



FIRST CATCH FISHERIES CO. LTD.

Why did you choose Halifax?

As we all know, China has the largest seafood market in the world and Nova Scotia offers the best quality seafood in the world, especially Canadian lobster. Most importantly, Halifax controls one of the most important cargo ports in North America and Dalhousie University has the best aquacultural technology support in the world. Basically, we have all the tools to be successful in the international marketplace if we can effectively manage a global seafood supply chain directly from the source.

What do you think Halifax needs to do in order to grow?

Halifax is one of the most important transportation centres in North America and there are not many cities in the world more beautiful than Halifax. Halifax has all the tools to be successful in the international marketplace. Globalization impacts Halifax in many different ways and many businesses here gain a great deal from globalization, including new customers and diverse revenue streams. I suggest Halifax should keep working with international markets and solve all emerging problems through negotiations within the business community.

NOT-FOR-PROFIT BUSINESS of the year finalists



Not-for-Profit Business of the year finalists

Joanne Bernard, Easter Seals Nova Scotia; Sara Napier, United Way Halifax; Katherine Dib, Solutions for Kids in Pain (SKIP); Sheri Lecker, Adsum for Women & Children; Nick Jennery, Feed Nova Scotia.



EASTER SEALS NOVA SCOTIA

How is your organization contributing to making Halifax a better place?

Our vision is to see a world where everyone is included. By helping persons with disabilities reach their goals through quality programs and services, our quest for inclusion moves that needle further every day. Whether it's creating employment opportunities, watching a kid play sledge hockey or helping a senior with mobility challenges, our goal is to always improve the quality of life for persons with disabilities because inclusion benefits everyone in a community.

What is the key to a successful and meaningful not-for-profit?

The key to a meaningful non-profit is to always ensure that the programs and services offered truly make a difference in the lives of the people being served. To ensure that, outcome monitoring and evaluation must be a core mechanism within an organization. If it matters, you measure it. By doing so, accountability and transparency become key tools in ways to enhance, change or expand programs and services to meet the critical needs of clients. By doing so, everything else, like revenue development and attracting engaged staff, will follow naturally.



United Way Halifax

UNITED WAY HALIFAX

What challenges do you see in the next 12 to 18 months? How will you overcome them?

We won't know the full impact of the [COVID-19] pandemic on our revenue for 12 to 18 months, at least. What we do know is that many people in our community were vulnerable and in crisis before the pandemic. In the months ahead, we will do everything we can to fund and advocate for the supports they need. We will continue to fundraise. We will bring leaders across sectors together. We will continue working with front-line partners to communicate needs to the public, our donors and government. And we will focus on making equitable investment decisions.

How can the business community help support your growth?

What we can accomplish together is so much greater than what we can accomplish alone. That's why we need businesses to be partners and investors in social change. It's one of the most effective ways to tackle complex issues. Many businesses have the means to give and many more have the platform to lead by example. We can help businesses engage their employees, meet their goals and use their influence to help make our community a better and safer place for everyone.



SOLUTIONS FOR KIDS IN PAIN

What would you say is your organization's proudest accomplishment?

SKIP's proudest accomplishment is bringing together diverse stakeholders from across Canada. SKIP collaborates with knowledge producers and knowledge users (e.g. patients, caregivers, health professionals, administrators and policy makers) from various disciplines, sectors and institutions, including industry, government and not-for-profit organizations. These partners are passionate about improving how we care for children in pain in Canada and amplify and spread SKIP's message throughout their networks.

How can not-for-profits work together to benefit everyone?

SKIP demonstrates the power of partnerships and leveraging the success of other organizations to reduce pain and suffering for children and their families. SKIP's partners have been able to grow their own profiles, engage with the public more effectively and further their own goals. SKIP recognizes the great work being done by non-profits throughout our community and across Canada, as well as the opportunity to move forward with even greater success as a result of combining strengths, perspectives and experience.



ADSUM FOR WOMEN & CHILDREN

How is your organization contributing to making Halifax a better place?

Adsum opened its doors to offer women a safe haven during periods of homelessness. Almost four decades later, we are operating several models of housing with our tenants enjoying 20-plus years of secure housing, paying rents geared to their incomes. We have apartment buildings, condos and shared accommodations and we rent units where families settle briefly while searching for permanent solutions to their homelessness. We use all this experience to advocate for all Nova Scotians to be housed.

How did COVID-19 impact how you offer your services?

The state of emergency has affected how we work, but it hasn't stopped us — not for one day — from delivering shelter, housing and support on a 24-7 basis. We've had to introduce extreme safety measures, increase staffing and training, renovate, alter practices, move to hotels and spend oodles more money than previously. Despite all this, we've expanded to two more locations and are seeking to build 24 more apartments.



FEED NOVA SCOTIA

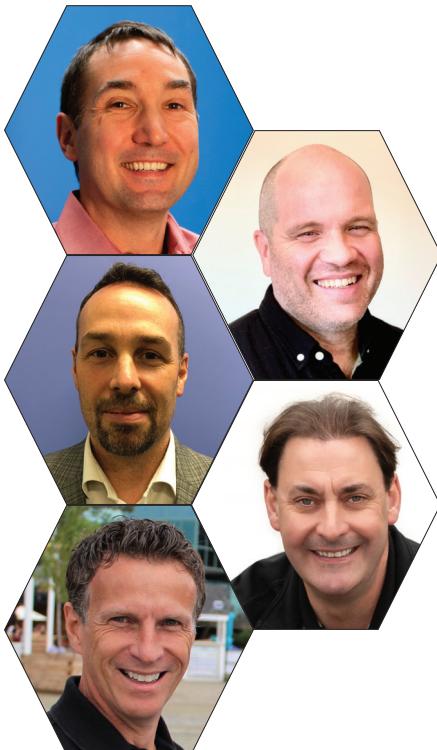
What would you say is your organization's proudest accomplishment?

I'd have to say the Feed Nova Scotia brand and the level of awareness and trust we've earned. With at least 400 registered food drives and fundraisers initiated by the community on our behalf each year, it's not lost on any of us how fortunate we are to be among the most readily thought-of charities in HRM. That doesn't happen overnight. It's the result of a consistent visual identity and message, a genuine belief that every donation matters, thoughtful engagement with the community and transparency and accountability.

What is the key to a successful and meaningful not-for-profit?

First and foremost, the cause has to resonate with the community. When you're funded entirely by the community, it forces you to stay relevant, creative and vibrant. You need to be innovative with your business model and willing to take risks. Being successful isn't just about accomplishing something reachable; it's about trying something uncomfortable. You need to live within your means and not carry debt. Transparency and accountability are key. And you absolutely need a dedicated and passionate board, staff and volunteer team with shared values, who are willing to challenge the status quo.

INNOVATIVE BUSINESS of the year finalists



Innovative Business of the year finalists

Dr. Greg Wanger, Oberland Agriscience Inc.; Willie Stevenson, Silverback Productions Inc.; Brennan Eadie, Eadie Technologies Inc.; Alastair Trower, Enginuity Inc.; David Burke, Nxtgen Care.



OBERLAND agriscience

OBERLAND AGRISCIENCE INC.

What inspired your business' innovation efforts?

The founders of Oberland believe passionately in addressing the global protein crisis. From the very start, it was clear that innovation was necessary to create highly nutritious, sustainable and cost-effective protein. Oberland's innovation is fuelled by addressing that need, creating efficient protein production at industrial scale in a zero-waste facility.

How can we engage youth to become innovative leaders?

From our perspective, the best way to engage youth to become innovative leaders is to provide them with industrial experience. With applied programs that place youth in companies in their area of interest, they see first-hand the pain points of that industry. Industrial exposure sparks the desire to innovate and address challenges they see.



SILVERBACK PRODUCTIONS INC.

What inspired your business' innovation efforts?

We first approached VR (virtual reality) as a platform for the games that we were making, but quickly realized that if we applied a lot of the same principles of design, engagement and analytics, we could revolutionize training. Because VR provides near total immersion, trainees are almost entering a waking dream and the lessons are more powerful and retention is 10 times over traditional learning methods.

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

Innovation is a double-edged sword. The bleeding edge can come with too much risk. Being behind the curve will have you left in the dust. You have to utilize tech in meaningful ways. Many times, new tech is a gimmick. Companies that can dive deep into the potential can be successful. It's never over, so it can be exhausting. You can't marry your company to any given tech without knowing that any day it will change and so must you.



EADIE TECHNOLOGIES INC.

What is your organization's proudest accomplishment?

The accomplishment that we are most proud of is producing a unique system, not just hardware or software, to accomplish our goal. We have all had to be incredibly flexible and take on tasks that are, at times, out of our comfort zones. We have had to form relationships with experts from around the world. I, personally, am most proud of my team for their hard work, dedication and shared passion to produce both a business and a system that will improve the lives of millions.

How can Halifax become a leader in innovation?

To become a leader in innovation, I believe the key ingredients are expertise, passion and capital. Halifax is home to some top researchers in many fields. Unfortunately, many ideas are not fully translated to the point where it will benefit consumers. To make this happen, a passionate individual or team must be willing to take on this challenge. Lastly, these individuals must be enabled with access to capital. Truly transformative innovation costs money and local investors must be willing to stoke these nascent fires.



enginuity

Atlantic Canada's Engine for Innovation

ENGINIUTY INC.

What inspired your business' innovation efforts?

Curiosity. It drives us. Clients come in with an idea or a problem or we visit a client's site and walk through. Observations become challenges, questions drive thinking and testing drives solutions.

How can we engage youth to become innovative leaders?

Invest in STEM, applied university courses, co-op placements and apprenticeships. Allow failure, embrace learning and celebrate success.



NXTGEN CARE

What inspired your business' innovation efforts?

When we started Nxtgen Care, I had a vision to improve the lives of seniors by using technology to help them age in a healthy and meaningful way. As an owner/operator of senior care facilities, I understood the challenges operators face. I thought there must be a way to better use technology to solve these issues! With Co-Founder Dan LeBlanc, we set out to create a new paradigm in seniors' care, using technology to create a community of care.

If you had the resources, what is the one thing you would change about your business?

We would hire more talent. Our challenge at the moment (a good problem to have) is the demand for our solution is greater than our ability to respond. We are at a point of strategic growth where we need to add more talented people to execute on our growth plan.

BUSINESS of the year finalists



Business of the year finalists

Linda Brigley, *Spirit Spa*; Mike Johnston, *REDSpace Inc.*; Jamie Reid, *Storm Insurance Group*; Gord Gamble, *Iron Dog Inc.*; Cheryl Doherty, *The Old Triangle Irish Alehouse Inc.*



SPIRIT SPA

How have you helped Halifax grow?

When we opened our doors in 2002, we were a team of six. We are proud to say we have helped Halifax grow by creating jobs and opportunities for more than 100 employees, many whom have been with us for several years. As well,

our beautiful new building in Halifax's historic Hydrostone is not only home to Spirit Spa, but also resides other local, creative businesses, giving them a chance for growth and opportunity.

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

There is always something new happening at Spirit Spa. Our latest has been growing our e-commerce to deliver premium beauty products across Canada, with our spa boxes being a big hit.



REDSPACE INC.

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

We started out of the ashes of the dot-com crash in the spring of 2000, unsure if there was a business to be had or whether it was even possible to survive here, let alone thrive. That was before the iPhone, Facebook and Netflix. I'm proud that we have navigated our way through a lot of industry transformation. As someone born and raised in the province, I'm personally proud that REDspace offers meaningful careers for 220 people and growing from all over the world.

Why did you choose Halifax?

First and foremost, when I started REDspace, it was because Halifax is home. It was where my wife and I wanted to raise our own family. I didn't know that our location would quickly become part of our value proposition. Not only are we well supported by an incredible business community, but we're also surrounded by top post-secondary institutions, making the city a hub for world-class talent.



STORM INSURANCE GROUP

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

Storm Insurance Group accelerated its digital insurance strategy by establishing an in-house innovation hub, designed to not only automate systems but innovate our business. We believe we're one of very few national, independent brokers who have built an internal innovation centre. We do this to modernize existing programs, innovate new products, find creative distribution methods and automate manual processes. One of our organizations, ZipSure Insurance Brokers, specifically is a leading innovator in tenant insurance distribution, landlord products and digital solutions.

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

Be creative, don't be afraid to take risks and venture where others won't go. Surround yourself with like-minded entrepreneurs and visionaries to help innovate your business.



IRON DOG INC.

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

Over the past four years, we have acquired and rebranded a 40-year-old business, shifted the focus of the business to commercial/industrial and tripled the size of the team. The pandemic slowed us down temporarily, but we are now back to 110 per cent of our pre-COVID-19 workforce.

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

We recently announced that Habitat for Humanity Nova Scotia is our Iron Dog charity of choice. In addition to

providing a financial contribution to the organization, this partnership has enabled many of our skilled staff to make a hands-on contribution to a duplex being built in Halifax, which will be home to two families who would not otherwise have been able to be homeowners.

THE OLD TRIANGLE



IRISH ALEHOUSE

THE OLD TRIANGLE IRISH ALEHOUSE

If you could bring in any famous leader from any era to work with your business for a day, who would it be and why?

This was a difficult question for us. We decided to pose the question to our staff, both front and back of the house. We wanted to name someone who was intelligent and knowledgeable about the food and beverage industry, who could understand the physical and emotional challenges involved in both the back and front of the house in the hospitality industry and provide the insight of an expansive personal experience to those of us who love this work. ... The answer was unanimous: the late Anthony Bourdain.

How can we continue to build a vibrant downtown core?

The COVID-19 situation has resulted in many people no longer working downtown, something likely to increase in the next few years as corporations transition away from large office footprints. The only way to keep downtown areas vibrant is by having people live downtown. This means they need food shops, cultural activities and green transportation options that are timely, affordable and efficient.

BUSINESS LEADER

of the year finalists



Connecting Businesses with Their People.



TANYA SIELIAKUS,
FOUNDER AND CEO,
HR PROS INC.

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

Be present, step up and do something, regardless if anyone is watching. Live your convictions and inspire others to share your purpose. Create a nurturing and supportive environment in which others can grow and also learn to live their convictions and step up. And know that you can't just step up in one area of your life; rather, being a leader is about doing something across all areas of you and your community, your activism, your friendship groups and your business.

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

There is always one professor who you remember. Dr. Dennis Stairs was that professor. He taught A Comparative Study of Canada and the United States Through War. After my final exam, he called. My exam was near perfect. He asked what my plans were after university and suggested the Foreign Service, overseas assignments. But I was a young mom and couldn't envision that. If I could do over, I would represent Canada with the same passion I bring to HR pros.



TISHA PARKER KEMP,
FOUNDER AND PRINCIPAL,
SHIFTED ACADEMY INC.

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

I feel quite fortunate that my contemporaries and those with whom I associate are in my corner, offering advice and connecting me with folks who are willing to help shiftED grow. The genesis for all of the advice is in the asking. And what I mean by that is, the best advice I have been given is to simply ask for advice.

What's next for you?

Growth. ShiftED Academy's services currently reach clients throughout North America and we have plans to grow that market and extend our reach into the U.K. This involves investing in the business, including a strategic approach to marketing, systems and process improvements and expanding our trusted team of subcontractors — locally and on the other side of the globe — to ensure we increase and sustain capacity.



LORELEI BURGESS,
DIRECTOR, OXFORD LEARNING

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

My biggest accomplishment to date is remaining fully operational and continuing to grow my business during the [COVID-19] pandemic. I was determined to remain open to provide our clients with a small sense of normalcy and consistency during such chaos. I felt it was critical that our students had the opportunity to interact with us on a weekly basis. They needed something to look forward to and their parents needed an opportunity to get some work done.

What's something new that's happening at your organization?

As a direct result of the [COVID-19] pandemic, we launched a new online program called Virtual Table to allow us to continue providing our proprietary learning methods to our students. We are now able to support families who normally wouldn't have access to our services.



MATT SYMES,
CEO, SYMPILITY DESIGNS

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

We need to invest in scaling socially conscious, sustainable organizations. Only six per cent of organizations ever make more than \$1 million in revenue; they have found (and are delivering on) a value proposition that has a market. Then, we all benefit — more jobs, more taxes, more people looking to grow their business in that supportive environment.

What's something new that's happening at your organization?

We began executing whole-person growth plans with people at Symplicity. It is no longer possible or advisable for us to fixate only on professional growth at work. Drawing on the best literature, we developed our own HR growth plans that take into consideration a person's purpose: the four perspectives of life (community, family/friends/relationships, personal and professional). The results have been incredible, with people living deeper and richer lives at home and at work.



MATHEW BENVIE,
PRESIDENT, EVOLVE FITNESS LTD.

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

Two things: that you can never give back too much and that you need to learn to delegate effectively. Both of these things have immensely improved my life and have led to successes in the business.

Why did you choose Halifax?

Halifax is a big enough city to grow a great business, but it also has a small-town feel. People are loyal, friendly and supportive. I can't think of a better city for a service-based business.

Grads inspire innovation

Young talent helps business adapt with creative solutions during COVID-19

This year, the Halifax-based start-up known for inventing the world's first bionic knee brace shifted gears completely to equip Nova Scotia's front-line workers during the pandemic.

Spring Loaded Technology hired more than 40 contractors and pumped out a whopping 50,000 face shields over the summer to protect nurses, food producers and vulnerable Nova Scotians from COVID-19.

A key to this quick success lay in the minds of young talent, who helped manage the transition.

"There really is no challenge that is insurmountable to young hires," says Katie Arsenault, Director of Operations and Controller, Spring Loaded Technology. "Our new grads are key to our continued growth and innovative solutions that help us thrive during such a challenging time."

In June, Arsenault hired accounting graduate, Jaye O'Brien, to manage their face-shield operation.

"In no time her skillset flourished, and she was completely running the shipping and receiving of face shields on her own," says Arsenault. "She continues to evolve in our company and hiring her permanently was easier with the help of Graduate to Opportunity."

The Graduate to Opportunity (GTO) program offers 25 per cent of a grad's first year salary — 35 per cent if the grad is diverse — and 12.5 per cent of their second-year salary to small businesses, start-ups and non-profits who create permanent full-time jobs for recent grads in Nova Scotia.

Spring Loaded Technology took home first place for Best Youth Employer at Halifax's 2017 Game Changers awards ceremony. The company has always prided itself on hiring young talent.

"We have multiple GTO hires which gives us the edge of a younger, more adaptable workforce," says Arsenault. "From digital marketing, to sales and operations management, youth are embedded in all facets of the company. We are proud to be part of their personal and professional growth."



CONTRIBUTED

Acadia University graduate Senewa Sena joined Spring Loaded Technology last year as a Business Development Associate, and says the company allows her to expand her knowledge through hands-on experience.

RICH WORK ENVIRONMENT

Senewa Sena is a testament to that statement.

The Acadia University graduate joined the team last year as a Business Development Associate, and says Spring Loaded Technology allows her to expand her knowledge through hands-on experience.

"It is a rich work environment," says Sena. "I have always felt entrepreneurial, and now I am able to further develop my interpersonal skills and start-up mentality with great coaching support. My outlook has broadened. There are more opportunities in Nova Scotia than I once thought."

"Sena has a knack for the workings of a small, growing company," says Arsenault. "We are expanding into new markets, which means we have had to find quality hires quickly. GTO helped us bring someone as talented as her onto the team."

Arsenault says that the GTO program is the most accessible funding program that they are a part of.

"It is so streamlined, from filling out the application to receiving the funding. We are grateful for a resource that helps us acquire and retain top talent. Our company's growth as a result of a young team is an indication of what GTO can do for business."

When you are ready to hire someone new, consider hiring a recent grad.

To date, more than 700 organizations like Spring Loaded Technology have hired more than 1,400 recent graduates across Nova Scotia using GTO funding. Complete applications are typically approved within three to five days.

GTO could save you money on the next person you hire. Learn more at www.novascotia.ca/GTO.



John Carruthers, FCPA, FCA



Sonya Fraser, FCPA, FCA



Tim Houston, FCPA, FCA



Keith MacIntyre, FCPA, FCA



Leo McKenna, FCPA, FCA



Bethany Moffatt, FCPA, FCMA



Don Wishart, FCPA, FCMA

Congratulations to our new Nova Scotia Fellow Chartered Professional Accountants

THE PRIDE OF OUR PROFESSION

CPAs are known for high ethical standards, strategic insights, and their capacity to identify solutions to complex issues in today's business world. Each year, CPA Nova Scotia honours select members, who are nominated and elected by their peers, who exemplify these attributes.

The title of Fellow CPA formally recognizes members who have rendered exceptional service to the profession or whose achievements in their careers or in the community have earned them distinction and brought honour to the profession.

With pride, we congratulate this year's FCPA Recipients.