

BUSINESS VOICE

HALIFAX'S BUSINESS MAGAZINE

TAKING THE LEAP TOWARDS ONLINE LEARNING

Pg 15

COWORKING SPACES

A thriving social movement

Pg 19

TAYLOR FLOORING

Expanding to compete

Pg 22

A NEW ERA OF ADVOCACY

Introducing Kent Roberts

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HALIFAX BUSINESS AWARDS 2021

PRESENTED BY:



01 • 28 • 21

NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN:
HALIFAXCHAMBER.COM/AWARDS

Categories:

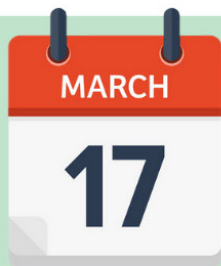
- New Business of the Year
- Small Business of the Year
- Export Business of the Year
- Innovative Business of the Year
- Business of the Year
- Business Leader of the Year

and introducing...

- Not-For-Profit of the Year

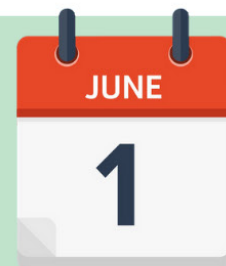


WORKING FOR YOU DURING COVID-19



Our office closed
to the public.

We worked from
home with no
interruption for
our members.



Our office reopened.



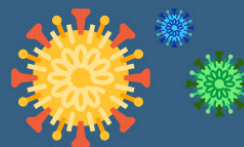
NOVA SCOTIA BUSINESS & LABOUR ECONOMIC COALITION

We created the Nova Scotia Business & Labour Economic Coalition (NSBLEC). Made up of over 135 organizations and representing over 200,000 workers, the NSBLEC met three times a week for real time policy making with all three levels of government to better support our business community.



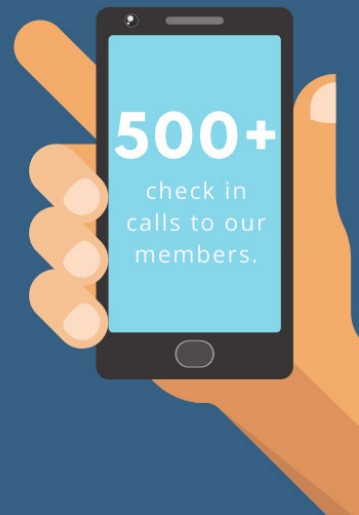
Navigating COVID-19 Webinar Series:

78 free webinars
2200+ attendees



12,300+

hits on our COVID-19
Resources webpage.



500+
check in
calls to our
members.

71

NEW
members
joined.



70+

M2M offers to encourage
supporting local businesses.

VISIT **HALIFAXCHAMBER.COM** FOR
REOPENING RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

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Customers will be able to come in and get most of their renovation shopping and installation done in one place." **22**

— Patrick Wood, Sales Manager with Taylor Flooring.



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Volume 29 • Issue 7

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.

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**HALIFAX
CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE**

CHAMBER EVENTS

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

VIRTUAL EVENTS

NAVIGATING COVID-19 WEBINAR SERIES:

Wage Support Programs for Hiring Students

July 21, 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM
REGISTER [HERE](#)

Speed Networking with BNI

July 15, 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM
REGISTER [HERE](#)

June 29, 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM
REGISTER [HERE](#)

WE ARE WORKING ON IN-PERSON EVENTS AND WE CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU SOON

Business After Hours at the Residence Inn

August 13, 4:30 PM - 6:30 PM
Registration opening soon

POWER LUNCH: How to Create a Dementia Friendly Business

September 23, 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM
REGISTER [HERE](#)

Dementia Friendly Ambassador Training

September 30, 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM
REGISTER [HERE](#)

SAVE THE DATE

WONDER WOMEN CONFERENCE

December 4
Halifax Convention Centre

Details to come

HALIFAX SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

October 19 - 23

Full calendar of events coming in August
Contact chris@halifaxchamber.com to get involved

FALL DINNER

November 12
Halifax Convention Centre

BUSINESS AWARDS

January 28, 2021
Halifax Convention Centre
Nominations are **NOW OPEN**

WE WILL PROVIDE UPDATES ON THESE EVENTS OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS

THE HALIFAX CHAMBER'S NAVIGATING COVID-19 WEBINAR SERIES HAS RECEIVED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE ATLANTIC CANADA OPPORTUNITIES AGENCY



Atlantic Canada
Opportunities
Agency

Agence de
promotion économique
du Canada atlantique

Canada

Taking a step forward with new transitions ahead

The Chamber is here to help with updates and support resources

@prezhfxchamber



PATRICK SULLIVAN
PRESIDENT & CEO

We couldn't be more pleased with the tremendous accomplishments of the past month. Establishing the Atlantic **bubble** shows how the Maritime provinces were able to follow regulations and restrictions, flatten the curve, quickly lower our COVID-19 cases and focus on healthcare and their residents' safety. As a result, we're able to travel in the Atlantic provinces and support our economy with staycations.

Beginning July 3, Nova Scotia will be welcoming travellers from Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick and PEI. Encourage your relatives and friends to visit our beautiful province. And to ease their concerns about safety, the Halifax Chamber along with many local businesses are making the POST Promise.

The POST promise, short for People Outside Safely Together, was designed to instil confidence in Canadian consumers as we take our first steps back into public spaces and the workplace. If you see the POST Promise logo at any establishment, rest assured that they're doing their part to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Be part of the campaign and make the POST promise [here](#). And if you already have, make sure to share photos with us of your space proudly showcasing the logo and we will share it on our channels.

You can also let your travelling friends and family know about Re-Open City. Every year, Halifax launches the Open

Let's show Halifax and Nova Scotia how much we love them and give them our continuous support and dedication."

City campaign during the summer focusing on local businesses and their offerings. This year, the campaign pivoted to showcase the resiliency of those businesses post-pandemic. **Re-Open City** is extending the focus on those businesses who need our help over four weekends in July. What a great initiative and a fun twist on a beloved campaign.

The Halifax Chamber has also partnered with Discover Halifax and Halifax Partnership on a campaign called **Buy Halifax**. Launched on June 25, the campaign provides an opportunity for locals to show their support for our Halifax businesses throughout the summer. Using the hashtag #ImOnBoardNS, shoppers can post and share their purchases at local establishments. Whether it be retail, hospitality or food and beverages, Buy Halifax is for local from the locals. It's an economic movement that anyone can join!

These initiatives are only a few of many out there helping local businesses after

months of reduced revenue. We have to do our part collectively and individually to support them. Let's show Halifax and Nova Scotia how much we love them and give them our continuous support and dedication.

In this issue of Business Voice, we're talking about online learning. From an economic movement to a social one, e-learning has become quite the indispensable path towards the future. To assist those working remotely or from home, online platforms have made e-learning even more possible and accessible due its extreme flexibility. At the same time, technology is making coworking spaces the sought-after happy medium for transitioning remote work from home offices to unconventional offices. Read this issue to find out more about this social movement and how to be part of it.

Happy reading and, as always, we're in your corner.

CHAMBER CHATS

PODCAST

Check us out!

From resiliency tales to recovery plans
tune in to hear all about it with your host
Patrick Sullivan, President and CEO





halifaxchamber.com/podcast

NEW & NOTED

We welcome our new Chamber members

3D DATACOMM

3D datacomm was formed in Fredericton, New Brunswick in 1998 and now has offices across Atlantic Canada including Halifax, St. John's, Moncton and Saint John offering a host of AV technologies aimed at Corporate, Government and Education sectors. The convergence of the IT and AV industries, over the past five years, has played into 3D's core strengths. With a solid understanding of server room, classroom and boardroom environments, 3D datacomm has emerged as Atlantic Canada's largest Professional Audio Visual Integrator.

Geoff Baker

420 Higney Ave Suite 200

Dartmouth, NS

(902) 233-8261

gbaker@3dav.ca

<https://3ddatacomm.com/>

EVENTS - Audio/Visual Equipment/ Services

APRIL STROINK, MONEY COACH

April is a money coach and financial advisor who specializes in helping people create and enjoy financial wellbeing in their businesses and personal lives.

She is the creator of the Money Fix - a suite of programs to increase financial literacy for millennials, families and entrepreneurs. A certified Profit First Professional, April has hands-on experience increasing the profits for multiple businesses (including her own) through a proven, globally recognized system that makes businesses more profitable. April is a gifted teacher and speaker who leads numerous workshops annually at local colleges, business associations and masterminds. She has helped hundreds of people and small businesses level-up their finances through her workshops, group programs and her astute one-on-one coaching. In her previous life, April managed multiple investment teams throughout Atlantic Canada for a national insurance company. She was also the owner and operator of a successful Halifax retail operation. Today, April is a money coach - a supportive guide who helps you understand and feel confident about your finances and future goals. She is known for her empathy and judgement-free coaching as she combines her expertise with her own experience of running her family business.

April Stroink

Halifax, NS

(902) 877-2407

april@aprilstroink.ca

<http://Aprilstroink.ca>

FINANCE & INSURANCE - Financial Services

ASSANTE HYDROSTONE

Assante Hydrostone, based in Halifax, is Atlantic Canada's largest independent branch of the national firm CI Assante Wealth Management, a publicly traded company managing more than \$180 billion in assets. Assante Hydrostone prides itself on being a strong member of the community and supporter of many local charities, while maintaining a commitment to ensuring its clients remain 'well advised'. A full-service firm, with more than 30 financial planners, they offer holistic wealth planning and investment management services from seven locations throughout the Maritimes.

Alfred Kunz

5548 Koye Street, Suite 201

Halifax, NS

(902) 423-1200

akunz@assante.com

<http://www.assantehydrostone.com>

FINANCE & INSURANCE - Financial Planner

Buy
Halifax!
#ImOnBoardNS

CFN CONSULTANTS (ATLANTIC) INC.

CFN Consultants (Atlantic) Inc is a Halifax-based consulting company specializing in the aerospace, defence and ocean technology sectors. The CFN team consists of some 14 consultants, in Ottawa and Halifax, who are experienced in executive level positions in the Canadian military, government procurement, or defence industry communities. CFN concentrates on procurement project opportunities originating with the Government of Canada and focuses on the requirements staff and decision makers, rather than elected officials. Members of the CFN team are specifically recruited for the depth and scope of their networks and their in-depth knowledge of current opportunities and government operations. CFN's ongoing networking with the Government's front-line managers and project officers enables us to understand requirements in detail and assist industry to both convey critical information to shape the requirement, and prepare clients to respond to opportunities with current and accurate information. Current CFN clients encompass a broad range of international and domestic aerospace and defence companies.

James King

Founders Square 800-1701 Hollis Street
Halifax, NS
(902) 491-4279
jking@cfncon.com
<http://www.cfnconsultants.com>
INDUSTRIAL & MANUFACTURING - Aerospace

CHRISTINE LUTLEY - RETIRED MEMBER

Christine Lutley

Dartmouth, NS
(902) 401-7067
christinelutley@gmail.com
<https://www.FibroCoach.Online>
OTHER - Retired Member

CHRISTOPHER NORMAN CONSULTING

Collaboration and communication are key in ensuring success as a BA; this is

the fulcrum of Christopher Norman Consulting. As a business analyst with over 10 years of complex project experience ranging from private to public sectors, I can work with you to ensure that your next project is a noteworthy accomplishment.

Christopher Norman

Dartmouth, NS
(902) 499-4223
christopher.norman1@gmail.com
BUSINESS & PROF. SERVICES - Business Consulting

DEEPSLOPE EXPLORATIONS

DeepSlope builds on decades of experience with smart optical bio-sensors detecting environmental stressors in aquatic ecosystems. Warning alarms of industrial pollutants, toxic algae, and micro-plastics are communicated remotely through AI-powered image processors to minimize resource losses. The company also facilitates liaison for Chamber Members with emerging OceanTech opportunities.

Ulrich Lobsiger

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(902) 488-7129
ulrich@deepslope.com
<http://www.deepslope.com/>
ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT - Ocean Technology

EVERY DAY I'M BRANDING INC.

With over 17 years of experience, Every Day I'm Branding owner, Alix Robinson, is often commended for her ability to create impactful and action-provoking campaigns by getting into the mindset of the target audience. Her website development, graphic design & social content creation techniques are proven to drive client conversion and brand awareness.

Alix Robinson

Halifax, NS
(782) 414-6160
alix.robinson@everydayimbranding.com
<http://www.everydayimbranding.com>
COMPUTERS, IT & TECHNOLOGY - Web Design

HA VU - INDIVIDUAL MEMBER

Ha Vu

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(782) 414-9728
thaihaktn452@gmail.com
OTHER - Individual Member

INGAGE HR

Christine Isnor

Dartmouth, NS
(902) 422-8644
christine@ingagehr.ca
<http://www.ingagehr.ca>
HR, EMPLOYMENT & STAFFING - Human Resources

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Ann-Marie Flinn

Dartmouth, NS
(902) 449-8784
flinnam@hotmail.com
<https://inpoweredliving.weebly.com/corporate-wellness.html>
BUSINESS & PROF. SERVICES - Business Consulting

INTENTIONAL OUTCOMES COUNSELLING

Robyn Jackman

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Halifax, NS
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robyn@intentionaloutcomes.com
<https://intentionaloutcomes.com/>
HEALTH CARE - Counselling

LOGAN HARRIS KINESIOLOGY

Logan Harris

998 Parkland Dr Unit 206
Halifax, NS
(902) 874-0259
loganharrishk@gmail.com
HEALTH CARE - Health and Wellness

LOUISBOURG SEAFOODS

Damien Barry

77 Kings Rd
Sydney, NS
(902) 733-2079
damien.b@louisbourgseafoods.ca
<http://www.louisbourgseafoods.ca>
AGRICULTURE, FISHING & FORESTRY - Fisheries/Oceans

MEG CONSULTING & PROJECT MANAGEMENT INC.

Provides local business owners and developers with construction management services at an affordable rate. Owner of MEG Inc., Julia MacPherson is a LEED Green Associate, and has experience on LEED projects. MEG Inc. can help you save money and the environment on your next construction project.

Julia MacPherson

Dartmouth, NS
(902) 488-6758

juliamacpherson.meg@gmail.com

BUSINESS & PROF. SERVICES -
Project Management

ROBERTA HIBBERT - NON-PROFIT LEADERSHIP CERTIFICATE, MSVU

Roberta Hibbert

Beaver Bank, NS
(902) 488-9122

robertahibbert@gmail.com

OTHER - Student Member

SAFETY SOURCE INDUSTRIAL INC.

Safety Source Industrial Inc. is dedicated to our goal of delivering tailored safety products and programs to the Canadian market. We hope to share our unique and innovative solutions that incorporate our strong existing Supplier Partner relations. We are proud to help Canadian industries and workers understand, evaluate and acquire the equipment they need to do their jobs as safely as possible.

Scott Weatherston

121 Ilsley Ave. Unit 4
Dartmouth, NS
(902) 468-6060

s.weatherston@mmfss.ca

<https://safetysourceindustrial.ca/>

SAFETY & SECURITY - Safety
Systems/Products

SHIFTED ACADEMY

Tisha Parker Kemp

Bayside, NS
(902) 818-1061

tisha@shiftedacademy.ca

<http://www.shiftedacademy.ca>

EDUCATION & PROF.
DEVELOPMENT - Training Programs

SNAP BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

A business and management consulting company specializing in simple and effective systems, processes and strategic planning aimed at helping small businesses with everyday challenges.

Jocelyn Melanson

Halifax, NS
(902) 452-0423

jocelyn@snapbusinesssolutions.ca

<https://snapbusinesssolutions.ca>

BUSINESS & PROF. SERVICES -
Strategic Direction

TERRADYNE WELLNESS CENTER - ADDICTION TREATMENT

Terradyne Wellness is a 12 bed Addiction treatment Center that offers up to a 90 day stay.

Personalized Programs include: Detox Services, Individual/Group/Family Therapy, Healthy Living, Occupational Transitioning, Recovery Maintenance/Aftercare. Terradyne has a separate Private Detox building, overseen by an experienced medical team to help

individuals safely withdrawal from substances.

Laurie Burns

610 Myers Point Rd
Head of Jeddore, NS
(902) 889-2121

laurie@terradynewellness.ca

<http://www.terradynewellness.ca>

HEALTH CARE - Health and Wellness

THE FRENCH DOCTOR

We offer personalized training French in order to achieve your goals for the French language as efficiently as possible. We specialize in training for a linguistic profile for Second Language for public servant. We can teach in the comfort of your office or in our comfortable premises in Halifax.

Sophie Hubert

6842 Chebucto Rd
Halifax, NS
(902) 446-5709

thefrenchdoctorhalifax@gmail.com

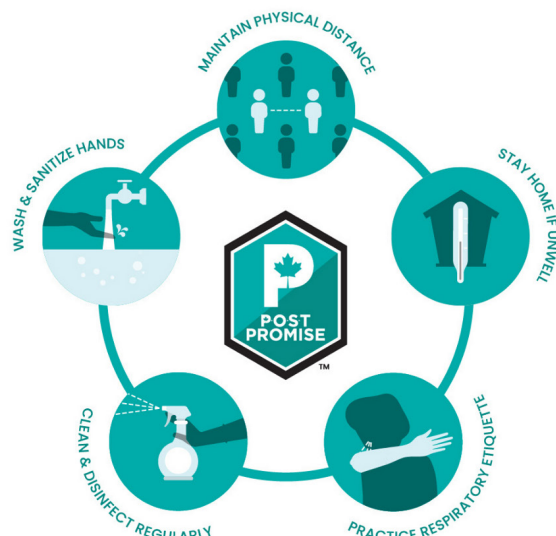
<http://www.thefrenchdoctor.com/>

EDUCATION & PROF.

DEVELOPMENT - Prof. Development

P.O.S.T

PEOPLE OUTSIDE SAFELY TOGETHER



POSTPROMISE.COM

THE HIGHLANDER SPA & LOUNGE LIMITED

The Highlander Spa wants to cater to Men's grooming and relaxation in a spa space that you can call your own. With a comfortable bar serving wine, local beer and whisky. A courtesy shuttle on the peninsula.

Bruce Herron

1597 South Park Street
Halifax, NS
(902) 331-1111

bruce@thehighlanderspa.com

<http://thehighlanderspa.com>

HEALTH CARE - Health and Wellness

TRANQUILITY ONLINE

Tranquility is an online platform that uses the gold-standard approach, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, to help organizations support their employees with anxiety and depression. Our service includes trained coaches available over video, phone or in-app messaging to help our clients get the most out of the program.

Joel Muise

Tranquility Online 1505 Barrington St #100

Halifax, NS
(902) 802-8126

joel@tranquility.app

<http://www.tranquility.app>

HEALTH CARE - Stress Management

VIGILANT MANAGEMENT INC.

Vigilant Management is Atlantic Canada's first construction agency. Our innovative made-to-fit service is designed to make your construction project a total success. Whether you are a small business owner who needs our full project delivery service or a large developer whose internal project team could benefit from our advisory service - we can add value to any project. Our projects are built on transparency, fairness, honesty, and collaboration. We are striving to take the Atlantic Canadian construction industry to a future without lawsuits. Our team has managed over \$4 billion in construction projects

across 190 years of shared experience. Our cross-sector involvement allows us to bring best practices and innovations from multiple industries to your project.

Michelle Samson

9-69 Karwood Drive
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(709) 782-5950

michelle@vigilantmanagement.ca

<http://www.vigilantmanagement.ca>

BUSINESS & PROF.

SERVICES - Project Manage



TRADE ACCELERATOR PROGRAM

GET THE SUPPORT NEEDED TO ACHIEVE GLOBAL GROWTH.

HALIFAXCHAMBER.COM/TAP

Are you a new member?

To submit your 50-word description for New & Noted, please contact **Mandi Bowser**, Administrative Assistant at Mandi@halifaxchamber.com or (902) 468-7111 within the first six months of membership.

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

How our members are growing Halifax

INTERTALK GOLD SPONSOR OF IWCE'S VIRTUAL CONNECTIONS

In the lead-up to IWCE 2020 in August, IWCE has launched its new Virtual Connections platform. **InterTalk** is a proud Gold Sponsor of this innovative "online trade show," and wants you to check out some of their new content regarding their dispatch solutions. InterTalk President Chris Oldham explains how InterTalk's flexible Enlite solution helps 911 centers implement remote working that can be used to ensure continuity of operations while also meeting guidelines for social distancing and quarantining associated with the current COVID-19 pandemic. Get a head start on IWCE 2020 this August, visit the "Virtual Connections" portal and get the pre-show information you need to get the in-person discussion started later this summer: intertalksystems.com

RESIDENCE INN WELCOMES GUESTS AND HOSTS FOOD DRIVE

Residence Inn Halifax Downtown has reopened as of Monday, June 1. It has been fully renovated! The hotel also ran a food drive for Feed NS from June 1-14. They encouraged patrons to come in, check out the renovations and make a food donation.



KEEPING CANADA'S SUPPLY CHAIN MOVING

In an effort to help keep the supply chain moving amidst the pandemic, **Air Canada Cargo** has opportunities for on-demand, cargo-only flights. Flights can accommodate general and specialized freight and are operated on Air Canada Boeing 777 and Boeing 787-9 aircraft, some of which have been converted to all-freight service. Routing is available between cities in Air Canada's

global network. Capacity is available on international routes such as Shanghai, Incheon and Hong Kong, as well as London, Paris, Frankfurt, Sydney, Tel Aviv and more. Find out more at www.aircanada.com/cargo, or through your preferred Freight Forwarder.

PROPELLER BREWING COMPANY ANNOUNCES QUINPOOL ROAD OPENING ON MAY LONG WEEKEND

Propeller Brewing Company recently expanded to Quinpool Road. "It's not quite the launch we had planned, but we're excited to finally be able to open the Propeller Quinpool store with cans and bottles," said Allen. "We'll also have our craft sodas and Windmill Craft Cocktails on sale." The store is open the same hours as the other Propeller stores with hours extended in the future as COVID-19

restrictions are relaxed. With the finishing touches complete on the Tap Room, Allen is looking forward to the day it'll be safe to welcome everyone for a pint. "We're officially joining the neighbourhood this weekend, but we look forward to expanding to have everyone enjoy the space once it's safe to do so," said Allen.

AGENCY “BOUNCING BACK” TO SUPPORT NOVA SCOTIA’S ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND GROWTH

With a new website, some recent campaigns in support of clients during COVID-19 and a plan in place to get back to the office, **Trampoline** is focusing its branding, digital, marketing, media and public relations work on helping organizations embrace and participate in economic recovery and growth. Trampoline’s new website www.bouncebackns.ca will be highlighting some of the campaigns the agency helped clients execute through COVID-19. The site also features a video series called Tide Turners – celebrating economic success stories in rural Nova Scotia. With a new office at The Factory at 1489 Hollis Street in the heart of downtown Halifax, Trampoline and its sister company Twist&Bits are driven by being a force for positive change in Nova Scotia.

TD COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

As part of the TD Ready Commitment platform, **TD** will allocate **\$25 million** to help strengthen community resilience. This comprehensive program includes funding, employee engagement and on-going collaboration with organizations and community groups that operate locally, regionally and nationally in Canada and the United States across TD’s operating footprint. Full program details are available [here](#). Approximately 400 students across North America will complete their summer programs virtually, including 12 participants in the TD Insurance Indigenous Intern program. In light of the tragic events in Nova Scotia in April, and to support immediate and long-term mental health services, TD has donated \$100,000 to the Strongest Families Institute in Halifax. These funds will help support mental health services to children, youth, adults and families in rural or under-resourced communities.



KAREN FURNEAUX CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

This is a throwback pic **Progress Halifax-Cornwallis** to one of Karen Furneaux’s very first talks with a large audience of 1000 attendees. She struggled to breathe. Speaking in public was one of the things she was actually terrified to do. Growing up, Karen wouldn’t even put her hand up in class because she was afraid of feeling

stupid and not smart enough. Now, she’s been a speaker for 20 years and soon her business will celebrate 10 years! Karen realized if she was going to make a big impact, she was going to have to get out of her comfort zone and do some hard things that scared her.

NEW HQ FOR OFFICE INTERIORS & CABCO

Office Interiors and CABCO Communications have started construction of a new showroom and headquarters in Burnside, doubling down on their long-term mission to help Atlantic Canadian businesses create more productive work environments. “We are excited to have broken ground and started construction,”

said Jim Mills, President & CEO, Office Interiors. “Our new showroom and workplace will be a great way to showcase our innovative products and solutions while at the same time providing our team with a best in class workplace.” Occupancy is anticipated in Q1 of 2021.



WELCOME TO DIGITAL NOVA SCOTIA, WAYNE SUMARAH

Digital Nova Scotia and our Board of Directors are excited to announce the appointment of Wayne Sumarah as our new Chief Executive Officer. Wayne is very passionate about the tech sector. He has spent the majority of his career with industry-leading ICT companies across Canada in leadership roles that encompassed strategic business planning, organizational growth, client acquisition, marketing, new product and service development,

and program design and implementation. In addition to these corporate leadership roles within the tech sector, he brings a unique combination of small business and public sector experience, including operation of a digital marketing agency and various senior leadership roles within government focused on economic growth, sector development, innovation and workforce development.

RILEY ACHIEVES INDEPENDENCE & MOBILITY



Many Nova Scotians with disabilities require wheelchairs or specialized mobility equipment for inclusion and independence for their daily lives. Trying to accommodate the many unique mobility needs can be expensive and place financial pressures on families. **Easter Seals Nova Scotia's** Assistive Devices provide wheelchairs and mobility aids to low income Nova Scotians living with disabilities. This pivotal program helps thousands of people each year with everything from highly complex power chairs to bath tables and children's standers. Riley Cole received a tricycle through the Assistive Devices program and wanted to say, "thank you for the bike! I really like it. It's a very nice bike."

NSCC ANNOUNCES FREE ONLINE WORKSHOP

The **NSCC** course provides small and medium enterprise owners and managers knowledge to develop agile business continuity planning skills to respond to changing environments. Participants will connect with other business owners to share ideas, challenges and successes. In addition, participants will be matched with a recent Emergency Management program graduate to assist with the creation of customized procedures and processes to meet the needs of each business. This is an opportunity to apply the principles of emergency management in an atypical environment. At the end of this course, participants will have a viable business strategy to ensure their company can react quickly and effectively to a variety of potential situations including changing restrictions and re-openings.

HIAA PRESENTS 2019 FISCAL RESULTS

Halifax International Airport Authority (HIAA) presented the results of its 2019 fiscal year at its Annual Public Meeting, held virtually to comply with COVID-19 provincial public health orders. Pre-COVID-19, HIAA was well-positioned for continued future growth. HIAA's financial performance in 2019 was strong, due to steady passenger volume, record cargo activity, sound fiscal management, measured capital investment, and continued strategic oversight. HIAA Board Chair, Marie Mullally, reflected on the strength of HIAA's leadership team and how they're positioned to support the region's recovery. After 11 years as a director, and two years as Board Chair, Ms. Mullally's term ended. The incoming Chair of the Board is Stephen Dempsey, who has served on the HIAA Board for nine years and was most recently Vice Chair. For the 2019 Annual Report, visit www.halifaxstanfield.ca.

PROGRAM CHANGES FOR SMARTBUSINESS

The Halifax Partnership's SmartBusiness program changed as a result of COVID-19. The program has shifted, and the current focus is helping businesses navigate and access the government programs and private sector resources they need most at this time. They've connected with over 750 companies, 175 of those have been one-on-one calls, resulting in 250 referrals into this SmartBusiness Action Team network. In addition to these changes, they introduced a new Virtual Adviser Program powered by their partner BoomersPlus.com. The program helps businesses overcome an obstacle brought forward by COVID-19. 25 businesses are matched to an experienced member of the BoomersPlus community of professionals to help them develop solutions. Businesses can apply and learn more about the Virtual Adviser Program [here](#).

DEVELOP NOVA SCOTIA PROJECT UPDATES

The Province announced an investment of up to \$230M to improve infrastructure and help get the economy moving again. The funding will support more than 200 shovel ready projects, creating up to 2000 jobs.

<https://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20200527005>

A number of these stimulus projects, through an investment of close to \$38M, will be led by **Develop Nova Scotia** with a focus on key waterfront infrastructure and places supporting thriving communities' authentic tourism destinations and working waterfronts. These projects build on substantial planning with community to date and they will create a platform for community to co-create new places for people to gather and for business to flourish.



GETINTHELOOP PARTNERS WITH THE DHBC

During this period of physical distancing mobile marketing has become an important means by which local businesses can communicate with local consumers and **GetintheLoop Halifax** has expanded to meet this new demand! In April they welcomed two new team members to assist in providing the best service to their partners and in May GetintheLoop Halifax was proud to launch a new partnership

with the **Downtown Halifax Business Commission**. The GetintheLoop platform now features a Downtown Hfx "Loop" dedicated to highlighting the incredible shops, restaurants and attractions of Downtown Halifax to help encourage Haligonians to support local businesses in their own city.

MEDAVIE BLUE CROSS® SUPPORTS CANADIANS WITH FREE ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

Medavie Blue Cross® has joined as a sponsor of Stronger Minds by BEACON® – a free digital program available for all Canadians during COVID-19. Through the BEACON digital platform, Stronger Minds offers resources focused on resilience building, videos and quick reads from mental health experts. The program provides participants the opportunity to engage as much or as little as they wish to access guidance that addresses their

challenges; however, unlike one-to-one therapy, there is no clinical assessment required to participate. Stronger Minds will be offered indefinitely, in recognition this crisis has an uncertain timeline. For more information: mindbeacon.com/strongerminds

Leaping into

online learning

with haste

Beneficial but still in its early days

by Mina Atia

With our reliance on technology and increased flexibility for both work and schooling over the last decade, online learning has been at the forefront of many institutions. It provides endless options for students of all ages the opportunity to learn.

Whether it be new skills, languages, diplomas or even degrees, they are all made possible remotely and from the comfort of one's own home. Flexibility and accessibility have become pillars of online learning.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, there has been a monumental uptake of language apps, virtual tutoring, video conferencing tools and online learning software. According to **Forbes magazine**, interest in learning new languages has seen a threefold increase and the number of new customers has doubled week over week.

And that wasn't the only noticeable change. Formal education has taken a drastic and rapid leap towards e-learning. Instructors are working remotely and on digital platforms, which was only made possible with the exponential development and growth of technology over the last decade.

Online learning allows for flexibility and accessibility."

—Peter Mombourquette,
Professor and Chair of the
Department of Tourism and
Hospitality at Mount Saint
Vincent University

But will this quick, additional adoption of online learning and complete reliance on technology continue to persist post-pandemic?

Based on extensive scientific research, online learning has shown a significant increase in retention of information. Students are retaining 25 to 60 per cent more information online compared to only eight to 10 per cent in classrooms.

Furthermore, online learning requires 40 to 60 per cent less time to learn than in traditional classrooms. This is made possible with students' ability to learn at their own pace, go back to re-read, skip or accelerate through chapters as they choose.

Many university students were already used to a blended form of online and in-person learning before the pandemic. They go to lectures in classrooms in the morning and head home to attend evening classes online.

And part-time students mostly take online classes while working fulltime or staying home with their children.

"Online learning allows for flexibility and accessibility," says Peter Mombourquette,



Professor and Chair of the Department of **Business and Tourism and Hospitality Management** at Mount Saint Vincent University.

“We run all our courses both online and in the classroom,” he says. “So students have that choice. This accessibility and flexibility is phenomenal.”

Executive Director, Isabelle Pédot, of Alliance Française Halifax also shared a similar insight regarding online learning.

“This crisis has also been an opportunity for us and our clients: online teaching allows more flexibility and a wider course offering,” she says.

A Canadian not-for-profit association located in the Hydrostone, **Alliance Française Halifax** offers high-quality French instruction

to promote French culture. The centre has been teaching French remotely for a few years now. All its logistics and technology platforms were already set up and available for their instructors as well as clients.

“We were able to adjust our programs and create new ones to fit everyone’s learning style: shorter and more frequent lessons with less participants, access to online material to give each student the freedom to study at their own pace and promote self-learning,” says Pédot.

Pédot further explained how clients realized the possibility of continuing their progress and learning online. Digital textbooks, smartboards and instructional videos amongst many other technological tools were at their disposal.

She reaffirms technology to be an inherent part of the modern pedagogical tool box for language

teachers. It facilitates online learning on either ends of the learning spectrum.

Based on these previous findings and insights, online learning may be here to stay. However, a concerted effort needs to be made in improving online learning.

This cultural change in learning, however, requires discipline. Just like classroom education needs discipline, online learning needs it even more due to the lack of handholding.

It’s hard for some students to find their bearings on their own and on their own timeline, that is if they even set one.

“Since COVID-19, we switched to online and telephone advising meetings, and we have faculty that are basically available 24/7, who love to e-meet and work with students to help them select their courses,” says Mombourquette.

To get the full benefits of online learning, a range of collaborative tools and engagement methods need to be used. By doing so, it will promote inclusion, personalization and intelligence by adding to the advantages of e-learning.

Alliance Française Halifax offers high-quality French instruction to promote French culture. The centre has been teaching French remotely for a few years now.

“We were able to adjust our programs and create new ones to fit everyone’s learning style...”

—Isabelle Pédot,
Executive Director
of Alliance Française
Halifax





Contributed

MSVU ran a survey asking students if they need support for their online learning, whether it be technology tools or internet access.

“We created videos for parents of our younger learners to allow repetition and memorization during the week,” says Pédot. “Our e-learning platform has allowed easy access to material, virtual classrooms and has increased communication among participants.”

“We run a very robust educational learning passport program comprising of what we do in the classroom, and we’ve worked exceptionally hard to transition all that online in the fall,” says Mombourquette.

“Students can have a great experience, not just in the classroom, but in a virtual experience enhancing their education,” he says.

On the upside, instructors and educators have reported more efficient and effective reach out to students since the pandemic through chat groups, video meetings, polls voting and document sharing.

“We didn't have any students actually come back and say this is going to be problematic for them. And I think that represents where technology is today.”

— Peter Mombourquette,
Professor and Chair of the
Department of Tourism and
Hospitality at Mount Saint
Vincent University

By contrast, others have been met with some online learning challenges. Students without reliable internet access and/or technology have been struggling with digital learning. It’s representing a gap evident across countries and between income brackets.

Lack of training, insufficient bandwidth and little preparation, all have resulted in poor experience for some teachers as well.

“Vocational training must be an ongoing priority, regardless of unforeseen situations and events,” says Pédot.

“By making sure that teachers are always aware of the most recent technological tools, knowledge and research, we give our team and our clients the best chance to adapt to an ever-changing environment,” she says.

Teachers are now pressured more than ever to become life-long learners. With the constant evolution of technology, teaching methods and different learning platforms, instructors must be both as accommodating and as digitally up to date as possible.

But with a significant digital divide between different socioeconomic backgrounds, it’s not always easy ‘getting with the times’.

For example, there’s a drastic divide between teachers from a well-funded school district and one with way less means. As accommodating and technology savvy as teachers can be, only so much progress can occur with the digital tools and funds available to them.

On the flip side, some students are well prepared: they’re set with Chromebooks and digital lesson plans while others don’t have internet access, structure at home or even helpful supervision.

MSVU ran a survey asking students if they need support when it comes to online learning, whether it be tools or internet access. “Every one of our students responded back that they had access, either to a phone or a computer and have access to WiFi or internet,” says Mombourquette.

“We didn’t have any students actually come back and say this is going to be problematic for them. And I think that represents where technology is today.”

A valid concern is this could be representative of a select demographic of students who come from a good socioeconomic background or are offered governmental support and loans. All of which enables them to adapt comfortably to online learning.

However, the divide impacting other less-fortunate demographics will only widen post-pandemic with the current acceleration in digital learning.

“There's a variety of ways that we could help students. We're more than willing to work with students on an individual basis to help them,” says Mombourquette.

“It's a very different environment. It's a very positive, student-engaging environment,” he says confidently about online learning and the endless possibilities it holds for the future.

“Blended learning means learners are offered a gamut of tools to achieve their learning goals.”

— Isabelle Pédot,
Executive Director
of Alliance Française
Halifax

Ultimately, it's time to put the emphasis on bridging existing and emerging digital services. It will allow those falling behind to take advantage and keep up with their peers.

And despite all of the benefits and challenges, some believe a hybrid education model offers the best solution. Some students believe traditional offline and online learning should still go hand in hand.

“There is no contradiction between these two methodologies. They are complementary,” says Pédot. “Blended learning means learners are offered a gamut of tools to achieve their learning goals.”

“We do not have to make a choice between online and in-person learning.” ■



Contributed

Photos provided by Alliance Française Halifax and Mount Saint Vincent University

There's been a shift in workplaces over the last decade. With the rise of tech start-ups and younger entrepreneurship, businesses are moving away from the traditional office with rows of cubicles, no work/life integration, and wearing full suits in the summertime.

Coworking spaces are taking over the modern workplace. These spaces are membership-based and allow diverse groups of freelancers, remote workers, entrepreneurs and other independent professionals work together in a shared, communal setting.

This social movement aims to create spaces based on a sense of community, collaboration, learning and sustainability. They're set up for working professionals to thrive in.

For starters, coworking spaces offer freedom and autonomy for professionals. They feel in control of their work schedule, routine and mode of operations. They decide to work when they feel most productive and able, on their own terms.

Some say it lacks the structure of the office-based counterpart, however, working in a coworking space offers motivation.

With the lack of routine and less pressure to be over-productive, professionals are more motivated. They adopt their individualistic work style, best-suited for their own needs.

"When you walk into Many Hats you will immediately notice it feels different from a traditional workspace," says Jenine Panagiotakos, Founder and CEO of Many Hats Workspace.

"Its inspiring art pieces, warm colour tones and scent of fresh brewed coffee instantly put you at ease and create a deep sense of belonging."

Making connections with other professionals is one of many reasons why there's a sense of community and belonging in coworking spaces. There's little to no direct competition between workers or internal politics to navigate. And there's no pressure to adopt a work persona to fit in.

COWORKING SPACES: A SOCIAL MOVEMENT TOWARDS HIGHER LEVELS OF THRIVING

BY MINA ATIA



Inspiring art pieces, warm colour tones and scent of fresh brewed coffee instantly put you at ease and create a deep sense of belonging."

- Jenine Panagiotakos, Founder and CEO of Many Hats Workspace



“Many Hats promotes collaboration over competition and is seen by many as a community, not just a workplace,” says Panagiotakos.

“Occupants can regularly be found engaging in meaningful conversations with their peers and supporting them through the ups and downs of their business journey.”

Working amongst a community of professionals from different fields

with vastly different backgrounds and experiences strengthens the individual’s own work identity.

It creates a culture where it’s the norm to share expertise, help each other out professionally and develop business growth. The variety of workers provides a unique skill-set for community members to benefit from and a wealth of knowledge that can be easily tapped into.

As coworking spaces offer excellent areas for collaboration and comfort for members, these benefits also have their own obstacles. “Workspace offerings have had their challenges, mostly related to the open-office design they are normally located in,” says Pamela Dempster, owner and senior health & wellness specialist at Dempster Wellness, a corporate health & wellness firm.

“Open-office designs usually see lower cubicle workstation panel heights, which allow noise levels throughout the space to carry more and offer decreased work privacy within the cubicle space,” she says.

Coworking spaces are shared spaces based on the concept of hot desking – chairs, cubicles, desks and stations are shared by many. It presents challenges in making the furniture adjustable to many different needs.

“If the workstations and chairs are not extremely adjustable by the user, it can increase the risk of maintaining very awkward, non-neutral joint postures, which can then increase workloads throughout the body when completing computer related tasks for extended periods of time,” says Dempster.

Dempster Wellness offers assessment services, conducted by certified professional ergonomists, to evaluate furniture and equipment prior to being procured by coworking spaces.

BOARD WALL – BRAINSTORM AWAY!

They ensure a decreased discomfort in those spaces by selecting extremely adjustable and ergonomic working stations. They also conduct follow-up sessions to provide proper training and education on all new items.

To attract new members and meet the needs of existing members, owners of the communal spaces curate a unique experience and vibe. From coffee amenities to online platforms and services, coworking spaces offer many perks for a membership.

“Many Hats strives to offer as many conveniences as possible to its occupants such as complimentary coffee, Wi-Fi and printing services; discounts on private meeting rooms and event spaces; a professional business address to preserve anonymity; a quiet, oceanfront view; and a growing online community of entrepreneurs who are happy to connect, encourage and offer advice to other community members,” says Panagiotakos.

These types of offers are the main reason why people opt out of working from home for free or renting traditional nondescript offices.

Coworking environments are not just satisfying and productive for members. They’re also engaging members in creating the future. These environments create an edge to highly energize members and help them avoid burnout, which is harder to do in regular office spaces. Members thrive towards building their own and their company’s success when coworking.

As it has affected most businesses, COVID-19 impacted the future of coworking spaces and is rendering it uncertain.

“Before the pandemic, our workspaces were functioning at capacity with little to no vacancy – business was booming,” says Panagiotakos.

“When the pandemic hit, our meeting and event bookings quickly dropped, and we saw a sharp decline in the number of coworkers sharing space. Home offices were suddenly reinstated and many of our occupants were back to

juggling work and family on the home front.”

Declining revenues forced some coworking-space owners to provide generous discounts to members. Throughout April, discounts were a major tactic to help offset costs for struggling companies and professionals plus compensate for no-longer available services due to the pandemic.

According to Dempster Wellness, coworking spaces’ open design has presented some challenges in adherence to COVID-19 protocols.

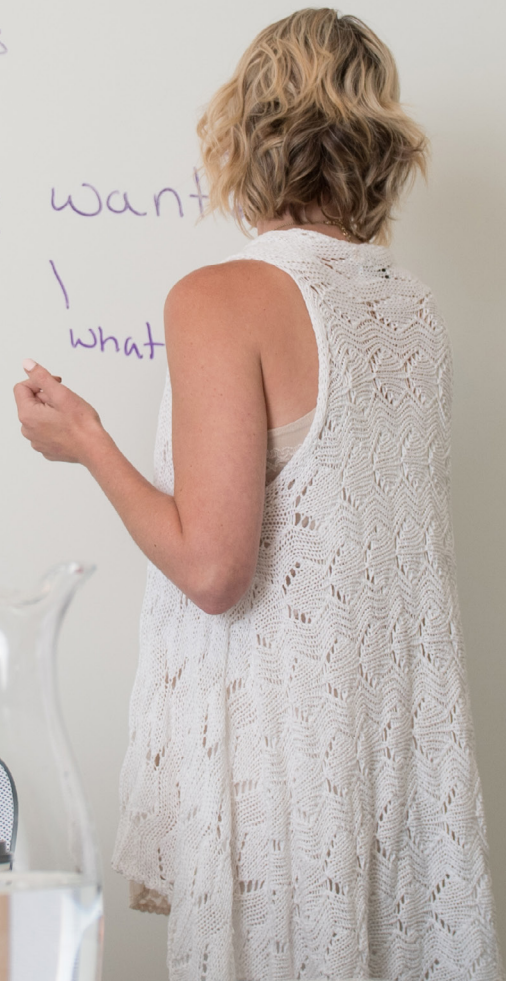
In terms of air circulation, there is a concern about ventilation and air conditioning locations in creating a proper and safe air flow within coworking spaces.

And hot desking poses the risk of increased exposure when multiple workers access the same stations in one shared space.

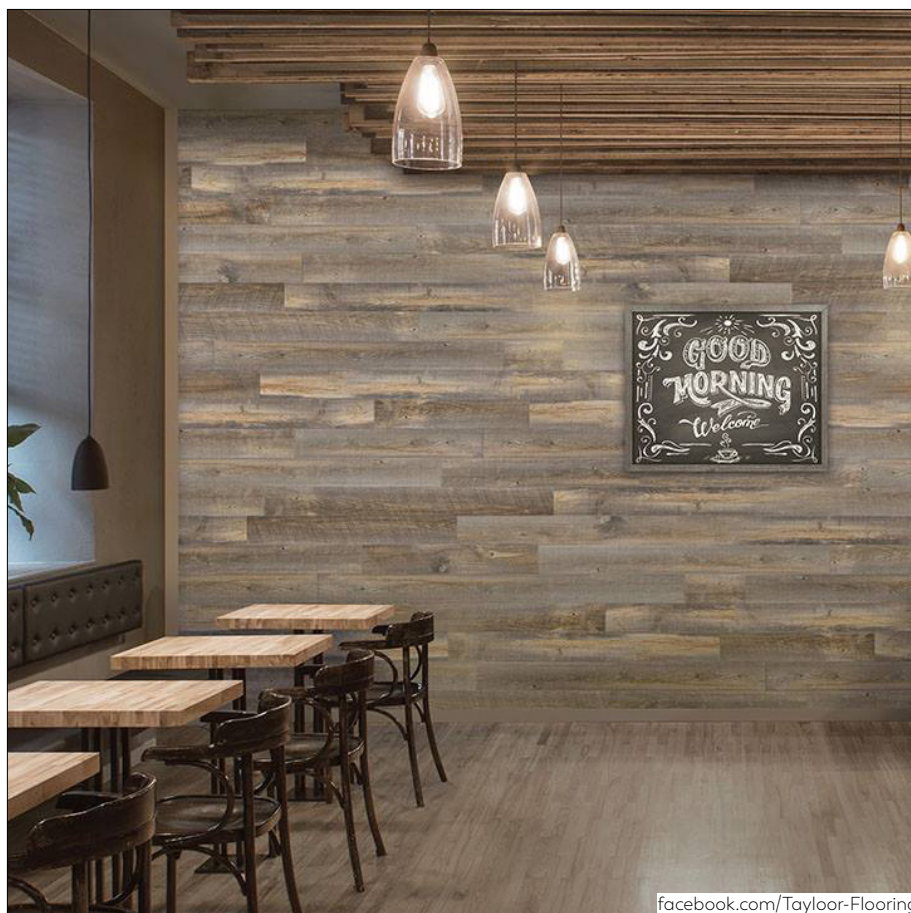
“Since restrictions have been lifted, I am pleased to say we are beginning to see many familiar faces again and seeing an increase in our booking and membership sales,” says Panagiotakos.

As a result, **Many Hats** has implemented the necessary safety measures to counteract these concerns. The coworking space has safety-guideline signs posted, antibacterial wipes and sprays handy and made rearrangements to provide more distance between members.

“I’m optimistic that we will continue to see a steady demand for coworking spaces,” says Panagiotakos. “The pandemic reinforced how essential the division between work and home life is and how important virtual resources are when tangible ones are scarce.” ■



Taylor Flooring expanding its products and services



facebook.com/Taylor-Flooring

Adding more offerings to clients to ensure future competitiveness

By Joey Fitzpatrick

For almost three decades, the Taylor Flooring name has been synonymous with quality flooring products in Nova Scotia. Now the company is taking that same commitment to quality and customer service into other facets of home improvement.

“We’re moving towards one-stop shopping,” explains Patrick Wood, Sales Manager with Taylor Flooring. “Customers will be able to come in and get most of their renovation shopping and installation done in one place.”

Taylor Flooring is introducing kitchen cabinetry, lighting, customized stairs and millwork at its retail locations. The company has experienced a great deal of growth in recent years, launching its own millwork division, creating its own lighting division and purchasing the Ontario kitchen and cabinet company, AyA Kitchens.

“We don’t want to be a big-box store,” Wood points out. “We still want to be

“We don’t want to be a big-box store. We still want to be specialized, with a focus on customer experience.”

— Patrick Wood,
Sales Manager at Taylor Flooring.

specialized, with a focus on customer experience.”

There will be specialized personnel on hand to work with clients to make sure their needs are met, he adds.

“Our people will have the specific knowledge to be able to go deeper into those projects, and make sure our clients are getting the right products.”

In a rapidly changing marketplace, Taylor Flooring is making the decision to add more offerings to clients to ensure future competitiveness.

“We realized we had to continue to evolve,” Wood says. “We want to be able to provide more services to our clients, and this is the way to do that.”

Taylor Flooring was launched in 1993 by entrepreneur Robert Taylor, and the company’s mandate from the beginning was to supply and install quality flooring finishes to both the residential

and commercial market. In 2009, the company amalgamated with Creative Flooring.

“The advantages of amalgamation include larger warehouse space and the buying power of a larger company,” says Wood. “But it’s still run independently. The brand is very well known, and we have a great client base.”

Taylor Flooring has retail outlets in Dartmouth, Halifax, Bridgewater and Sydney, along with a 120,000 sq. ft. warehouse on Thornhill Drive in Burnside Industrial Park.

New products are constantly being introduced into the flooring market, and one of the most popular trends right now is luxury vinyl planks.

“It started about 10 years ago, but the imagery has really improved and the quality and durability are top-notch,” Wood says.

Luxury vinyl plank flooring is designed for high performance in active households. Featuring the beautiful, natural look of hardwood, luxury vinyl plank flooring provides 100 percent waterproof protection against spills and stains. The product is also resistant to scratches, scuffs and dents.

Its waterproof features make it an ideal option for bathrooms, kitchens and basements, and also provide peace of mind against flooding, weather-related events and all of the other unpredictable moments in life.

Carpet

Carpet still provides a huge comfort factor, as the feeling of sinking your feet into a soft pile remains popular with consumers of all ages.

“For kids’ rooms and rec rooms, people still like to have something soft and warm on the floor,” Wood says. “Sometimes people will do their entire house in hardwood, and then later they decide they want area rugs for most of the rooms.”

Ultimately the decision about which soft carpet is best for your home comes down to a balance of softness versus durability, clean-ability and budget.



The brand is very well known, and we have a great client base.”

— Patrick Wood, Sales Manager at Taylor Flooring.

Tile

Homeowners appreciate the value of a special, customized room — and tile flooring offers endless possibilities to achieve that unique finish.

Tile manufacturers have responded to the demand for coordinated tile options, creating collections with various sizes of field tile, mosaics and edging tile that can be combined in remarkable ways. Collections can be mixed and matched for an even more customized look. Combining a stone collection with a textile collection, for example, can introduce additional colour and texture to a project.

Wood

Wood floors add warm, rustic charm and natural beauty wherever they are installed. There are many options on the market, and consumers should understand the differing features of solid hardwood and engineered hardwood.

Both are made from 100 percent real wood, and both deliver a beautiful visual impact. There are differences, however, in construction, stability, installation and cost.

Solid hardwood planks are created from a single, thick piece of solid wood. It is inherently durable, but must be permanently nailed or glued to the subfloor. Engineered floors can have greater dimensional stability in extreme temperatures, which provides slightly more resistance to buckling and rippling.

Laminate

There have never been more styles of

laminate available than there are right now. Homeowners can opt for a vintage look with a textured plank, or for the sleek modernism of smooth laminate. It’s easy to install, affordable, strong, durable and easy to clean. In fact, laminate is expanding beyond the floors of the home, and is becoming a popular feature on walls.

“If you have a busy house with kids and animals, then laminate might be the best product for you,” Wood says. “It’s going to look new for a longer period, and you will get more life out of it.”

Whether in its traditional flooring products or its expanded line of services, customers can expect specialized knowledge and commitment to customer service at Taylor Flooring.

“This is how we differentiate ourselves from the larger stores,” Wood says. “When you come here, you’re going to get our expertise.”

Community involvement has been part of Taylor Flooring’s mission since the company was launched. Every year the company and its employees take part in the Ride for Cancer powered by BMO Bank of Montreal — Atlantic Canada’s largest cycling fundraising event, raising funds to transform cancer care in our region. Each year, Taylor Flooring matches the donations raised by participating employees.

“We also support the Epilepsy Society and other groups,” Wood says. “We will look at every request that comes in. We’re always looking for more ways to get involved with the community.” ■

Navigating COVID-19 as a nonprofit

How non-profits can maintain their mission in the wake of COVID-19



KRISTEN BINNS
COMMUNICATIONS
ASSISTANT,
THE LUNG ASSOCIATION
OF NOVA SCOTIA

Non-profit organizations may be seeing a slow return to normal operations, but the services that nonprofits provide are now more important than ever. Non-profit organizations need to be adaptive in the way they serve clients, using new ideas and strategies to deliver programming and services to those that need them most.

At the Lung Association of Nova Scotia, our vital role to help Nova Scotians who are most at risk of COVID-19 drove us to be innovative and open-minded in our approach to supporting those who need us. The following tactics have helped us maintain strength and presence as a nonprofit throughout this pandemic:

Continue to communicate

Transparency is a crucial first step to finding success for nonprofits during this pandemic. There is enough uncertainty and there is no reason to create more. Keep open lines of communication with your board members, employees, volunteers, donors and the people you serve. Even if your organization

“At the Lung Association of Nova Scotia, our vital role to help Nova Scotians who are most at risk of COVID-19 drove us to be innovative and open-minded in our approach to supporting those who need us.”

— **Kristen Binns**, Communications Assistant,
The Lung Association of Nova Scotia.

is unsure about how you will adapt to this new environment, continue to communicate.

If your doors have remained open, or you will be opening at any capacity, share what safety measures you have implemented and why. This communication will allow people to feel safe engaging with your services.

If you can't meet in person, communicate through video when possible. Consider scheduling meetings on a video calling platform such as Zoom or GoTo Meetings. Video calling can also be beneficial for support groups, who are unable to meet due to health conditions and increased vulnerability. Consider supporting these support groups by organizing meetings on their behalf.

Find new lanes for success

Finding ways to adapt programs and services may seem like a daunting task. The lanes you once used to deliver your programming and services may be closed. But not all lanes for action have been closed, and new ones continue to open.

Having an online presence is no longer just a good idea, it is crucial. People are looking for answers online, and they need ways to connect and be informed without leaving their homes. Using social media platforms, blogs or newsletters are just a few ways to communicate with your stakeholders.

Encouraging online donations is now even more integral, as it reduces barriers to giving while also creating cost savings for the organization. While many Canadians are facing economic uncertainty, there are still many others who have the means and the desire to help. Donor outreach can be a great way to let your supporters know how much their contributions mean to your organization, especially during this pandemic.

Running campaigns and events can be a key source of funding, and running programs are key to achieving missions. These operations will likely need to be adapted to this new environment. As you make plans for updating, consider what you can do differently and better with these operations. Can you host an online seminar, or series of seminars? Host a virtual fundraiser? Look for ways to bring your goals into action by finding new lanes instead of accepting dead ends.

Listen

A final way we have been able to adapt while dealing with the impacts of this virus includes keeping the lines of communication open with those we serve. Ask your community and those who are involved with your organization what support you can provide them right now. You may be able to guide them to resources you already have available, or they might inspire you with new ideas.

Young talent helps business thrive during COVID-19

Consider hiring recent graduates when looking for new employees



MARGARET SCHWARTZ
STRATEGIC YOUTH
INITIATIVES OUTREACH
COORDINATOR,
DEPARTMENT OF
LABOUR AND ADVANCED
EDUCATION

As Nova Scotia's economy starts to open up, businesses large and small, are figuring out how they're going to operate in a world impacted by COVID-19.

Some are rebuilding their workforce after being forced to lay off staff, and many are adapting to new ways of reaching clients and delivering services.

Halifax-based organization, Strongest Families Institute (SFI), provides evidence-based mental health services to children and families everywhere, and are tapping into new skillsets as remote work and building connections become more important than ever.

"Our team has quickly adapted our

offerings so we can provide more flexible mental health supports to families in need during the pandemic," says Dr. Patricia Lingley-Pottie, CEO and President of SFI. "And much of this revolutionary work is championed by the young talent we hire."

SFI has created about 80 jobs in the last seven years, a number of them filled by recent grads.

"Our grads are contributing to cutting-edge work," says Dr. Pottie. "Including the development of digital avatars and virtual coaching applications that can communicate skill reminders to clients. These grads come to us with strong programming and communication skills that put us on the leading edge of innovation."

Due to the demand of their services, SFI recently hired four more graduates, which was made easier with the Graduate to Opportunity (GTO) program. GTO 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.

GTO is available to small businesses, start-ups and non-profit organizations. Complete applications are typically approved within three to five days.

"We are a very young organization and GTO has helped us grow our workforce, stay on budget and tap into young talent," says Dr. Pottie. "And as a result, the contributions of our grads play a key factor in our continued growth."

Mental Health Coach and recent King's College graduate, Breanne Wilson, is quickly customizing her

coaching arrangements with families who are facing more stressors than ever before.

"Some of the parents I support may have lost a close friend or family member. Others are struggling with the loss of employment," says Wilson.

"This makes it so important that we tailor our services to meet their current needs. As a young team we are comfortable adapting to change and offering new ideas to help solve difficult problems."

SFI recently partnered with Bell Lets Talk to take their virtual programming to the living rooms of those in rural communities as far as the North West Territories. A national contract with Military Family Services Ottawa allows SFI to support military and veteran families across Canada as well as those posted internationally.

"Our hires are reaching those in need across the world," says Dr. Pottie. "As an employer we see the value in succession planning and the competitive opportunities that come with hiring young minds out of school. For us, GTO helped make this possible."

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

To date, more than 600 organizations like Strongest Families Institute have hired more than 1,000 recent graduates across Nova Scotia using GTO funding.

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

Free tools and rapid best practices

To help you navigate challenges of transitioning online



TISHA PARKER KEMP
FOUNDER AND PRINCIPAL,
SHIFTED ACADEMY INC.

COVID-19 has jarred our way of life and created a fork in the road for business. Have you landed on a well-paved path with continuity plans or hit speedbumps and spike strips?

Roadblocks, although disruptive, can push us to innovate. Among many challenges, bricks and mortar businesses have had to adapt to virtual ways of operating, selling products and services, and connecting with clients.

Perhaps you've been forced to move your training programs online, or you're considering webinars or online courses as a way of marketing or adding a new revenue stream.

If you are navigating these waters, you might be experiencing the same challenges as our clients - they know their stuff. They just don't have the time or mindshare to sort through it all.

Like you, they are smart, driven and could quite likely have figured out their next step. But it got overwhelming.

Some spent hours trying to bring order to the chaos, with little progress. Others

struggled with where to start and what to do next.

Being thrust into virtual learning can be bewildering at the best of times, let alone during a global pandemic.

Many of us have overloaded cognitive resources. We're sharing workspaces with play areas, homeschooling and pets.

There's technology, platforms, methodology, format, adult learning principles, content, budget, timelines, scope and myriad other elements for teaching online.

You have no budget and need to move swiftly into the online learning space? Leverage these free tools and a few best practices for rapid deployment.

Tools:

- **Live Sessions:** Use Webex; similar to Zoom, it's free and you can record up to 50-minute sessions and up to 100 participants.
- **File Sharing:** Leverage Google Drive to share links to training content (handouts, guidebooks and videos).
- **Payments:** Put course contents behind a 'pay' wall; accept payments on your website and email links to content afterwards.
- **Screen Recording:** Use Loom to record your monitor as you complete an online form or walk through processes.

Best Practices for Live Online Learning Events:

- **Internet:** Make use you have a hard-line connection. If you must use Wi-Fi, reduce the active gamers and Netflix streamers sharing your connection to optimize the quality of your video/audio.
- **Confidentiality:** Remove bulletin boards or white boards from your background. Close applications such as calendar and email to eliminate

pop-up notifications, reducing the risk of revealing private information during screen sharing.

- **Webcams:** Position at eye level or above and two feet away. If necessary, raise your laptop or purchase an external webcam for best positioning.

And to create a sense of eye-contact, look at or near your webcam. Place a sticky note with your agenda items just below the webcam to keep you on track, rather than looking down at notes.

- **Lighting:** Ensure a source of light is in front of you - sit facing a window or a lamp with the shade removed.

- **Timing:** Arrive early to ensure your setup is functioning properly and to welcome participants. Start and end on time. Take a few moments at the beginning to orient people with the online meeting functions.

- **Ask for help:** A moderator can manage your technology, monitor the chat box and moderate questions from the audience.

Does the idea of designing, building, and launching an online course - live or on demand - induce both excitement and perplexity?

Sure, you can pay for enterprise-wide learning management systems and e-learning software. But with a little creativity and a know-how attitude, your online learning toolkit may already be full.

Start small, but start. Roadblock? Innovate.

Introducing Kent Roberts

From civic and private sectors to advocate for Chamber members as VP of Policy

by Mina Atia



When Nancy Conrad retired from her role after 25 years of incredible service, the Halifax Chamber welcomed its new vice president of policy, Kent Roberts.

After a five-year stint at the Department of Business with the Government of Nova Scotia, Roberts transitioned from the civil service to the not-for-profit sector.

“This opportunity with the Halifax Chamber allows me to put my private sector and civil service experience to use, helping Halifax businesses and the province thrive and succeed,” says Roberts.

“It allows me to reconnect directly with business stakeholders while using my government experience and contacts to provide access, insight and value to our members.”

“And of course this is a great opportunity to work with a small team of very talented people at the Chamber that are doing great work,” he says.

Born in Nova Scotia but raised in

Newfoundland, Roberts received a Bachelor of Commerce from Memorial University and then spent four years serving as an Artillery Officer with the Canadian Armed Forces.

After leaving the Armed Forces, he returned to Newfoundland and started his career in the consumer-packaged goods industry as a salesperson with Quaker Oats.

This new career path took him on many journeys – from managing the Atlantic Canadian Sales team in Halifax, to a marketing role in Peterborough, ON, a regional sales manager role at Frito Lay, to a senior marketing role in Toronto and then back to Atlantic Canada as vice president of sales and distribution for Farmers Dairy and finally as Managing Director at the Department of Business with the NS Government.

Roberts has been married for 28 years to his wife Monique and has two children, Cameron and Sarah. Roberts and his wife recently downsized by renovating a 180-year old North End house, which was featured in a 2016

The Coast **article** and they thoroughly enjoy the life style this eclectic neighbourhood provides.

When asked what his greatest accomplishments were, Roberts had this to say: “I am so proud of my wife and children and their accomplishments, so that is definitely number one. Certainly I’m also proud to have served my country, and I treasure that experience and the friends I made there and still have.”

“My volunteer work over the years – culminating as President of the Grocery Foundation of Atlantic Canada – having raised over six million dollars for local children’s hospitals in Atlantic Canada. I have also always enjoyed building and leading sales teams that overachieved their targets and personal goals,” he adds.

Roberts has several recently successful projects under his belt of professional experiences.

Leading the team that managed the Rural Internet for Nova Scotia project, they were able to secure over \$190 million from government to improve internet service in rural N.S. Similarly leading the multidisciplinary team that initiated and completed the now world recognized COVE (Center for Oceans Ventures and Entrepreneurship) project in Dartmouth was a wonderful legacy moment. Roberts also led the development of the first ever Social Enterprise strategy for N.S. and helped secure the 2021 Social Enterprise World Forum for Halifax.

As the provincial lead on the Federal/Provincial Working Group on Social Finance and Innovation, Roberts was able to support and help launch a \$750-million national fund in 2019.

Roberts has had quite the noteworthy career so far, and he’s just getting started.

An avid golfer, Roberts has been to Scotland three out of the past four years to play some of the world's iconic courses and certainly speaks of the similarities of the warm people of Scotland and of his native Nova Scotia. But par for the course, golfing isn't the only skill he brings to the Halifax Chamber.

With his broad background in private and public sectors, Roberts accumulated a wealth of knowledge and skills in sales, marketing, distribution and senior management.

He has a deep understanding of business perspective, strategy and execution. Not only is he able to build strong relationships with stakeholders, but he can also navigate the inner workings of policy, program implementation and corporate bodies thanks to his years of working with and in the government.

"Working for the economic development department allowed me to have a hands-on role in developing the economic policy for the province, while building the stakeholder engagement needed to implement the programs generated by policy," he says.

Joining the Halifax Chamber team marks Robert's inauguration into the not-for-profit sector and he views that shift as the next evolution in his career and a real opportunity to make a difference with the Chambers members and the community as a whole.

"Simply put, the private sector is shareholder focused, the government is citizen focused and the not-for-profit sector is client focused," says Roberts.

"The not-for-profit sector is managed by the most selfless group of people working to achieve meaningful change for others, however, they are often burdened with insufficient funding and support."

"Even though society in general would be in major trouble without the work they do," he says.

Roberts believes each sector has been



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"I hope I can add value to our members by advocating their needs to the various levels of government locally, provincially and nationally." — **Kent Roberts,**

Vice President of Policy, Halifax Chamber of Commerce.

rewarding for him in broadening his knowledge, experience and appreciation. By bringing his extensive repertoire of skills and experiences, he's more than capable of going to great lengths for Chamber members.

"I hope I can add value to our members by advocating their needs to the various levels of government locally, provincially and nationally," he says. "To enable meaningful change in policy and programs that directly benefit our members and the general business community across the province."

Roberts is ready to tackle on new tasks with the Chamber and to deliver on his personally-cherished value of giving back.

He sees a shift happening in the traditional view of economic, business and personal success. A shift that is happening world wide where success is measured not just in shareholder value, bottom line or GDP but also in the overall social wellbeing of employees and the population.

"There has never been a more important or opportune time to look at inclusive economic growth and social wellbeing as a baseline for businesses and economies to measure their long term success," says Roberts.

From a leadership perspective, Roberts urges managers to hire the best and brightest at all times, and if possible, make sure they are even more capable than you "The best team raises all boats, including your own," he says.

His words of advice to young professionals, embarking on their new careers, "The best success is not individual; it comes from a team succeeding. Individual success will follow," says Roberts.

"And always manage your own career, ultimately no one will do it for you. Find your passion, work hard and ask for the opportunities, training and/or mentoring that will see you progress in your career."

Reach out to kent@halifaxchamber.ca to talk policy, economic development and government relations.

Looking back on my year as Chair

Encouraging results with more work to be done



MARGARET CHAPMAN
COO & PARTNER
NARRATIVE RESEARCH

As I wrap up my year as Chair of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce board, I'm sitting in my home office during the age of the COVID-19 pandemic. I would've never guessed we'd be working remotely, meeting as a board via Zoom and having such immeasurable changes to our lives and economy.

Throughout the last months, I've been consistently impressed with the flexibility of people to adapt to these new conditions. In this environment, the Chamber has undertaken some integral advocacy work, spearheading the Nova Scotia Business Labour Economic Coalition (NSBLEC).

The Chamber is also providing immediate access to policy makers as programs and supports are developed, along with countless other resources made available to members.

In a recent NSBLEC group meeting, Minister Melanie Joly said "Chambers have never been more important than they are today," and in my year as Chair, I have witnessed this being true.

As Chair, I had the privilege to be involved in so many amazing events and initiatives. I was part of the new Trade Accelerator Program aimed at helping businesses to grow through export. I was supporting local businesses in Small Business Week and at a huge number of events – large and small – connecting members to speakers and information that will help this city grow and prosper.

The Chamber's diversity and inclusion initiatives is one area I've been very proud to be involved in. It included co-hosting many breakfast meetings to discuss this topic, along with our new board member, Ann Divine.

As a diverse group, we discussed ways to ensure the organization is more inclusive of the variety of communities in Halifax, and how we can better demonstrate diversity of underrepresented groups in our events and policies.

As a Chamber, we have undertaken initiatives about accessibility, working on ways to ensure working-age adults with a disability are able to find jobs with businesses hungry for labour.

I will continue to advocate for diversity and ensure we have more representation on boards and in leadership, including African Nova Scotians, women, Indigenous people, immigrants and people with disabilities.

Outside of the current situation, it was a big year for advocacy as well. The Halifax Chamber and the Canadian Global Cities Council were advocating for better conditions for Canadian businesses ahead of the 2019 federal election. The groups released playbooks detailing the necessary changes to our largest industries to increase our GDP.

One of my other main goals as Chair of the Board was to find new ways to engage our diverse membership. I am happy to report, through partnerships and recruitment efforts, it's been a successful year.

Under this board's leadership, focusing on membership and new initiatives, we've seen measurable successes at the Halifax Chamber. Our Member Health Index reports high retention rates, more new members, sold-out events (at least until March), lots of interest in the task forces and higher than ever engagement in our advocacy efforts, events and membership.

These are encouraging results, and it's heartening to know our members are seeing the value in their Chamber. But we know there's more work to be done to ensure Halifax grows and prospers.

It's been an honour and pleasure to serve the members of the Halifax Chamber. Thank you to the Board and Patrick for their leadership, the staff for their hard work, and my colleagues and partner for their support over my year as Chair.

Under Gavin Macdonald's leadership in the coming year, I look forward to seeing how the Chamber's vital work continues. The membership is in great hands.

**From the Halifax Chamber of Commerce team
and our members:**

THANK YOU.

Our members have stepped up during this unprecedented time to share their insights, knowledge and expertise to support businesses through COVID-19. We have hosted free webinars with experts in cybersecurity, labour law, business planning, finances, mental health and many more. Thank you to the following organizations and individuals for reaching out to keep the business community informed:



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