

BUSINESS VOICE

'S BUSINESS MAGAZINE



A GLOBAL MINDSET

ISANS, employers agree hiring newcomers helps both immigrants and business

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WITH A PURPOSE

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Reductions could help small businesses grow **Pg 26**

INCREASING ABILITIES

Removing barriers in the workplace **Pg 30**



ARTHUR RECALDE
NSCC GRADUATE
DEV OPS SYSTEM ADMINISTRATOR
QRA CORP

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE LEADERS OF TOMORROW

The informal office atmosphere isn't the only thing that has young professionals racing to work at QRA corp. The small Halifax firm designs software to help clients verify plans in early stages of engineering projects. The brainy team of quantum physicists, software engineers and mathematicians who work there love the challenge of complex systems.

Much of QRA's talent are recent grads who are applying their education in a full-time job for the first time. And they're driving the company's growth.

"I was worried about getting a job after graduation," says Arthur Recalde, an international student from Brazil, who graduated from NSCC. "But then I got hired here. They even paid me for my 5-week work placement, which was not required of them. Graduating, I thought I would be fixing printers, but I started off operating systems as a DevOps system administrator right off the bat."

Hiring Arthur fresh from college was made easier thanks to Graduate to Opportunity (GTO), a provincial funding program. GTO provides salary incentives to small businesses, start-ups, social enterprises, and non-profits who commit to hiring a recent post-secondary graduate. Employers receive 25% of the grad's first year (35% if the grad is diverse) and 12.5% of the grad's second-year salary.

"Having the follow-through from the government, with the Graduate to Opportunity Program, gives us a way to keep these co-op students here in Nova Scotia after graduation," says Jordan Kyriakidis, QRA Co-founder and CEO. "This is key to the growth of our industry, and both these programs — GTO and the Co-op Incentive — are incredibly important for retaining youth."

Attracting and retaining youth is important to the future of the workforce in Nova Scotia.

"At some point there will be a labour gap that needs to be filled," says Arthur. "How can businesses better prepare for that? If you wait, you will be behind in the competition to hire the best grads."

Hiring youth is an investment in the future. It can be incremental — start with hiring co-op students, and then consider hiring them after graduation."

Stephen Foster recently completed his PhD in physics in Toronto, but was eager to come back home to Nova Scotia and join QRA as a software engineer.

"I was hugely relieved to get this job," says Stephen. "I moved back to Halifax, and I really wanted to stay here — that was my goal all along. If I didn't get a job, I might have had to move somewhere else. I feel very lucky. QRA is very good at onboarding and welcoming young people with a progressive, start-up mentality that values work-life balance."

Like Stephen, Arthur sees a future and a life in Nova Scotia. "In Nova Scotia, there are more jobs, better pay, and it is safer than Brazil — where I would still be living with my mom. Coming here I thought 'why don't I go to Toronto or Vancouver? It seems like everyone is moving there'...but Nova Scotia has magic in the air. I don't know what it is, but I like it."

"Per Capita, the talent of Nova Scotia youth — especially in software and technology — is on par with any other place in the world, literally any other place in the world," says Jordan. "But because the youth population is so small here, we really need to retain as much of our future brain trust as we can. As a small company with global reach and ambition, the youth we hire and retain today will be our leaders of tomorrow. We are so fortunate to be benefitting from that every day."

GTO has helped more than 800 graduates land good jobs in their fields in Nova Scotia, and for the first time in 32 years, we are seeing more youth enter the province than leave. Employers like QRA are contributing to this trend, and helping themselves, by providing career opportunities to post-secondary graduates.

**NOVA SCOTIA YOUTH
ARE ON PAR WITH ANY IN
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COMPANY WITH GLOBAL
REACH, WE BENEFIT FROM
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EVERYDAY.**

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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Nothing feels better than waking up in the morning and wanting to go to work."

— John Robertson, CEO, HomeEXCEPT

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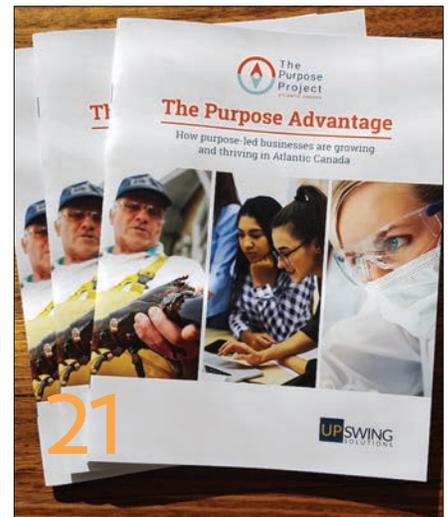
A GLOBAL MINDSET

ISANS, employers agree hiring newcomers helps both immigrants and business

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CHAMBER EVENTS

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

SAVE THE DATE:

**LUNCHEON:
DEPUTY GOVERNOR,
BANK OF CANADA**
SEPTEMBER 5

BUSINESS AFTER HOURS
LOCATION: Four Points by Sheraton
SEPTEMBER

**LUNCHEON:
VIBRANT COMMUNITY**
SEPTEMBER 26

SMALL BUSINESS WEEK
OCTOBER 21 - 25

**LUNCHEON:
MAYOR SAVAGE**
NOVEMBER

FALL DINNER
NOVEMBER 14

**LUNCHEON:
PERRIN BEATTY**
NOVEMBER 21

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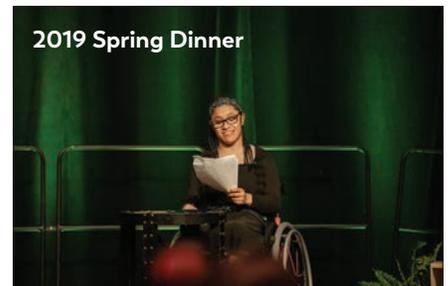
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Preparing for the polls

The Chamber plans to help engage voters in the upcoming election

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PATRICK SULLIVAN
PRESIDENT & CEO

It's summertime in Canada and Canadians and Canadian politicians are preparing for the federal election coming early in the fall. We live in a democracy and in an effort to maintain this democracy, we as citizens need to be engaged and informed as we head to the polls.

At the Chamber we believe in the power of democracy. We know the

peoples' voice should be heard regularly, and should influence our city and help its thriving business community.

We're looking forward to the next few months of encouraging and supporting our members in order to boost voter turnout in our region. We are committed to helping our members succeed and participate by encouraging them to use their voice.

We saw an increase in voter turnout in 2015, especially amongst youth ages 18 to 24 who came out to vote in numbers 20 per cent higher than the previous election in 2011. We were thrilled to see such a substantial increase and believe this is essential in order to ensure that our leaders recognize how important it is to provide a vision to all constituents.

We need to ride this momentum and show even more young people the value and importance of their vote.

Many have speculated the reasons behind the low youth voter turnout,

including a lack of trust in the system, information and desire. We're lucky at the Chamber to boast many student members. They're active in their community and engaged on political issues. They want to improve the current business and social climate, partly through their Chamber membership. This dramatic increase in voter turnout is in part thanks to our population of driven youth finding their voice and using it.

We are confident that with strong engagement from all Canadians during this 2019 election, the result will be one that rises from the voice of the people. The resulting government will be one chosen on the merit of their platforms, and the country will move forward, continuing to grow, prosper and compete on a global scale.

Keep an eye out for the Chamber's social media campaign we're launching this summer in preparation for the election! #VoteYourConcernsHFX ■

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2019 TOP 50 CEO WINNERS

We would like to extend our congratulations to the 2019 Top 50 CEO winners, including many of our own members!

Atlantic Business Magazine honours Atlantic Canadian excellence in corporate leadership. The Top 50 CEO winners are chosen in recognition of their inspiring success, and the magazine hopes to encourage other companies and CEOs to achieve their business goals as well.

Here are the Halifax Chamber of Commerce members who were recognized this year for their excellence in corporate leadership:

Dov Bercovici, President & CEO,
Discovery Centre
Halifax, NS

Lydia Bugden, CEO & Managing
Partner, Stewart McKelvey
Halifax, NS

Don Bureaux, *FIVE-TIME WINNER*
Inducted into the Top 50 CEO Hall of Fame
President & CEO,
Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC)
Halifax, NS

Joyce Carter, President & CEO,
Halifax International Airport Authority
Halifax, NS

Jennifer Gillivan, *FIVE-TIME WINNER*
Inducted into the Top 50 CEO Hall of Fame
President & CEO, IWK Foundation
Halifax, NS

Tom Hickey, *FIVE-TIME WINNER*
Inducted into the Top 50 CEO Hall of Fame
CEO, Atlantic Road Construction &
Paving Ltd.
Eastern Passage, NS

Rod Kerr, President & CEO,
Kerr Group
Dartmouth, NS

Roger King, President,
Supplement King Canada
Halifax, NS

Ashwin Kutty, President & CEO,
WeUsThem Inc.
Halifax, NS

Michael Leonard, President & CEO,
Atlantic Central/League Savings and
Mortgage Company
Halifax, NS

Stephen MacDonald, CEO,
EfficiencyOne
Dartmouth, NS

Allan Macintosh, *FIVE-TIME WINNER*
Inducted into the Top 50 CEO Hall of Fame
President, Marco Group
Dartmouth, NS

Dallas Mercer, President & CEO,
Dallas Mercer Consulting Inc.
Mount Pearl, NL

Brent Scrimshaw, *FIVE-TIME WINNER*
Inducted into the Top 50 CEO Hall of Fame
President & CEO,
Atlantic Lottery Corporation (ALC)
Moncton, NB

Ken Shea, President & CEO,
East Coast Credit Union
Antigonish, NS

We would also like to acknowledge
another Chamber Member:

Dan Merzetti, President & CEO,
DSM Telecommunications.

Dan is a 2017 Top 50 CEO Hall of Fame
Inductee and he donated his time to
select this year's honourees.

NEW & NOTED

We welcome our new Chamber members

100 SEEDS ATLANTIC

100 Seeds Atlantic is a non-profit organization that fosters youth entrepreneurship in Atlantic Canada. One of their major initiatives is “100 Entrepreneurs Planting Seeds”, a pitch competition for ages 16 to 24. This annual event brings business leaders and young entrepreneurs together as 100 senior entrepreneurs contribute \$100 each to make a \$10,000 investment for the winning pitch.

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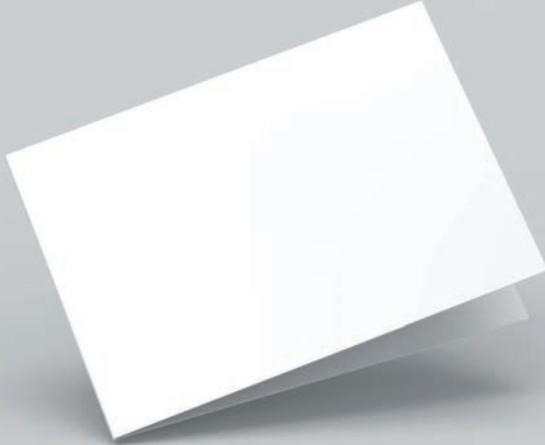
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STUDENT MEMBER

Avinash Pillay – Game Development, NSCC

Halifax, NS
avinash.pillay@hotmail.com

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.



WHITE POINT FALL EXECUTIVE MEETING PACKAGE from **\$219**

Before you flip flop off, think fall meetings!

Hang on a minute, Chamber members. Before you kick off your business shoes, think about re-grouping – with gusto – come September. Post Labour Day is when things fall back in order here at the beach, but maybe that's why we call it 'fall'. Contact Anne and get started on an autumn gathering by the sea. The weather is absolutely perfect for golf, surfing lessons, mussel bakes, and lobster s'mores by the bonfire. The mood will be post-school-bell bliss. Think sunrise yoga, Lakeside picnics, and loving the possibilities that come with planning ahead. Happy summer! anne@whitepoint.com



CALL ANNE: 902.423.8887 WHITEPOINT.COM

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

How our members are growing Halifax



NIMBUS LAUNCHES PODCAST

Nimbus Publishing has created an exciting new podcast for book lovers. “Book Me!” with Costas Halavrezos focuses on entertaining and illuminating interviews with the Atlantic Canadians who create the books published by Nimbus Publishing and Vagrant Press. “The podcast format allows us to really delve into the world of the authors, illustrators and photographers behind the books people love to read,” says former CBC Maritime Noon host Halavrezos. “I think listeners will enjoy spending time with these interesting, creative people.” Check it out at www.bookmepodcast.ca



George Inglis Photography

INAUGURAL MOTHER'S DAY CELEBRATION

Dress for Success Halifax is thrilled to announce the success of their sold-out inaugural Mother's Day celebration event on Mother's Day at The Music Room. Host and international performer, Geordie Brown and award-winning artist, Holly Carr were joined on the stage by a variety of young artists and local talent

who sang, danced and played the fiddle and guitar. “There was something for everyone,” says Executive Director, Brenda Saunders/Todd, “and it was a fantastic way to honor all the mothers we serve at Dress for Success each week. It was a true celebration for all!”

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A MOORE FAMILY CELEBRATION

Last Thursday's **22nd Annual Peter Wilson Dinner** was a great success thanks to the family of Tim Moore, the Wilson family and a host of sponsors and supporters for our silent auction. Over 500 dinner guests gathered to hear Tim, his sons Matthew and Chris and daughter-in-law Lizzie share their unique family business journey. There were

many moments of laughter as Tim shared some memorable times growing several of his businesses and his next generation had much to say about working alongside Tim. All agreed that core to their family and business is Tim's wife, Bernadine. We were so honoured to have the Moore's support and thank them for their generosity and kindness.



SLOW DOWN! FOR DISCOVERY CENTRE'S NEW EXHIBIT

Sometimes being slow, staying still and hiding away is the best way to survive and thrive in the wild. A new live featured exhibition at the **Discovery Centre** brings animals with fascinating, counter-intuitive adaptations such as sloths, iguanas, chameleons and hedgehogs to offer an educational experience like no other. Produced by Little Ray's Nature Centres in collaboration with the Canadian Museum of Nature,

"Survival of the Slowest" arrives in Halifax for its premier tour. "We are super excited to have 'Survival of the Slowest' making its first stop on the east coast of North America at the Discovery Centre," says Paul Goulet, founder of Little Ray's Nature Centres. "This truly world-class touring exhibit will amaze visitors with gorgeous exhibits and amazing interactive educational programming for all ages."



HALIFAX PARTNERSHIP ANNOUNCES WENDY LUTHER AS PRESIDENT & CEO

The **Halifax Partnership's** Board of Directors is excited to announce that Wendy Luther is joining us as our new President and Chief Executive Officer. Wendy brings 17 years of visionary leadership to the role, having pioneered innovative programs at EduNova where she served as President and CEO for six years, and at Nova Scotia Business Inc. where she represented our city and province on the world stage. We are confident that Wendy will help Halifax be all it can be as we continue working towards the ambitious vision of the Economic Growth Plan to grow Halifax's population to 550,000 and GDP to \$30 billion by the year 2031. The Partnership can only succeed when Halifax does and we know that Wendy will ensure our great city is put front and centre.

DAVIS PIER CONSULTING CELEBRATES 5 YEARS

Davis Pier is pleased to celebrate five years in business with the opening of a new Toronto office and the launch of Pier Labs, their new social innovation outpost. Davis Pier was established in 2014 by Mike Davis and Darryl Pierrynowski. Over the last five years, they have recognized a gap in consulting for more evidence-based policy development and innovation for government clients. In recent years, the driving philosophy behind their work is that government services whether health care, education or social programs, should first be tested before being rolled out on a broader level. It is this principle that has fueled the company's growth.



MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION OF NOVA SCOTIA WELCOMES NEW STAFF MEMBER

The **Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia** is proud to welcome Jill Chappell to the team as Marketing and Communications Lead. Chappell joins the charity after several years running her own business, Chappell Media, providing communications and content creation for clients including Devour! The Food Film Fest, Grape Escapes Nova Scotia Wine Tours and The Syrup Factory. Prior to working as an entrepreneur, Jill was the Co-Ancor of Global News at 6 p.m. and Host of The Morning News. She is proud to join the Foundation in their efforts to change the way people think about mental illness and addiction.

EFFICIENCYONE RELEASES ANNUAL REPORT

EfficiencyOne, the non-profit operator of the province’s energy efficiency utility, Efficiency Nova Scotia has released its 2018 annual report celebrating an important milestone for Nova Scotia — ten years of investment in efficiency programs. “In that time, we have reduced the province’s electricity use by an impressive 11 per cent,” says Stephen MacDonald, CEO of EfficiencyOne. In 2018 alone, independently evaluated results show that Nova Scotians saved over \$180 million in annual energy costs, and have reduced one million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions — that’s one tonne for every person in the province. “We are also reaching more customers today than ever before, with new support for oil-heated homes and new services for low-income renters and Mi’kmaq communities,” says MacDonald.



CUA & JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT LAUNCH #ADULTING BOOT CAMP

Local banking institution **CUA** has partnered with Junior Achievement of Nova Scotia (JANS) to launch #Adulting, a program providing valuable lessons on money matters and career readiness to young adults. On April 30, CUA and JANS staff along with volunteers delivered the day-long boot camp style

workshop to approximately ten youth from Pathways to Education in Spryfield. The students were provided with helpful information on a variety of topics including credit, budgeting, financing and interview skills. Planning is underway for a second cohort of participants to complete #Adulting later this year.

**DEPUTY GOVERNOR
LAWRENCE SCHEMBRI**
BANK OF CANADA

Thursday, September 5

11:30am - 1:30pm

Kenneth C. Rowe Hall,
Canadian Museum of
Immigration at Pier 21

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**BANK OF CANADA
BANQUE DU CANADA**





HEALTH CARE LEADER RECOGNIZED AS LEBANESE BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR

Robert Zed, entrepreneur, philanthropist and community leader, has been recognized as the 2019 Lebanese Business Person of the Year by the **Lebanese Chamber of Commerce** in Nova Scotia. Robert is currently Chair and CEO of Triangle Strategies, a group of companies providing strategic advisory services to Fortune 500 companies in the health care and hospitality industries. “My advice for success is pretty simple:

the formula is hard work, having fun and making sure to pay it forward,” said Zed. As a former hospital Vice President and Board Member for a variety of health care foundations and associations, his broad pan-Canadian perspective in health care is unmatched. His extensive experience in both strategy and operations has made him a trusted advisor across Canada, often called upon by senior leaders. Congratulations, Robert!



HALIFAX WATER ANNOUNCES NEW GENERAL MANAGER

Following a national search, Halifax Board Chair Darlene Fenton is pleased to announce Cathie O’Toole, BA, MBA, CPA/CGA, ICD.D, as the successful candidate for the position of General Manager at **Halifax Water**. “Ms. O’Toole brings a wealth of experience to her new role. For the last eight years Cathie has served as Halifax Water’s Director of Corporate Services/CFO and held senior roles with the Halifax Municipality,” said Fenton. O’Toole said, “The utility has a proud legacy of providing world class water, waste water and storm water services to our customers. I look forward to continuing that legacy and working to ensure we are on the leading edge of customer service and environmental protection.”



ROD KERR, TOP 50 CEOs IN ATLANTIC CANADA

The **Kerr Group of Companies** is very proud to announce that our President and CEO, Rod Kerr, has been recognized as one of the Top 50 CEOs in Atlantic Canada for 2019. Rod was recognized along with some of his peers for outstanding work in the community, the

industry and company growth in recent years. Congratulations to all the 2019 Top 50 CEO nominees. Congratulations also go out to the team at Frontier Technologies and Northern Business Intelligence for their continued support and dedication.

SIMPLYCAST PARTNERS WITH COMMUNITY SECTOR

SimplyCast has partnered with the Community Sector Council of Nova Scotia (CSCNS) to provide digital engagement technology to non-profit organizations across the province. This partnership will allow non-profit organizations to harness the power of online communication to connect with their audience and stakeholders. “SimplyCast’s software is meant to be flexible and able to suit any organization and use case. As such, the solution we’re providing to CSCNS includes all the applications that we’ve spent almost ten years developing,” said Saeed El-Darahali, President and CEO of SimplyCast. SimplyCast is proud to be able to support non-profit initiatives in Nova Scotia through this partnership.

SONA

SONA LEVELS PLAYING FIELD FOR CANNABIS INDUSTRY WITH BIOME GROW INC.

SONA has been selected by Biome Grow Inc. (Biome) as its merchant service provider in a deal that could represent several hundred million dollars in credit card processing annually. SONA's partnership challenges unfair markups in payment acceptance services faced by the Canadian cannabis industry. Despite the industry becoming quickly established, securing key business services like payment acceptance is an expensive and difficult process. "Regardless of industry, companies deserve transparency and fair rates," says Ryan O'Leary, CEO of SONA. "We were determined to get Biome set up while navigating through the requirements of the sponsoring bank. This process required a great deal of communication and understanding from all parties."



THE MARKETER'S IN-HOUSE PODCAST LAUNCHES

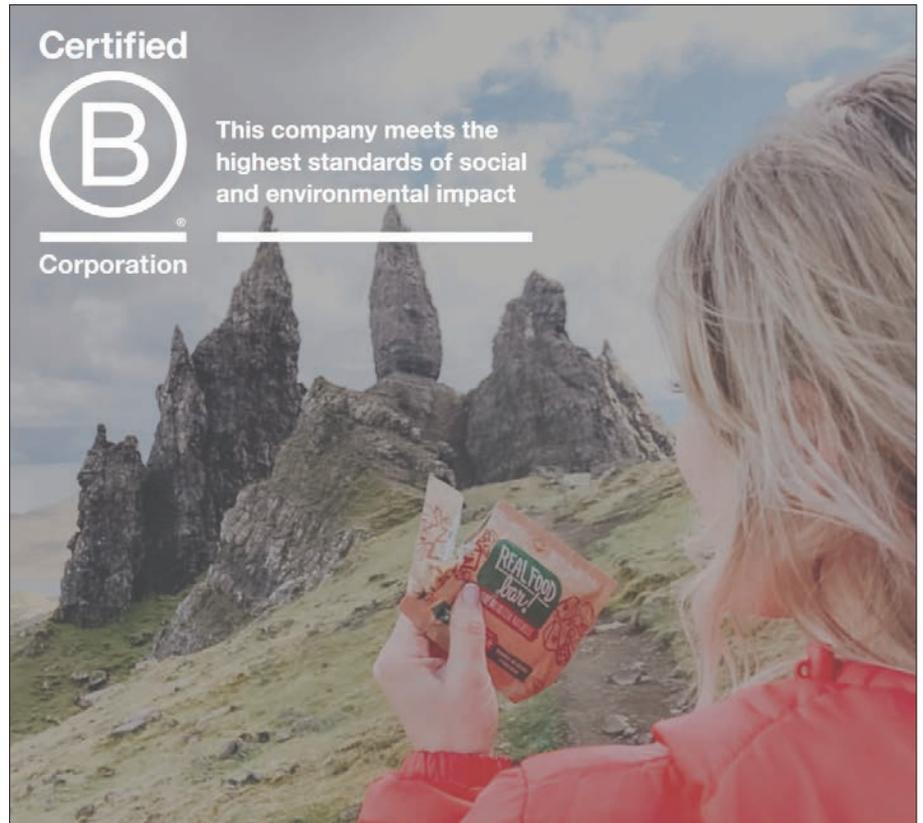
The Family Knife launched their Marketer's In-House podcast, focused on helping business owners, managers, team leads and marketers do more marketing in-house, and make their current in-house marketing even more effective. From tips and tricks for hosting outstanding corporate events to the inside scoop on how to have a more productive relationship with your ad agency, The Marketer's In-House is designed to be your go-to guide for in-house marketing expertise, insight and empowerment. Listen now at www.inhouse.fm

PICKFORD & BLACK OPENS ON HALIFAX WATERFRONT

Murphy Hospitality Group (MHG) from Prince Edward Island is pleased to announce that they have recently renovated and transformed 1869 Upper Water St. in Historic Properties from Gahan House Harbourfront to a brand new restaurant, Pickford & Black Local Seafood & Craft Beer. The restaurant is now open for business and is excited for the busy summer and exciting winter ahead! The restaurant will feature a 135-seat dining room serving the freshest seafood, a large seasonal outdoor patio and many local craft beers on tap. The restaurant will also feature an oyster bar with a variety of local oysters. MHG has hired roughly 80 staff for this new establishment.

STORM INSURANCE TAKES 2ND PLACE IN TOP 10 BROKERAGE AWARDS

Storm Insurance Group (Storm) is thrilled to take second place in the annual "Top 10 Insurance Brokerages in Canada" report released by Insurance Business of Canada (IBC) on April 16, 2019. This marks Storm's second time being recognized as a top 10 Canadian brokerage, having placed fourth on the list in 2017. The IBC Top 10 Insurance Brokerage Award's criteria weighed the metrics from hundreds of brokerages nationwide and took into account areas of business such as revenue growth, revenue per broker, client growth and policy growth. The Storm group of companies prides itself on diversification, specialization and niche programs.



MADE WITH LOCAL ANNOUNCES B CORP CERTIFICATION

Made with Local, Halifax's premier healthy snack-maker recently became a certified B Corp. To become a certified B Corp a company must submit to an independent assessment of its social and environmental performance, accountability and transparency. Made with Local has achieved this certification because of their commitment to

supporting local farmers and their innovative partnerships with social enterprise production facilities, along with their company helping to employ dozens of Nova Scotians living with barriers to the mainstream workforce. You can find their yummy Real Food Bars at Sobeys, Atlantic Superstore, Bulk Barn, and at www.madewithlocal.ca.



**HALIFAX WANDERERS
SELL OUT HOME OPENER**

On May 4, **HFX Wanderers** held their opening match in front of a packed crowd of more than 6,000 fans who roared the team to victory in its inaugural home opener. Attendees flooded the downtown core all day long and were able to watch Halifax win on streaming television after the match.

DAY OF THE REALTOR

On June 8, REALTORS® from across our province celebrated the fourth Annual Day of the REALTOR® in Nova Scotia. June 8 has been proclaimed as the Day of the REALTOR® by the province of Nova Scotia in recognition of the contribution REALTORS® make to our provincial economy. In 2018, it's estimated that home sales through the **Nova Scotia Association of REALTORS®** (NSAR) MLS® system contributed over \$513 million to the provincial economy. NSAR is the professional association for over 1,500 real estate professionals in the province.

Love the way you work.



**CABCO COMMUNICATIONS
ACQUIRED**

A group of Halifax businessmen are pleased to announce the majority acquisition of Dartmouth based Cabco Communications from CEO and majority owner Craig Meredith. Jim Mills, President and CEO of **Office Interiors** will be Chairman; Michael Mills will assume the role of President and CEO; and current Cabco partner Darren McCormick, will remain as Vice President. Also involved in the acquisition are Keith Skiffington, COO at Office Interiors and Don Mills, President of Crane Cove Holdings. "We are extremely pleased to announce this deal and we look forward to the opportunity to help grow this business in the years ahead," says Mills. The deal closed effective May 1, 2019.



**30 YEARS OF CAMP
TREASURE CHEST**

This year marks the 30th year that the **Lung Association of Nova Scotia** has been offering Camp Treasure Chest — a week-long summer camp for kids suffering from asthma and other lung conditions. Since 1989, these kids in Nova Scotia have been able to enjoy making memories, lifelong friendships and growing confidence, all the while learning to manage their conditions in a medically-supervised, beautiful camp environment. Can your organization help send a deserving kid to camp this summer? For more information on Camp Treasure Chest, contact ns.lung.ca



NEW KIDS HELP PHONE PARTNERSHIP

Kids Help Phone is pleased to announce a new partnership with Fog Off Clothing, a brand designed to help end the stigma attached to mental health. The branding was designed by Tim Henneberry and the clothing is designed and manufactured by Stanfield's in Truro. The collection will be available online at stanfields.com/fogoff and through retail partners across the country. Ten per cent of all proceeds will be donated to Kids Help Phone, Canada's only 24-7 national service offering professional counselling, information, referrals and volunteer-led text-based support for young people. The free, anonymous and confidential services are available in English and French.



SUPPLEMENT KING BECOMES 50 STORES STRONG

Supplement King, headed by entrepreneur Roger King, is one of Canada's fastest growing companies. The company began as a small door-to-door supplement delivery company in Dartmouth. Now with 50 locations nationwide, Supplement King helps Canadians coast-to-coast achieve better health and fitness. As one of a handful of nationally licensed

brands HQ'd in Atlantic Canada, Supplement King continues to outpace competitors. "Despite other companies having a 15 to 20 year head start, we hold our own," says King, "coupled with a faster than Amazon, next day delivery platform launch in August, our brick and clicks business model is poised to service our evolving clientele."



HALIFAX CHAMBER WELCOMES NEW STAFF

We are pleased to announce the hiring of two new staff to the small but mighty **Halifax Chamber** team. Kayla Whalen, the new Event Coordinator joins us after a year of working with us as Administrative Assistant. Abby Tucker, the new PR Coordinator, is our former co-op student. Both are passionate about providing value to our members and look forward to meeting you all. Be sure to say hi at an upcoming event!

Imtiaz Ahman

says he owes a big thank you to instructors he met and job search courses he took at Immigration Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS) for helping him navigate the Canadian job market and eventually land a job in Halifax. He now works as a Senior Business Analyst at the IWK Health Centre.

Photo: Paul Darrow



A GLOBAL MINDSET

ISANS, employers agree hiring newcomers helps both immigrants and business

BY SARA ERICSSON

Imtiaz Ahman lost hope he'd find a job when his applications went months without a response.

He says despite his qualifications and English skills the numerous applications he sent out to business analyst and other positions brought him no results in his job search process after he arrived in Halifax from Bangladesh.

So he returned to where he started and reconnected with employment programming providers at Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS) and says the process proved invaluable — he landed a job in his field he's been at now for nearly a year.

"After three or four months, you start doubting yourself and think that maybe you're not good enough.

But that's not the case, because you know everything you need to know. It's just the communication and finer details that need honing, and that's where ISANS comes in," says Ahman.

Skills and confidence both key

When Ahman arrived in Canada in 2018, he felt baffled by the country's application and interview process. It was a shock he did not know to anticipate but

is something nearly all immigrants will encounter during their job search.

He enrolled in an ISANS job search and skills workshop and says the experience was "brilliant" because it taught him small yet significant skills like how

when they arrive in Canada because such skills don't just set them up for one specific job, but rather the labour market as a whole.

"If they don't learn about the job search process, their chances of landing

job interviews will be limited. These techniques and practice sessions give them the self-confidence to become better prepared for the labour market and job interviews," she says.

When he completed his first round of job search training, Ahman says those months without reply soon turned into requests for interviews that presented him with a new challenge — the job interview.

And so he returned to ISANS again for help on how to face this new hurdle, and found the one-on-one instruction and practice sessions transformed his confidence, and set him up for success.

It got him his job as a Senior Business

Analyst at the IWK Health Centre.

"Having that confidence made all the difference, and really helped. I got the job because things went well and things are going well for me at the IWK," he says.



Sara Ericsson

“These techniques and practice sessions give them the self-confidence to become better prepared for the labour market and job interviews.”

— Mohja Alia, Employment and Bridging Program Manager, ISANS

his resume should be two pages, how to structure a cover letter and how to target an application for each specific job.

It's a process ISANS' Employment and Bridging Program Manager Mohja Alia says all newcomers should prioritize



Sara Ericsson

“Hotels are a global business, so employees from different places can help navigate languages with guests and can help understand their perspectives. These employees also bring a great selection of creativity and innovation.”

— **Carol Logan**, Director of Human Resources,
Prince George Hotel & Cambridge Suites Hotel

Why hire from away

Carol Logan is the Director of Human Resources at The Prince George Hotel and Cambridge Suites Hotel, where nearly 20 per cent of hotel staff is immigrants hired through job programs and partners including ISANS.

The hotels participate in recruitment sessions conducted by ISANS and later partner with the association to provide paid English as second language courses and other job-specific training for each employee they hire.

“These might not be forever jobs for them, but they are great opportunities for a first step. If we can help them get Canadian work experience, we feel really great about that,” says Logan.

Alia says ISANS job programming includes occupation-specific job training

for low to medium skilled persons in areas like automotive, construction and hospitality, from which The Prince George Hotel and Cambridge Suites Hotel regularly hire. But they also offer higher-level bridging programs like a competency assessment through Engineers Nova Scotia that currently employs 90 per cent of the engineers who’ve participated in their chosen fields.

Alia says ISANS helped a total 1,200 clients gain employment in the 2018 fiscal year, and of that 75 per cent in their field or related field.

The vast majority of immigrants arriving in Nova Scotia are highly-educated, English-proficient individuals, with 80 per cent having earned a bachelor’s, masters or PhD degree in their native country.

Ahmad was one such arrival, and says he still made a point of taking English classes tailored to words to use to make his resume stand out.

He says the one-on-one training he received went a long way in helping him understand colloquial Canadian English, but also what specific words to use to make his resume stand out.

“We all speak English, but this language has so many variants. So it was important for me to learn those soft skills, because those are often even more important than the technical knowledge in getting the job,” he says.

A diversified workforce

Logan says the hotels continue hiring international employees not only to help them gain Canadian work experience, but also because of the unique perspective they bring.

“Hotels are a global business, so employees from different places can help navigate languages with guests and can help understand their perspectives. These employees also bring a great selection of creativity and innovation,” she says.

Alia says she would encourage any company to consider hiring immigrants and to consider their unique qualifications, skills and experiences when hiring for jobs.

She says hearing someone speak with an accent, as an example, can be seen as a unique opportunity to bring a new language skill to your team, instead of making you wonder what circumstances they’ve come from.

“Look at that before you look at where they are coming from — give them an opportunity and try to benefit from them to build a diversified workforce, because it will allow everyone to excel,” she says.

Ahman says immigrants like him do just that, and also bring a diversity of ideas and different viewpoints to the table.

He says he’s been able to cover loopholes because of his own unique way of thinking, and says other immigrants likely do the same in their respective jobs.

“We contribute to the thinking process, most of all I think, because sometimes with a different background you think in your own way. And all of that adds up to give everyone a better understanding of the business,” he says. ■



Paul Darrow

People, planet and profit

How purpose-led businesses are turning competitive challenges to their advantage **By Erin Elaine Casey**

More and more businesses in Atlantic Canada are looking at their “triple bottom line” — people, planet and profit. But does taking a strategic approach to creating social and environmental benefits help businesses navigate the competitive challenges we face here, including recruitment and retention, revenue growth, attracting investment and innovation?

The answer is most definitely yes.

Allison Murray is CEO and founder of Upswing Solutions, a Halifax-based consultancy that helps companies design and implement purpose-led business and product strategies, measure their progress and share their stories.

A purpose-led business is a for-profit company that can clearly demonstrate their products, services and operations are improving the well-being of their customers, their employees, their communities and the environment. Murray started Upswing about a year and a half ago after working much of her career with large multinational companies on social responsibility, sustainability and purpose.

“We now have clients seeking us out because we’re purpose-led and we’re starting to pitch that more.”

— Mark Fraser,
Executive Vice
President, T4G

“There wasn’t a lot of talk about purpose-led business in Atlantic Canada, although I could see many operating here,” she says. “The concept of social enterprise is well understood, but in terms of traditional, for-profit businesses who have a clear social and environmental benefit built into their business strategy, it wasn’t really part of the conversations I was hearing.”

Murray’s solution was to create The Purpose Project. She set out to talk to CEOs across the region about their purpose-led businesses. The resulting report, *The Purpose Advantage: How purpose-led businesses are growing and thriving in Atlantic Canada*, shines a light on how robust the purpose-led business landscape is in our region and builds a strong case for making money while doing good.

“We wanted to know: how are purpose-led businesses turning the competitive challenges we face here to their advantage?” says Murray. Every single CEO Murray interviewed — more than a dozen — reported that a clear business purpose has helped them attract investment, innovate, transform and drive strategy. Ninety per cent said it helps them recruit employees, connect with customers and generate revenue.

T4G is a large data analytics, digital marketing and custom software company operating out of Halifax, Moncton, Saint John, Toronto and Vancouver. Their purpose? Changing the world, one project at a time.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22 >

Executive Vice President Mark Fraser participated in The Purpose Project. “We’ve always had a community-minded orientation and 16 or 17 years ago we created T4G’s Future Focus Foundation to raise money to give to organizations that help kids succeed,” he explains. “Why wouldn’t we embrace the idea of making good profit while doing no harm?”

T4G was recently named a Great Place to Work in Canada for the 12th year in a row. They also earned B Corporation certification about 18 months ago. Certified B Corps meet the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency and legal accountability to balance profit and purpose. “In our first year of being certified, we were recognized as Best in the World for Workers, putting us in the top 10 per cent of B Corps worldwide,” he says proudly.

“We now have clients seeking us out because we’re purpose-led and we’re starting to pitch that more.”

Employees get time off to volunteer for the charity of their choice, and several start-ups are housed in T4G’s offices. The company is also deeply committed to attracting and retaining top talent and works directly with universities to hire recent graduates and new immigrants. “We’re committed to making our business a force for change,” says Fraser.

John Robertson is CEO of HomeEXCEPT, another company involved in The Purpose Project. HomeEXCEPT also happens to be one of the start-ups housed at T4G. Their purpose is to provide non-intrusive monitoring solutions for exceptional peace of mind.

“The idea started from looking at the problems people face in being able to stay in their homes longer,” explains Robertson. “What we found is that families were constantly worried. When you watch a 65-year-old daughter crying about her 85-year-old mom it breaks your heart. There were lots of monitoring solutions out there, but we wanted to create non-intrusive ways to monitor — no cameras, no listening devices, no wearables.” These systems don’t listen to,

or watch you and don’t collect personal data, unlike other home security and smart home options.

HomeEXCEPT’s thermal, motion, light and sound sensors have many benefits beyond peace of mind. Robertson predicts they will also help address capacity challenges in the health-care system by keeping people at home longer with fewer interventions.

“By using sensors and AI, we can start predicting and preventing unfortunate things from happening. So when routines

plans to hire both students and seniors in the future. “They want to work on things they’re passionate about, have control over their time, work with people they like and have an impact. They don’t want to punch a clock.”

“They’re not here because I’m paying the biggest salary,” he adds. “They’re here because they like being on the bleeding edge of technology. We want to be hiring young talent, particularly immigrants who want to stay and do something good.”

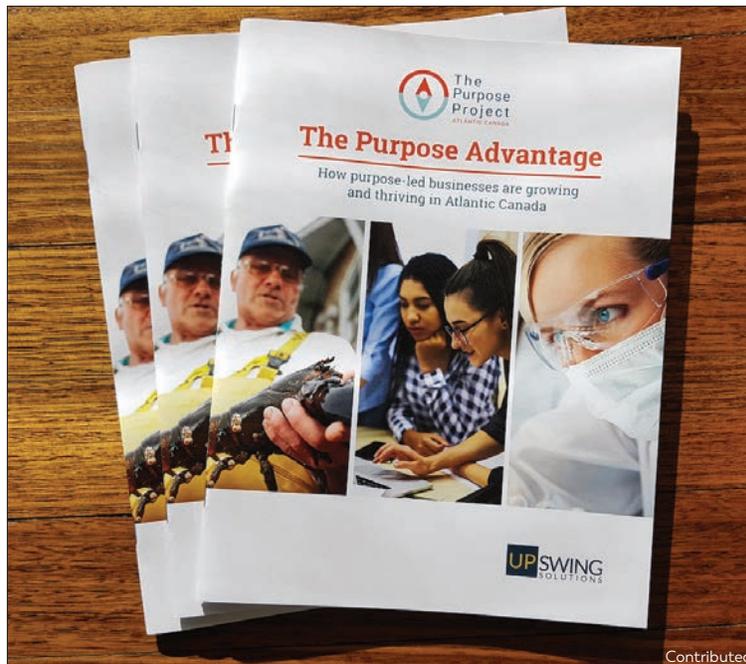
“We’ve incorporated our purpose into our talent search processes,” says Fraser. “We’re looking for people who want to think differently. Rebels drive businesses forward. We might even have used the word ‘insurrection’ at one point,” he laughs. And having a handful of start-ups onsite gives T4G’s staff a taste of that start-up excitement whenever they want to pitch in.

Sheena Russell is founder and CEO of Made With Local. You’ve likely seen their snack bars, mixes and oatmeals at local grocery chains and specialty stores. The mission “to build and nurture our local community through local suppliers and social enterprises and to be

the voice of intuitive, mindful nourishment in the snack aisle” was not part of Russell’s initial plan. Her message to anyone considering making their business more purpose-led? “You don’t have to be a raging philanthropist — start with where you’re at.”

Russell’s farmer’s market-based enterprise started as a “locavore” initiative, but as the business grew and the need for production outstripped the home kitchens of its founders she knew she needed something to bridge the gap. That’s where social enterprise comes in. A social enterprise is a business or organization operated for the purpose of addressing social, cultural or environmental challenges, with the majority of profits reinvested to support community needs.

Russell started five years ago with the Flower Cart Group’s What’s Cooking Commercial Kitchen in New Minas. Today, that kitchen bakes and packs the vast majority of Made With Local’s



change in the home, we can see that dad’s going to the bathroom more, mom’s watching TV a lot or not sleeping, dad’s leaving the stove on. It works in nursing homes and hospitals as well.”

The company went commercial in June with their first partner in Atlantic Canada, Wilsons Security. “We wanted to partner with a trusted brand in the region,” says Robertson. HomeEXCEPT just made the Branham Group’s Top 25 Canadian Up and Coming ICT Companies

“Purpose is everything behind this business, right down to the fibres of how we run our company. There are no ‘positions’ — everyone in here plays a role. Almost everyone is under 30. We have complete equal pay and good gender balance.”

Fraser and Robertson agree that creating the right environment is key to attracting and retaining talent. “People want autonomy,” says Robertson, who employs nine people full time and has



Contributed

Real Food Bars, sometimes thousands a week. The Dartmouth Adult Services Centre handles the Loaded Oats and Real Food Bar mixes, and the Stone Hearth Bakery bakes and packs private label bars for the Farm Boy grocery chain in Ontario. All three organizations provide work opportunities for people with barriers to employment.

“I didn’t start with a ‘global saviour’ perspective,” laughs Russell. “But after partnering with the Flower Cart, we saw it was a total game changer that amplified our local impact in a major way. You’re impacting dozens of families, and it’s huge.”

She is deeply grateful for the work of her social enterprise partners’ clients. “We get lots of praise for what we do for these organizations, but I like to flip that on its head. How lucky are we to have been able to build a business that we could scale gradually with these amazing values that they’ve instilled in us?”

Made With Local is not only profitable, May 2019 was their best month on record as they begin national distribution through Loblaw’s. They also recently earned B Corp certification. “Our social impact is literally baked into the business. It just feels natural and the way you do things.”

All three CEOs see purpose-led business as a key to building a prosperous future in Atlantic Canada, and wouldn’t have their businesses follow any other path.

Allison Murray emphasizes that any business, any size, at any stage of development can introduce purpose into their business strategy. “This is an opportunity for established businesses to look at their impact on the world. Begin by asking how do we make our products and services

Begin by asking how do we make our products and services better for people and our environment? The opportunity is there and the benefits are clear.”

— Allison Murray,
CEO and founder,
Upswing Solutions

better for people and our environment? The opportunity is there and the benefits are clear. You can start with one product line and go from there. And your company’s going to be different.”

“Go for it,” says Robertson. “Nothing feels better than waking up in the morning and wanting to go to work. I didn’t build this to exit — this is about building a company here. Everything is

made and built here in Atlantic Canada and we’re sticking around. My investors bought into the problem we’re solving and they bought into me.”

“Start where you are,” adds Russell. “It can be as simple as deciding that one day a month all your staff is going to go volunteer somewhere. We donate oatmeal and our time at the Dartmouth North Community Food Centre. Think about things you can do that don’t cost anything. It’s doable and it doesn’t feel hard.”

“I think purpose helps us become more profitable by hiring people who want to stay,” explains Fraser. “I make no excuse for the business benefit I enjoy for being a B Corp. Yes, we invested in that, and yes I expect a return on that investment.”

“I want to make money and save the world, and I can’t do one without the other.” ■

To learn more or download the report, visit thepurposeproject.ca.

To find out how to put your business purpose into action, visit www.upswingsolutions.net.



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Photos contributed

Renovated Zatzman Sportsplex offers new facilities and opportunities **By Joey Fitzpatrick**

Friday evening is a busy time at the Zatzman Sportsplex. Everyone age 12 to 17 can use the Sportsplex for free each Friday after 7 p.m.

“We call it Teen Takeover, although we are still open to regular members and day pass users,” says Elizabeth O’Hanley, Marketing, Communications and Community Development Co-ordinator with the Zatzman Sportsplex. “It was identified as an issue in the community that there was nothing for teens to do on Friday nights.”

On a recent Friday evening more than 200 teenagers made use of the pool, gymnasium, fitness studios, running track, weight room and a board games room.

The Teen Takeovers are made possible by a \$750,000 donation from the Zatzman family to provide enhanced community access to the facility in a number of areas. The running track is now open at no cost each Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. There is also a free fitness class each Saturday at 9:30 a.m.

Joseph Zatzman’s son Michael made the donation on behalf of the family. Community involvement has long been synonymous with the Zatzman name. Joseph Zatzman was just 22-years-old



when he opened a small grocery store on the corner of Victoria Road and Portland Street in Dartmouth. The year was 1934, the midst of the Great Depression, an era when fortune did not smile kindly on new entrepreneurial ventures. But Joseph Zatzman persevered. Putting in long hours backed by fierce determination, he built both a successful store and a place in the community.

As his reputation grew, Dartmouth citizens began encouraging Zatzman to take on greater leadership roles in the community. He went on to serve on numerous boards of directors and committees that helped Dartmouth become the thriving community it is today. He also served as councilman and then mayor of the former city of Dartmouth. Zatzman is perhaps best known as the visionary behind the creation of the Burnside Industrial Park, the largest business park in Atlantic Canada.

As a place to learn and grow, to be active and to interact with other community members, the Sportsplex fits perfectly with the Zatzman vision. The renaming was announced in January of this year, and the facility was officially reopened the following month.

The Zatzman Sportsplex now includes a new double gymnasium, a fitness centre overlooking Wyse Road and new pool attractions. Entering the premises is now simpler, as the main entrance provides access to all of the facilities.

“You just swipe your membership card or go to the welcome desk and pay for your day pass, and once you’re in the building you have access to everything,” O’Hanley says.



Fitness classes are drop-in, and schedules on the website are updated daily. The brand new cardio equipment in the weight room is exclusively Precor. The Precor brand is an industry leader in developing equipment focused on ergonomic motion, proven science and superior engineering. The squash and racquetball courts have been refurbished with new paint and new floors.

Services are in place to enhance the membership experience. A new cafeteria will be opened this summer by The Kitchen Door, the innovative catering company based in Dartmouth Crossing.



A child-minding service is available seven days a week for infants up to age 12, and is included in the price of a family membership. For those with adult memberships the service can be purchased on a daily basis.

The pool area now has equipment to assist those with mobility issues. The small pool has been redesigned to include a wheelchair ramp, while the large pool now has a poolpod, an elevator-like device that raises and lowers users to and from the pool. The lift is sensor-activated with a bracelet and is available to all.



“The life guard can show you how to use the first time, and after you’ve used it once it’s pretty easy,” O’Hanley says. “You don’t have to be in a wheelchair to use it. It’s open to anyone who doesn’t want to climb down the ladder because of mobility challenges.”

There is also a new waterslide and a new hot tub.

“The new waterslide ends in its own shallow pool, so you don’t have to be able to swim to go down that slide,” O’Hanley explains. “The smaller kids love it because they don’t have to get dunked in the deep end.” ■

Deloitte appoints Sheri Penner as Regional Managing Partner, Atlantic

Congratulations to Sheri Penner on her new position as Regional Managing Partner (RMP) for Deloitte in Atlantic Canada.

In her role, she manages Deloitte’s marketplace activities and brand throughout the region, working closely with our people to serve our Atlantic clients. As RMP, Sheri also serves on the Canadian firm’s management executive team.

Her previous roles include New Brunswick tax practice leader, National Private Tax Leader, and elected member of Deloitte Canada’s board of directors. Sheri has also served as a member of Deloitte’s executive for the Ontario region as the regional Consumer Business leader and led tax practices in both St. Catharines and Burlington. She has worked with a wide range of clients, from small to very large companies over the course of her career. Much of that career has centred on companies in Ontario and New Brunswick, with a focus on oil and gas, as well as the consumer and industrial product industries. Sheri’s technical experience includes domestic tax planning, estate and succession planning, as well as Canadian corporate and personal tax compliance.

Deloitte has five offices in the region: Halifax, Nova Scotia; St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador; and Saint John, Moncton, and Fredericton in New Brunswick. The Atlantic practice includes approximately 300 professionals in audit, tax, consulting, risk, and financial advisory.



The truth about taxes

Lowering taxes should be the first step in helping the province grow



TIM HOUSTON MLA,
PICTOU EAST, LEADER,
NS PROGRESSIVE
CONSERVATIVE PARTY

Responsible spending. Accountable government. An environment that fosters entrepreneurship.

These are things that we all hope for in government. In fact, they are the very reasons why I left a 20-year business career that has taken me from doing financial statement audits in Bedford, to venture capital in Bermuda and ultimately, to small business ownership in Pictou County and pursuing politics.

Well, that history and a sense of anger at the level of taxes we pay for less and less in the way of government services (health care being exhibit A). I got into politics because I couldn't stand back and watch our quality of life steadily decline.

Nova Scotia can be a place where businesses thrive but we have to be honest about where we are, and then force the conversation towards ideas that build on our natural competitive advantages to foster growth that not only keeps people at home, but brings others back — like me.

Where can we start? Taxes.

Our taxes are too high. Sadly, too many people are too afraid to talk about it. Imagine if Nova Scotia became the first jurisdiction to reward growing companies. That would be the opposite of what government usually does. Too often governments prop up struggling companies in struggling industries.

Here's an idea: allow individual companies to grow their way into their own effective tax rate (until they get to a reasonable provincial, corporate rate).



“Imagine if Nova Scotia became the first jurisdiction to reward growing companies. That would be the opposite of what government usually does.”

How would it work? What about capping the nominal amount of provincial corporate taxes paid at the dollar amount paid in the prior year. Growing companies that earn more money this year would still pay what they paid last year. This would lower their own, unique effective tax rate and reward them for their growth.

Ideas like this don't make for the quick political soundbites that political communication teams love, and in fact actually open politicians up to easy attacks. But the discussion surrounding lower taxes is an important one that must extend beyond one election cycle.

Would it work? You tell me. Would existing corporations move additional operations here — warehousing, manufacturing — if they knew that could earn incremental income here tax free?

I think they would, but I also accept that I don't know what I don't know — so I need your feedback.

The reality is that with one of the lowest per capita GDP's in the country, it's time for serious ideas and discussions. Our corporate taxes are too high. Our high personal income tax rates are

offensive. And the small business tax changes taking effect will hurt many this year.

We all feel the sting of higher taxes, maybe in higher prices or maybe in another family doctor or specialist leaving our province. The impacts are real.

Government must promote entrepreneurship and spend tax dollars as if they are their own. There is so much that can be done, but it all comes back to being responsible, accountable, transparent and respectful in every decision

Lowering our corporate taxes would see companies move more operations here. That would mean more warehouses and put simply, more economic activity and jobs.

My name is Tim Houston. Challenge me. Encourage me.

I'm ready.

Are you?

Tim Houston, is MLA for Pictou East, Leader of the N.S. Progressive Conservative Party and a member of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce

Beyond the IQ

Enhancing the social and emotional intelligence of employees is good for business



CHARLENE PICKREM
CYC-P, (MA) CYS, S+EIC

Social and emotional intelligence, or soft skills, are necessary to attain and cultivate in business at every level. Why? To enhance internal and external customer service! Social and emotional intelligence is the ability to be aware of our emotions and those of others in the moment, and to use that information to manage ourselves and manage our relationships.

Being able to meet team members and customers where they are at, identify strengths and challenges and act appropriately, are skills essential to developing a healthy work culture. Tools to assess and enhance soft skills are being used by over 75 per cent of fortune 500 companies according to the Institute for Social and Emotional Intelligence. The U.S. and Australia have been implementing strategies to foster soft skills in classrooms and boardrooms with positive results. Being able to play nice in the sandbox of life is a win-win for everyone.

Our genetic makeup is established at conception (nature) and does not change much over our lifetime if at all. An individual's personality is pretty much formed by the age of six or seven. Our nurture, social interactions, influence our behavior. We do not have control over our nature or nurture but we do have control over our behaviors. Soft skills can be taught to infinity and beyond — there is no ceiling such as with our IQ.

Understanding the unique strengths and challenges of an individual or team provides a solid foundation to develop

“Tools to assess and enhance soft skills are being used by over 75 per cent of fortune 500 companies according to the Institute for Social and Emotional Intelligence.”

empowering strategies to overcome roadblocks. Self and other awareness, as well as self and relationship management skills, can be learned. Specific skills such as personal power, service orientation, integrity, behavioral self-control, communication, powerful influencing skills, teamwork and collaboration, achievement drive, personal agility, building trust and many more skills can be fostered with the correct tools and cooperation of the individual/team.

How many times have you known an individual or team who is struggling to meet goals but you can't determine

why? Do you invest in training if you do not know what the issue is that you are trying to address? Do you let skilled labor go without first supporting strategies to enhance effectiveness? You are wasting time and money! You are addressing the symptoms, not the cause. Use training dollars effectively.

Be empowered!

Charlene Pickrem is the Host of *Mental Health – Let's Talk About it!* Contact her at cpick@live.ca or check out the website at www.pickempowerment.ca.

Halifax Distilling Co. made their business goals a reality, with the Chamber in their corner. Learn more about how becoming a member can build your business. halifaxchamber.com

HALIFAX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The retail transformation

Next generation of in-store shopping experience



EHSAN BELGHIS MBA, P.ENG,
HEAD OF OPERATIONS,
REWHYS BUSINESS
SOLUTIONS

Customers who bought this item also bought...

These kinds of recommendations help online stores and e-commerce websites to upsell their products to shoppers, and as a result online shopping is getting more and more market share in the overall shopping universe year over year.

What is stopping businesses from bringing the same experience to their stores? What are the limitations and how can these limitations be resolved?

We're entering the age of personalization and adaptivity where everything is tailored. Shoppers are looking for shopping experiences customized to their needs. This requires anticipating their



MOE BELGHIS
HEAD OF TECHNOLOGY,
REWHYS BUSINESS
SOLUTIONS

needs and wants and providing offers and recommendations that are in line with these needs. This is the main differentiator between online and in-store shopping.

E-commerce systems collect and utilize data to generate recommendations and suggest more products which customers are also likely interested in. These recommendations are generated based on what customers already have in their shopping cart as well as what other customers with similar profiles bought.

The same data can be captured and utilized in stores while customers are shopping. Data, such as a customer's buying sequence and in-store physical movement around the store can be captured and mined for more

meaningful insights. In addition, this data can be used to generate recommendations and up-sell products to shoppers.

How can this functionality be delivered to shoppers in store? The answer is an adaptive in-store recommender system that suggests different items along with their store locations to shoppers in real-time based on what they currently have in their shopping carts, their order history and segmentation analytics. This approach also increases shopper satisfaction by providing them with faster checkouts.

This solution can be fully implemented for different sized stores, along with a loyalty program and a mobile app for stores that don't currently have a loyalty program, or can be added to the existing mobile apps and loyalty program if the store already has one.

By using this in-store recommendation system, customers are provided with a better shopping experience and businesses increase their sales revenues, reduce their waste and track customer behavior. Best of all, the captured data can be utilized to increase the accuracy of promotional campaigns and store's planogram, and to optimize store floor plans to either maximize or minimize customers walking distance based on different use cases and business strategies. This is the next generation of the in-store shopping experience. The retail transformation is here.

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QUALITY CAREERS • QUALITY CANDIDATES

Encouraging accountability in the workplace

How employers can help employees succeed



HARRIETTE SCHUMACHER
CEO, BIG LEAP LEADERSHIP

Do you feel that people at work don't do what they say they are going to do?

Are you guilty of overcommitting, or under delivering or both?

Accountability is a huge problem.

The *Workplace Accountability Study* recently revealed that 82 per cent of respondents have no ability to hold others accountable, but 91 per cent of people rank accountability as one of the top development needs they'd like to see at their organization. There are two big "don'ts" if you want more accountability on your team. First, don't give advice. Giving advice is one of the worst things you can do when people come to you with problems. Yes, you read that right. When someone comes to you with an issue and you go straight into advice-giving mode, you are training people not to do the problem-solving work themselves. Advice giving can have huge consequences on a leader's time. If the advice you give doesn't work out well, people will blame you instead of taking accountability. Instead of telling people what to do, ask questions — and then more questions. Help the person come up with the answer to the issue themselves. End the conversation with embedding accountability — ask them what they are going to do next and by when, and watch the accountability rise.

Second, don't validate excuses. It's really hard not to go down the excuse lane — it's alluring and even fun at times. Many excuses are grounded in reality. It's easy to come up with a list of reasons why



“ Giving advice is one of the worst things you can do when people come to you with problems. Yes, you read that right.

we can't. If you want people to uncover reasons why they can, then we need to stop feeding excuses. A recent coaching client shared her frustration with me about her team not delivering projects on deadline. It seemed that every time someone came to her with a setback, she would validate it. Her true empathy was at play because she really could see the realities around them. She would say, "Oh I know the budget isn't where it should be," or "Oh I know it's a hard climate right now," or "Oh I know we do have of projects on the go right now."

I shared with her an alternative approach which is to respond by saying, "Given that ... What can you do?" Given that the budget is small. Given that the climate is competitive. Given that there is

a lot going on. Embed accountability by asking the person what they can do given all the challenges.

Instead of talking about excuses, talk about solutions and next steps. Talk about what can be actually achieved. Let them decide what they can do, let them choose a solution and commit. This is the accountability context. Given the situation is what it is, what can I do about it?

At the end of the day, accountability is not something we are born with, it is something we choose. It is how we choose to live our life. This is not something you can control for anyone but yourself. You can however, create an environment where people choose accountability. Where people choose to show up fully and committed.

Accessing the ability of all Canadians

How we can create a barrier-free environment



ALITA FABIANO
COMMUNICATIONS &
MARKETING OFFICER,
CANADIAN CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE

You walk to into the office, juggling a cup of coffee in one hand and your laptop in the other, rushing to your desk where your phone is ringing. This may seem like a typical hectic day at the office for you, but for countless Canadian adults with a physical disability, this would be an impossible day. The environment your business creates has the potential to either access the full ability of your employees or create additional barriers for them.



Andriy Popov/T23rf

Canada is inadequately addressing the barriers to accessibility that nearly four million Canadians with a mobility, vision or hearing disability face daily. A barrier-free environment not only better the quality of life for persons with disabilities, but also dramatically increases labour force participation and consumer spending within our economy. Our members have vocalized finding and retaining skilled staff among their top issues, yet there is an entire pool of educated and

qualified Canadians with disabilities who are waiting to be hired.

Our headquarters were built to respect the design priorities reflected in the Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification™ (RHFAC) program and earned official certification last fall. The RHFAC program provides a road map for the adoption of meaningful access and universal design principles, as well as a way for all levels of governments to work together to improve the built environment. We recently made additional improvements by installing 12 automatic door openers throughout our headquarters to eliminate barriers to accessibility in our working and collaborative spaces. This was funded in part by the Government of Canada's Enabling Accessibility Fund.

But the responsibility for the built environment cannot fall solely on the government. Businesses must lead the way in improving accessibility in their workplaces. We encourage our members to apply for Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification. It is time businesses access the ability of all Canadians by building a more accessible nation!

For more information about the having your office or building rated by the Rick Hansen Foundation, visit www.rickhansen.com/become-accessible.

NATIONAL ACCESSABILITY WEEK

National AccessAbility Week (NAAW) takes place every year starting on the last Sunday in May. It is a time when accessibility and inclusion is promoted across communities and workplaces and a time to celebrate the contributions of Canadians with disabilities. It is also an opportunity to recognize the efforts of Canadians who are actively removing barriers and ensuring persons with disabilities have an equal chance to participate in all aspects of Canadian society.

The increased social and economic inclusion of persons with disabilities has positive economic and social benefits,

for persons with disabilities, for business, the economy and society in general.

When persons with disabilities can access meaningful employment, resources and services, Canada's economy grows. Businesses have the chance to welcome more customers, service satisfaction improves and workplaces reflect Canada's diversity.

By bringing Canadians together to recognize the valuable contributions of persons with disabilities, we are strengthening the collaborative effort needed to create a country that is fully accessible and inclusive. (Canada.ca – National AccessAbility Week)

Starting a business: what's your why?

Anthony Ginsbrook/unsplash

Asking yourself the right questions can lead to the right answers



KATHLEEN MACEACHERN
POLICY ANALYST, HALIFAX
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

So, you've decided you want to become an entrepreneur, but you don't know where to start. Maybe you've been told to go through the five W's. The who, what, when, where and why. While they are all important, having the right "why" will play a major part in your business' success. Your motive behind your actions might just be the most important part of your entrepreneurial story. German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche once said, "He who has a why can endure any how." A strong foundation can let you take risks, it will get you to work every

morning, will help push you through the difficult times and it will establish a clear direction for you and your business. Find what you're passionate about and make that your "why." Studies have shown that doing what you love can help you live longer, feel happier, be more productive and be an inspiration to others — who wouldn't want that title?

How to find your "why"?

So how do you determine your why? It might not be as obvious as you would like, but you can start with a list of questions. Grab a pen and paper or if that's too old school for you, grab your laptop and ask yourself the following:

- What would I do if money wasn't an issue?
- What made me most excited as a child?
- What would I do for free?
- What am I good at?
- What do I love to do?
- What do I believe in?
- What would I do if I knew I couldn't fail?
- What problem keeps me up at night?
- What would keep me getting up for work every day?

These are just a few of the questions that can help narrow down your passion. If you notice a few common answers start to pop up, maybe that's a great place to start. If not, talk to family and friends. Ask them what they think is your "why," and that might spark an idea.

Why the Why?

Opening a business because of the money might not be enough to keep both it and you going. If you don't love what you do, a paycheck may not get you out of bed every morning. A passion will. The "why" will. If you're doing something you're passionate about you may be more inclined to go above and beyond the call of duty, to leap over obstacles and feel more creative about solutions to the obstacles that lay ahead. Others (your employees, hopefully) will see that grit and determination and feel that same level of "why" you do. Clients, customers or stakeholders may be more motivated to buy from you or use your services.

We're not saying that if you follow your passion business will come easy. In fact, following your passion may come with problems of its own, but it is a lot easier to do something you love every day than to do something you don't!



Photos Contributed

Celebrating Nova Scotia

Honesty wins big for Compass Distillers **By Sara Ericsson**

An honest approach is paying off for Compass Distillers.

Company President Graham Collins says the honest approach is a fruitful one for the company which has already won 37 medals — 36 are international — to date in the less-than two years they’ve been open.

The business is young but has already established itself as a big player in Nova Scotia’s distilling scene. The north end business is fresh off their gold medal win for New Business at the 2019 Halifax Business Awards in January and is launching a visitor experience collaboration with the Halifax Citadel National Historic Site.

It sounds like a lot of work simply because it is, but that doesn’t mean it’s not also a good time, according to Collins. After all, sampling the product is an encouraged and essential part of the process.



“This isn’t just a job — it is fun. It’s got to be, otherwise what’s the point in doing it?” he says.

SERENDIPITY AND HARD WORK

Winning gold left Collins and head distiller Ezra Edelstein in a sense of shock.

With their doors having opened less than two years ago in late 2017, their success has been early but intentional. Edelstein owes it mostly to producing spirits 100 per cent made from scratch — something he says a minority of Nova Scotian distilleries do because it’s harder, and more expensive.

Collins says this is how they ensure they stay honest with their customers — by making everything themselves. Their recipes are also what give their products that distinct flare because they use an entirely different set of ingredients to bring their spirits to life.

Collins says it was this crafty approach he found in Edelstein that made him sure he was what they needed in a head distiller. It was a happy coincidence that brought the two together, but it's no accident that they're doing well now.

Edelstein's unique combination of a chemistry degree, well-tuned palate and obsession with distilling mean a show-stopping force.

"It's the ability to make those subtle little changes that takes something from an eight to a 10, and it's Ezra that really sets our spirits apart from the rest," says Collins.

CELEBRATING THIS PROVINCE

The company is currently aging spirits inside the walls of the Halifax Citadel where around 35 barrels are stacked with various aging spirits, some of which will be part of tastings and a visitor experience at both the citadel and distillery.

"It's been a long, long haul — it will have been about two years from start to finish, so we're excited for that to launch," says Edelstein.

The distillery always serves new cocktails and sells new products, but



what remains steady is their use of quality Nova Scotian ingredients and top notch products. A Nova Scotian grain base is combined with local corn, rye wheat and barley for most spirits,

but the most Nova Scotian spirit of all is the Spring GiNS, or "gathered in Nova Scotia," for which all ingredients are gathered within the province.

"We don't want to take something that's been distilled in another province and bottle it, and call it Nova Scotian — we believe in this province and want to capture it," says Collins.

Graham and Edelstein also believe in their company, which is a recipe of hard work and good fun for them. Graham works at the distillery alongside his main day job, and says he and his partners started it as their passion project. And Edelstein says the distillery acts as his creative outlet, where he can have fun with trying new ingredient combinations and innovative recipes to see what new combinations reveal winning results.

Because that is of course what they aim for in their approach to distilling, but Graham and Edelstein concur winning the New Business award won't change their process, but rather reaffirms the one they've got is the way to go.

"If you're already making the best spirits, there's only so much you can change," says Graham with a laugh. ■



Arla Johnson
Halifax Distilling Co, Owner
Licensed Minister, First Baptist Halifax
AST class of 2020

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Starting young

How entrepreneurial education could set the future up for success **Contributed**

“We need more entrepreneurs!” This statement leaps off the page (page 28 to be exact) of the Ivany Report as a call to action. The call to action is followed by a big hairy audacious goal: to generate 4,200 start-ups per year.

Ambitious? Absolutely. Vital to the economic success of Nova Scotia? Definitely!

The One Nova Scotia dashboard has revised this goal to reflect the proliferation of high growth start-ups, citing that they are a better representation of the start-up culture. By that measure, the stark truth is that we are not progressing, we are regressing. Instead of the 50 per cent growth in start-ups that the Ivany Report proposed, we are experiencing declines missing the target by 48 per cent.

Despite a history of successful entrepreneurs in Nova Scotia, we have become ambivalent about the value of entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs play a key role in driving innovation, creating jobs and powering communities. This is not promoted to the extent that it should be. The resulting malaise threatens our future prospects.

The future depends upon what we do in the present. Today’s youth are tomorrow’s entrepreneurs. They will drive the economy of the future. While there are initiatives in Nova Scotia that attempt to address youth entrepreneurship education, there is not enough to affect the cultural change the Ivany Report envisioned. An Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report on youth entrepreneurship cited two primary barriers for young entrepreneurs. First, a lack of awareness of potential for entrepreneurship among role models resulting in a lack of encouragement or negative social attitudes and second, education and training programs generally do not adequately nurture entrepreneurial attitudes and skills.

Many experts believe that entrepreneurial education and training should begin as early as possible. It is an essential component in the preparation of potential young entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurial education and training instills habits and skills that serve just as well for successful employees in the new, post-industrial economy as for those who choose to establish their own enterprises. Although the gains from an early intervention are obvious, it is impractical to suggest that the educational system can tackle it alone.

Promoting entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial behaviour could begin as early as primary education through information and awareness-building

reduce unemployment and adapt to the emerging economy. While this is a worthwhile pursuit, if these efforts were supplemented by a focus on the development of entrepreneurial skills and behaviours at an early age through both curricular and extra-curricular programming, the results of start-up and business development programs would likely improve. Entrepreneurship education for youth is a long-term investment.

The challenge for governments, entrepreneurship service providers and private sector companies is to coordinate efforts for collective impact. We must accept that investing in youth entrepreneurship education has a longer time

horizon and the success metrics are two sided. On one side, success is measured by traditional business indicators, on the other it is measured by broad-based outcomes including personal growth, gains in knowledge and experience and skill development that may be less tangible and immediate. The success of youth entrepreneurship education programming is best envisioned as an iceberg. The portion above the water that we can see are the young people that actively



programs. A focus on formal business and entrepreneurial skills should intensify progressively through teenage years to post-secondary. Training outside the educational system can reinforce their work and fill gaps that cannot be efficiently addressed within the educational system. This represents a collaborative effort by multiple organizations in the quest for collective impact; an impact that can only be achieved through a common strategy, co-ordinated effort and long-term investment.

In an effort to respond positively to our economic situation, policy emphasis is placed on programs for start-up and business-development support to boost youth entrepreneurship in the short term,

pursue entrepreneurship through venture creation, social enterprise or pitch competitions. This visible part is captivating and positive but the part below the surface is where the greater economic benefits lie. Entrepreneurship education cultivates teamwork, innovation, critical thinking, risk taking and leadership, as well as financial literacy and business skills.

Whitney Houston was right — children are our future. Investing in entrepreneurship education and co-ordinating the effort of service providers would boost the level of start-ups and produce the kinds of entrepreneurially aware employees that drive start-ups to being great companies. Returning to Ms. Houston — teach them well and let them lead the way.



ANNUAL SPRING DINNER

HALIFAX CONVENTION CENTRE
May 2, 2019

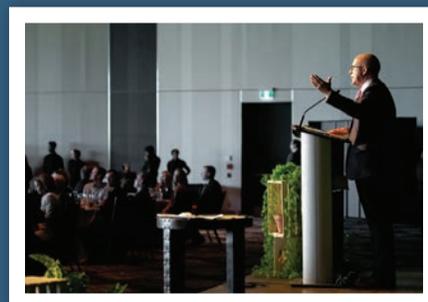
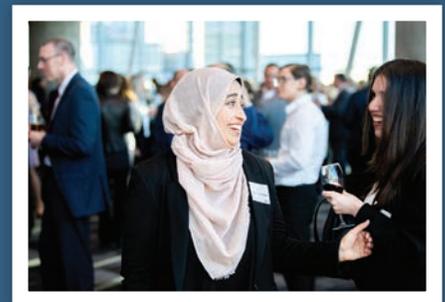
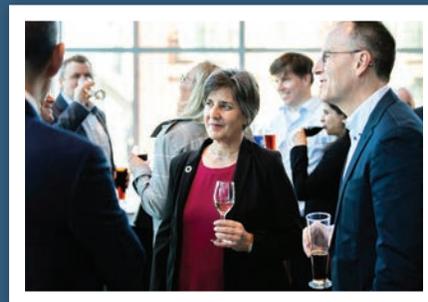
On May 2 at the Halifax Convention Centre, the Halifax Chamber hosted a discussion on work-integrated learning and its pivotal role in keeping students in our province. John Stackhouse, Senior VP, Office of the CEO at RBC led the discussion through his expertise on the “Humans Wanted” report. Local education champions explored how employers and students alike can take advantage of work-integrated learning to strengthen our economy for years to come.

Thank you to Don Bureaux, President, NSCC; Sarah Young, Managing Partner, Atlantic Canada, NATIONAL Public Relations; Karen Hutt, President and CEO, Nova Scotia Power; and Primrose Watson, Articled Clerk, McInnes Cooper, for your insights.

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