

# BUSINESS VOICE

HALIFAX'S BUSINESS MAGAZINE

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Valuing the power of employees **Pg 28**

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

**Vice President, Partner Solutions (NS):** Jeff Nearing

**Editor:** Denise Surette • dsurette@herald.ca

**Layout & Design:** Peter Ross

**Contributing Writers:** Richard Blackwell, Carol Dobson,  
Jon Tattrie, Heather Laura Clarke, David Pretty,  
Theresa Tipert, Christine Sauer, Laura Godsoe,  
Ron Hanlon, Matthew Halliday, Abby Tucker.

**Customer Relations Specialist:** Jennifer MacLean

**Sales Executive:** Wanda H. Priddle, Karen Publicover

902-426-2811 ext. 1163

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2717 Joseph Howe Drive  
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2T2  
Tel: 902-426-2811  
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*It is integral that we all work together, passionately and collaboratively, to ensure the outcomes that we want.”*

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Ron Hanlon, President and CEO, Halifax Partnership



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# CHAMBER EVENTS

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

## 2019 HALIFAX BUSINESS AWARDS

**NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN**  
We will be accepting nominations until Tuesday, September 4. Nominate a deserving business today!  
[www.halifaxchamber.com](http://www.halifaxchamber.com)



**SPEAKER: Rear Admiral Craig Baines, Commander, Maritime Forces Atlantic**  
DATE: Tuesday, June 5  
TIME: 11:30 am - 1:30 pm  
LOCATION: Delta Halifax

## BUSINESS After Hours

**HOST: Workspace Atlantic - Bedford**  
DATE: Thursday, June 7  
TIME: 4:30 - 6:30 pm  
LOCATION: 620 Nine Mile Drive

## NETWORKING FOR SUCCESS

DATE: Tuesday, June 12  
TIME: 11:30 am - 1:30 pm  
LOCATION: Halifax Chamber



DATE: Thursday, June 14  
TIME: 12 - 8 pm  
LOCATION: Brightwood Golf & Country Club

## Business Development Network

DATE: Friday, June 15  
TIME: 12 - 1:30 pm  
LOCATION: Halifax Chamber



DATE: Wednesday, June 20  
TIME: 12 - 1:15 pm  
LOCATION: Halifax Chamber

## PINTS & POINTERS

**SPEAKER: Phil Otto, Revolve**  
**TOPIC: Personal Branding**  
DATE: Thursday, June 21  
TIME: 3:30 - 5 pm  
LOCATION: Garrison Brewery, 1149 Marginal Road  
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Suzanne Rix will help you navigate the complexities of immigration law so that you, your family or your employees can work in Canada. Suzanne advises clients on which type of immigration application will have the greatest chance of success.

From lease review to the benefits of incorporation, Mohammad Ali will help you reach your goals faster and ensure every detail is considered. He provides legal guidance on all matters related to running your own business.

**Suzanne Rix**  
srix@coxandpalmer.com  
902.491.4124

**Mohammad Ali Raza**  
mraza@coxandpalmer.com  
902.491.6845

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# Opportunities abound

Halifax is blooming with growth and progress

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**PATRICK SULLIVAN**  
PRESIDENT & CEO

It's a wonderful time to be in Halifax. Maybe I'm just saying that because, as I write this, summer seems to finally have made an appearance. But I swear, it goes deeper than that. Although, the warmer weather does add an extra highlight to some of the progress we've made over the past number of months. People are finally stepping outside and are enjoying patio season — my favourite time of year. But in all seriousness, I like this time of year for more than the opportunity to enjoy a refreshing beverage on the deck of one of our many amazing restaurants. I like this time of year because it showcases how far we've come and what lies before us.

In early May, we held our Spring Dinner — focusing on the opportunity

that goes along with Canada's Ocean Supercluster at the Halifax Convention Centre. And what an opportunity it is — we even dedicated our April issue of *Business Voice* to the topic. While the Ocean Supercluster is the most obvious area of opportunity in that sentence, what about the opportunity that goes along with the Halifax Convention Centre? It wasn't that many months ago we were counting down the days until it opened its doors. The Chamber was there with the Halifax Business Awards as it was one of the first events in the building.

Here we are, nearly six months later and the Halifax Convention Centre held the Liberal 2018 National Convention, which brought 3,000 people to Halifax. The streets were filled with people from across the country and it was a great feeling. In May, the ECMA's took place downtown and created a great environment for residents and visitors alike. This summer, we will see the National Progressive Conservative Convention and I'm sure the Halifax Convention Centre has many other events lined up that will bring even more people to the province. And once people get here, they tend to want to come back. There are some clear opportunities that go along with that. But don't just take it from me, take a look at their story on page 14 to learn more of what they're up to.

This issue also looks at the opportunity that lies with our graduates. We've spoken with our Grow HALIFAX Partner, the Department of Labour and Advanced Education, on the impact that hiring recent graduates can have on businesses in the province and I think you'll agree, it's significant. The Chamber fully supports businesses taking advantage of co-op programs, internships and the Graduate to Opportunity program — and encourages you to learn more about what you can do to support recent grads. These opportunities could be the ones that take your business to the next level. Halifax is packed with recent and soon-to-be graduates and many of them want to stay. Not only that, we actually need them to stay to secure our sustainability as a province. It's a win-win.

I'm incredibly proud of where we are as a city, but to quote our past Board Chair, Mark Fraser: "Now is NOT the time to take our foot off the gas." We must continue this momentum and not lose it. Let's seize the opportunities that are in front of us and work toward creating more. Together we can create a city of growth and dynamism.

Have you experienced any outstanding opportunities you couldn't afford to miss? Let us know and, more importantly, let us know how we can help. We're in your corner and we're in this together. ■

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# NEW & NOTED

We welcome our new Chamber members

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### Karen Decker

101-137 Venture Run  
Dartmouth, NS  
902-446-4004  
[karen.decker@accelphysio.ca](mailto:karen.decker@accelphysio.ca)  
[www.accelphysio.ca](http://www.accelphysio.ca)  
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ARTS, CULTURE & ENTERTAINMENT – Video/Multimedia

## Here is the future of mental health research.

When Leslie Scott invented Jenga, in Ghana, West Africa, she thought she was just inventing a simple game that her family could enjoy around the kitchen table. Little did she know, that some forty-five years later in Halifax, Nova Scotia - Dr. Rudolf Uher would find a way to make this little piece of child's play, a very real building block for mental health research.

This study, and others like it, are proudly supported by the Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation.

[watch the video at DMRF.ca](http://watch.the.video.at/DMRF.ca)

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**Katherine Lloyd**

134 Eileen Stubbs Avenue, Unit 104  
Dartmouth, NS  
902-442-7347  
katherine.lloyd@bt.konicaminolta.ca  
www.konicaminolta.com  
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### Ken Hoffer

1000 Windmill Road, Suite 15  
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www.atlanticheroes.org  
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ksams@snaks.com  
www.snaks.com  
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Manufacture/Process

## STUDENT MEMBERS

### Inderjyot Singh - DAL, Masters of Health Informatics

Halifax NS  
902-440-5546  
inderjyotsingh9@gmail.com

## RETIRED MEMBERS

### Deborah Ryan

Hammonds Plains, NS  
902-835-7255  
dryanandminnes@ns.sympatico.ca

### *Are you a new member?*

*To submit your 50-word description for New & Noted, login to your Chamber Master profile, or email Kayla Whalen, Administrative Assistant at kayla@halifaxchamber.com or 902-468-7111 within the first six months of membership.*

# MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

How our members are growing Halifax



## NOVA SCOTIA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS WELCOMES NEW PRESIDENT

Nova Scotia’s real estate industry introduced new leadership with New Glasgow REALTOR® Aaron Millen taking on the position of President of the **Nova Scotia Association of REALTORS®** (NSAR), which was announced at the association’s AGM on April 11. As a local REALTOR®, Millen is thrilled to have the opportunity to stand as President. “I am excited to play a part in helping NSAR continue to be successful in advancing real estate in Nova Scotia — especially in 2018, the 60th anniversary of organized real estate in Nova Scotia.” Millen is not alone in his leadership duties and welcomes his fellow board members.



## THE WE ARE YOUNG ASSOCIATION GRANTS SIXTH WISH

The **We Are Young Association** grants unfulfilled wishes to elders and has recently granted its sixth wish! Marian Creelman, 76, a huge fan of the Marilyn Denis Show, has been watching it daily for many years. Knowing her only wish was to attend a live taping of the show, Marian’s daughter nominated her to receive a wish — a dream she never thought was possible. Through the support of our local community and community members in Toronto, the We Are Young Association was able to make Marian’s wish a dream come true. To find out more, visit [www.weareyoung.ca/wishes/wish-stories](http://www.weareyoung.ca/wishes/wish-stories).

## CLUTTERBUG CLEANING & ORGANIZING INC. CELEBRATES 13 YEARS

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**Mattatall Signs** is pleased to announce a transition in business ownership and management. Company founder Bob Mattatall who has been at the helm since its inception, will be moving into semi-retirement. Bob's role will transition

from President to CEO, which will largely be an advisory role to the new company executive. Justin Boudreau will move from the role of Director to President and Rob Mattatall will transition from a key Account Executive to Vice President.



**LOCAL PHYSIOTHERAPIST RETURNS FROM THE 2018 OLYMPIC GAMES**

**ACCEL Physiotherapy and Sport Performance Centre** is pleased to welcome back physiotherapist Karen Decker to our Dartmouth location after spending February in PyeongChang, South Korea. Karen was part of Team Canada's health care team at the 2018 Winter Olympics, where Canada had its best

results to date. As the owner of ACCEL, Karen has modeled our multi-disciplinary health clinic after the services provided to high-performance athletes. Check out our social media feeds to see some of Karen's Olympic experiences and see our full list of services at [www.accelphysio.ca](http://www.accelphysio.ca).



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**NORTHWOOD FOUNDATION OPENS DOORS OF KAYE’S PLACE**

The doors of **Northwood Foundation’s** new memories room are now officially open. Kaye’s Place is Northwood’s response to the need for specialized programs and supports for residents living with dementia — and in support of their families. Kaye’s Place provides a haven

for residents who struggle with the challenges of dementia, while providing a home-like setting and a special place to reconnect. The room is located at Northwood’s Halifax campus and will be used for special programming and scheduled family visits.



**BOYNECLARKE LLP WELCOMES J.W. STEPHEN JOHNSTON**

**BOYNECLARKE LLP** is pleased to welcome J.W. Stephen Johnston to the firm. Stephen joins our Accident and Personal Injury Team as Counsel. Originally from Dartmouth, Stephen has practiced law for 32 years in Nova Scotia. Prior to joining **BOYNECLARKE LLP**, he worked as in-house Counsel at Intact Insurance for 26 years. In addition to Stephen’s extensive experience in the world of personal injury litigation, he has widespread knowledge of insurance coverage and general insurance litigation.

**DARTMOUTH-BASED ALSCOTT AWARDED HVAC CONTRACT ON BP MAD DOG 2**

**Alscott Air Systems Ltd.**, a global leader in marine and offshore HVAC systems, is pleased to announce that it has been awarded the HVAC contract for BP’s Mad Dog 2 floating production unit. Alscott Air Systems will engineer and supply HVAC equipment on the Mad Dog 2 semi-submersible production unit, which is being manufactured in South Korea by Samsung Heavy Industries. “With the downturn in the oil and gas industry, this is a major contract for Alscott,” says Keith Carlaw, Alscott’s Executive Vice President.

**SCANWAY CATERING & GLEN ARBOUR GOLF COURSE ANNOUNCE NEW PARTNERSHIP**

**Scanway Catering**, one of Halifax’s oldest catering companies, announced in April that they would be partnering with Glen Arbour Golf Course to exclusively handle all of their food and beverage catering. “We’re very excited to be working with not only Nova Scotia’s top golf course, but a top golf course from across Canada,” says Ankur Gupta, Director of Business Development for Scanway.



**FROZEN TREATS ARRIVE IN TIME FOR SUMMER AT SUNNYSIDE MALL**

We are thrilled to announce that Pinkberry® Frozen Yogurt is now available at Second Cup in **Sunnyside Mall!** Pinkberry® launched in Los Angeles in 2005, as the original brand that reinvented frozen yogurt and reignited the craze worldwide with its signature light and refreshing taste. This product is made with high-quality ingredients, fresh hand-cut fruit and premium toppings. This is the perfect summer treat to enjoy on their patio while catching up with friends or taking a break from work. Stop by to experience Pinkberry® for yourself!

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE NOVA SCOTIA TRUCKING SAFETY ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCED AS A 2018 CHAMPION ON MENTAL HEALTH**

The Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health announced its 2018 Champions of Mental Health. Linda Corkum, a long-time supporter of workplace safety and mental health, recognized the need to provide mental health education and training through her role as Executive Director at the **Nova Scotia Trucking Safety Association**. There, she brought in The Working Mind Program making it the first trucking association in Canada to implement the program. Congratulations to Linda on your recognition in Workplace Mental Health.



**KELLY SERVICES ANNOUNCES NEW BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT REPRESENTATIVE IN ATLANTIC CANADA**

**Kelly Services** is extremely excited to have Matthew Bower join our team of Talent Acquisition Specialists. He will be working with current and future clients to match our talent in their roles, creating the right fit. Matthew brings more than 25 years of business experience from entrepreneurial ventures to leadership positions within fortune 500 companies. His savvy business sense and keen eye for talent is a perfect combination for this Business Development Representative role. Welcome aboard, Matthew!

**DEVOFX HELPS VETERANS WITH MENTAL WELLNESS**

For the last year, **DevoFX** has been helping veterans cope with mental health issues by offering sculpture classes, which enables healing through arts and creativity, promoting and enhancing mental wellness. These classes create fellowship, friendship and a transparent environment allowing veterans to break from isolation, socialize and share stories. As of today, seven veterans have benefited from this program. In addition, DevoFX has received inquiries from other provinces and organizations dealing with PTSD. Marc Deveault, owner of DevoFX is a veteran himself and employs veterans.

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**MID-MONTH MONDAY SHOPPING A HIT FOR DRESS FOR SUCCESS**

**Dress for Success Halifax** is pleased to announce the success of The Social Boutique's™ Mid-Month Monday Shopping. Founder Brenda Saunders/Todd and VP Operations, Kim Bourgeois are leading the charge, along with a few volunteers pictured above. Additionally, private shopping parties have been a

huge hit! "We are incredibly appreciative of the volunteer efforts, as well as, clothing and monetary donations received from the community, as they are enabling us to continue to transform the lives of women in our community through Dress for Success programs," says President Julie Wisen.

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# BRINGING THE WORLD TO OUR SHORES

The new Halifax Convention Centre has downtown booming

By Jon Tattrie

After spending years and millions of dollars building a new Halifax Convention Centre to attract people to the city, the success of the enterprise will depend on convincing delegates to leave the building.

Paul MacKinnon, Executive Director of the Downtown Halifax Business Commission, says he's been to many conventions elsewhere that felt like casinos. Once they get you to the convention centre, nothing pulls you away from that table. But the Halifax Convention Centre from the start focused on getting delegates out the doors, he says.

"It's not really been done here before and frankly, in my experience, it's not something that's done very well in most cities that I've travelled to for conferences," he says. "What's different about this convention centre from a lot of other ones is it's right smack in the middle of downtown. We've got these wonderful, historic, walkable blocks. There really is a sense that they want people to get out and explore the city."





HALIFAX CONVENTION CENTRE

1650



*The grand opening of the new Argyle streetscape last November. Paul MacKinnon (second from left), along with Councillor Matt Whitman, Mayor Mike Savage and MP Andy Fillmore.*

Contributed

MacKinnon says that's crucial for the long-term prosperity of downtown businesses. Once the shine's off the Nova Centre and another city opens a newer convention centre, Halifax will rely on an all-around experience that makes attending conventions here worth it.

He says the convention centre has lived up to promises since finally opening in late 2017, after many delays. "A giant weight had been lifted. Just having survived all that construction was a huge relief. That turned very quickly to excitement," MacKinnon says. "We were promised great things would happen and it really seems like great things are happening."

Joe McGuinness operates four downtown businesses and says the three year-round ones have seen a sales bump already. "Absolutely. Immediately. The convention centre opened officially on

Dec. 15. Shortly thereafter, there was a weekend event — a wedding show — and we had one of our busiest Saturdays and Sundays in December ever as a result of that."

When the federal Liberal Party convention rolled into town, many of its 3,000 delegates stepped outside to visit Dirty Nelly's, Stubborn Goat Gastropub and Antojo Tacos and Tequilas — all businesses owned by McGuinness. He saw a 30 per cent increase in sales that Saturday. On average, takings go up 20 per cent when the new convention centre has a conference.

"The old convention centre, the capacity was limited, as we all know. We didn't see the huge, multi-national conventions coming to town," he says. "We did see spikes in business when there were events such as Festival of Trees or the Halifax Chamber of Commerce

**»»** *What's different about this convention centre from a lot of other ones is it's right smack in the middle of downtown. We've got these wonderful, historic, walkable blocks. There really is a sense that they want people to get out and explore the city."*

— Paul MacKinnon,  
Executive Director,  
Downtown Halifax  
Business Commission

spring and fall dinners."

A big conference at the old centre would bring about 700 people to the downtown, whereas the new one will bring in several thousand people for big conferences. McGuinness says before, a bump in business only came if the demographics were just right. Often, he saw no increase at his pubs and restaurants. "Certainly, there was business in the past, but nothing that compares to the new convention centre."

He's a member of Discover Halifax ([discoverhalifaxns.com](http://discoverhalifaxns.com)) and that helps him see what's coming up at the centre and when delegates will have free time. When *Business Voice* spoke to him, he was preparing for the upcoming East Coast Music Awards in May. Next up was Rendez-vous Canada, a large hospitality and tourism trade show. It last came more than a decade ago, but outgrew Halifax.

Next up will be the Federation of Canadian Municipalities at the end of May, bringing mayors and senior executives from across Canada. McGuinness had his eye on June's 450-delegate congress of the Canadian Neurological Sciences Federation and the similarly sized meeting of the Canadian Meteorological and Oceanographic Society.

"During the months of May and June, we're expecting to be extremely



Joe Robichaud, Tanglewood Studio

*During the months of May and June, we're expecting to be extremely busy. We're looking forward to it — it's been a long time coming."*

— Joe McGuinness,  
Co-Owner Platinum  
Hospitality Inc.

busy. We're looking forward to it — it's been a long time coming," he says. "Durt Nelly's, although it is an Irish pub, one of the reasons I think it does succeed here is because the culture of Nova Scotia is Celtic — Irish and Scottish. The old kitchen parties and the traditional music blend well together."

After enduring the streetscaping and construction, he's reaping the rewards. "Kudos to everyone involved. Our mantra here with our businesses is to create a legendary experience for each and every guest and we're thankful for the opportunity to do so."

Carrie Cussons, the President and CEO of the Halifax Convention Centre, shares that optimism. She says they have 49 events booked, delivering 30,000 delegates in the first year. "It's about three times what we've ever had," she says. "We're really excited."

The gigantic project started in 2012 as part of the \$500 million Nova Centre, which consists of about one million square feet. It was originally set to open in January 2016, but in fact opened in December 2017.

Trade Centre Limited, the Crown corporation that preceded the Halifax Convention Centre, spent a decade making the case for the new centre inside the mammoth Nova Centre. Taxpayers poured in millions of dollars at the federal, provincial and municipal levels. The 2015 Halifax Convention Centre Act decreed that the province and HRM would jointly appoint a board of directors to manage and operate the new convention centre. That replaced TCL.

The centre is much bigger than the old one. It has more than 120,000 square feet of event space, including a 30,000 square-foot ballroom overlooking the city, a 50,000 square-foot multipurpose convention space and 40,000 square feet of smaller-scale meeting spaces.

In March, the Nova Centre finally

announced its anchor hotel: Sutton Place Hotels, a luxury brand that is now putting some 262 high-end guest rooms and a restaurant into its part of the centre. Tom Gaglardi, CEO of the hotel chain, told reporters it should open in the spring of 2019. At the same time, developer Joe Ramia said the Nova Centre had



**DOWNTOWN  
HALIFAX**  
downtownhalifax.ca



Joe Robichaud, Tanglewood Studio

70 per cent of its tenancies filled. The unfilled sections mostly consist of office and restaurant space, he said, expressing optimism that they too will be filled.

The centre's staff worked with the tourism industry and downtown businesses before opening to develop a local program. On the centre's website, click on location and you'll find the slogan: "We're on the edge of North America and in the centre of it all." Every other link on the page sends people to the wider world, encouraging them to eat locally, go to a cultural event or walk downtown.

The centre used about 226,000 square feet of glass (which it measures as equal to 13 NHL rinks) — meaning it's hard not to catch a stunning view of historic Halifax.

The first thing Cussons talks about is the importance of showcasing that world outside the centre. "As much as we love to host people within the facility, obviously we would like to get folks out into downtown Halifax and all of the province of Nova Scotia."

The idea is to give delegates a taste of Nova Scotia inside the centre that inspires them to go out exploring. Inside, TV screens show videos and photos of things like people dining on the ocean floor in the Bay of Fundy or driving through nature's painting palette on the Cabot Trail. They'll also see fresh brews from local cafes and images of the iconic Halifax Central Library.

They give visitors a literal taste of Nova Scotia by working with local suppliers including Meadow Brook Farms,

River View Herbs, Blue Harbour Cheese and Acadian Maple Products, to bring their products to the menus. Homemade Acadian Maple ice cream has proved to be an early hit, Cussons says. Other treats have included mini donairs and blue cheese salads.

"I know that local suppliers are really enjoying that we're using their products in the facility and I also know that they're seeing traffic from people coming out to explore," she says.

She says the convention centre works with Taste of Nova Scotia to do this. It has a community panel with representatives from tourism across the province, downtown businesses, the airport, hoteliers, all helping to create an "amazing experience" in the province for delegates.

Out of that group came the idea to focus on giving each delegate a warm Maritime welcome. At key contact points like the Halifax Stanfield International airport and hotel check-ins, they've put up welcome signs and promotions aimed at delegates.

"We're really ready as the convention centre, and more importantly as a city and a province, to really put our best foot forward as we welcome those guests," she says.

It's about "teasing them in the convention centre with what the experiences could be and then driving them out into the community to actually experience the authentic way we like to host in Halifax and Nova Scotia."

So far, word-of-mouth suggests it's working, she says. They do a lot of exit

**“***We're really ready as the convention centre, and more importantly as a city and a province, to really put our best foot forward as we welcome those guests.***”**

**— Carrie Cussons,**  
President and CEO,  
Halifax Convention  
Centre

surveying to see what delegates did and as time goes by they'll be able to measure the economic impact. Cussons says once the food market is established, they want to focus more on cultural events for delegates to go out to.

MacKinnon says members of DHBC located on Argyle Street are reporting boosts to business. But he's also heard from businesses on Grafton and Barrington streets and they are beyond keen to draw those delegates their way. He says the general feeling is, "we as taxpayers have put a big investment into the convention business, so let's make sure that we're maximizing that."

He wants to build on the welcome programs so the practice becomes a staple part of holding a convention here. He notes the airport has greeters specifically welcoming delegates as they arrive and telling them what they can do while in Nova Scotia. A Show Your Badge program offers deals to delegates at participating businesses.

That "wow" factor, MacKinnon says, will hopefully encourage business visitors to see some of the sights and one day return as tourists — or for another convention.

Up the hill at Durty Nelly's, McGuinness says his decade in business has seen steady increases in revenue. "We've not had any years where our business went down, so we can honestly say we were not negatively affected by the building of the Nova Centre or the streetscaping."

He hopes they will continue to grow as the convention centre settles in. ■

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*Jeehan Javed (left) was hired on with BlueLight Analytics as a Sales Associate by Director of Operations, Leeza Hack. Javed now focuses on marketing, operations and special projects.*

Paul Darrow

# Retaining smart, young professionals

Graduate to Opportunity program provides incentives for employers and new grads **By Heather Laura Clarke**

Jeehan Javed was born in Pakistan and raised in Dubai, but she knows all about the perception that it's difficult for recent university graduates to start their careers in Atlantic Canada.

When she graduated from Mount Allison University's commerce program in 2016, many of her classmates moved to Ontario and Alberta for traditional banking and consulting jobs. She chose to move to Halifax instead because she says living here offers something her friends simply aren't getting.

"When I talk to people living out there, it sounds like we have a much better work/life balance here in Atlantic Canada. The region itself kind of promotes that, which was one of the biggest

**“***When I talk to people living out there, it sounds like we have a much better work/life balance here in Atlantic Canada... which was one of the biggest reasons I wanted to stay.”*

— **Jeehan Javed**,  
Sales Associate,  
BlueLight Analytics

reasons I wanted to stay,” says Javed. “I can push myself professionally, but my career doesn't take over my entire life.”

Just a few months after she graduated, Javed was hired full-time at BlueLight Analytics Inc., a dental technology firm based in Halifax. She started as their first official Sales Associate, but her role evolved quickly as Javed put her critical thinking skills to work.

“I came in and assessed where we were and then developed processes and systems for inbound and outbound sales,” says Javed. “Now, I'm still involved with sales and business development, but I focus more on operations, marketing and special projects — helping out wherever there's a problem to be solved.”



*Ross Whyte (right) was hired as a CAD/BIM Technician at Campbell Comeau Engineering after a successful co-op through NSCC, by company partner, Michel Comeau.*

Paul Darrow

Leeza Hack, BlueLight’s Director of Operations, says it worked out perfectly to hire Javed when they did.

“She enabled us to have the right systems in place before our sales started ramping up,” says Hack. “Everything was already organized, which facilitated an easier onboarding of the rest of our sales department.”

Even though Javed’s help was instrumental in building BlueLight, Hack admits they may not have been able to hire her — at least, not when they did — if it hadn’t been for a provincial government program called Graduate to Opportunity.

It covers a portion of a new graduates’ salary for the first two years. Since the program launched in February of 2015, more than 500 recent graduates have used it to secure full-time work in their chosen fields.

With a startup, Hack says you’re “hyper-aware” of every single financial decision, so hiring anyone is a big deal.

“Programs like this ease the strain of adding a new person to your company because you know you’ll be reimbursed for a portion of their salary,” says Hack.

“It’s allowed us to grow our team while still being conscious of our budget.”

Statistics show that while new employees need time to learn the ropes before they can be productive, they more than make up for that with enthusiasm and fresh perspectives.

“The value and diversity of experience these recent graduates bring to an organization is invaluable,” says Hack, who has since brought on two more recent grads through the Graduate to Opportunity program.

“They’re always willing to take on a new challenge and be flexible — and those traits aren’t as easy to find in someone with more experience in an industry.”

Nova Scotia’s Minister of Labour and Advanced Education, Labi Kousoulis, agrees that young employees can have a tremendously positive impact on a company.

“They energize us. They bring a different perspective,” says Kousoulis. “In any workplace you want diversity, you want a range of ages, you want people with different outlooks on life.”

Kousoulis says hiring new graduates

had been an important part of the Liberals’ platform commitment back in 2013, but he later realized they weren’t practicing what they preached. Every ad for jobs within the Public Service Commission was still requiring “a minimum of two years’ experience.”

“If there’s no opportunity here, our youth won’t stay here — they’re going to go where the jobs are. But when our new graduates go out into the job market, many times they’re competing against people with a lot of experience,” says Kousoulis. “If you’re hiring someone and your candidates are equally matched, but one has experience and one doesn’t, chances are you’re going to hire the person with experience.”

Kousoulis says the Liberal government knew they needed to lead by example, so they scrapped the “minimum two years’ experience” standard and created MakeItHere ([makeithere.novscotia.ca](http://makeithere.novscotia.ca)) to showcase the programs that help grads enter the workplace. Since then, he says they’ve hired more than 1,800 youth into public service.

Kousoulis says there can certainly be costs associated with hiring someone

fresh out of university. Since the recent graduate will need to be trained and mentored — and it will take time for their productivity to ramp up — the Graduate to Opportunity program offers a financial incentive to level the playing field.

Graduate to Opportunity is open to companies with 100 or fewer employees, startup companies incorporated within two years of the application date, social enterprises, not-for-profit organizations and registered charities with recognized standing. The employer must create a new, permanent, full-time position based in Nova Scotia, that pays at least \$30,000.

Approved employers are reimbursed 25 per cent of the first year’s salary and 12.5 per cent of the second year’s salary — a total of 37.5 per cent over two years. If the new graduate is a member of a designated diversity group, their employer will be reimbursed 35 per cent of the first year’s salary instead of 25 per cent. This includes aboriginal Canadians, visible minorities, people with disabilities, women in under-represented occupations and international student graduates.

“Employers will get a bright, young



Contributed

individual who’s eager and motivated — and graduates get their foot in the door so they can stay in the province,” says Kousoulis. “It’s a win-win.”

After a lifetime of living in large cities in Asia, Javed had liked the idea of living and working in a smaller city like

**“Employers will get a bright, young individual who’s eager and motivated — and graduates get their foot in the door so they can stay in the province. It’s a win-win.”**

— **Labi Kousoulis**,  
Minister of Labour and  
Advanced Education,  
Province of Nova Scotia

Halifax.

“I absolutely love Halifax. I grew up by the water, so being in a city on the ocean is absolutely wonderful,” says Javed. “I love how close to nature we are, and how close-knit the community is here in Halifax.”



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Ross Whyte isn't a native Nova Scotian, but this is where he and his family have made their home. Originally from Aberdeen, Scotland, Whyte moved to Nova Scotia during the summer of 2015 for his father's career.

"The culture of Nova Scotia is very much like home in Scotland," says Whyte. "I knew I wanted to build a career here and this is where my family is."

Whyte went to NSCC to study architectural drafting and part of his coursework included completing a co-op term at Campbell Comeau Engineering in Halifax.

It was working out well and his boss, Michel Comeau, learned that the Graduate to Opportunity program would make it even easier to bring Whyte on full-time after he was finished school.

"In our business, the technology we use is always changing and recent grads are trained in that newer technology," says Comeau. "They're able to come in and know what to do right away — and that's an asset for us."

When Whyte graduated last June, Comeau hired him as a CAD/BIM technician at Campbell Comeau Engineering. Today he does computer-aided drafting and building information modelling, something he's been training for since he was child sketching every building in sight.

"If a company was on the fence about hiring someone or not, this might make the difference for them," says Comeau. "It's a way to hire young talent more affordably."

Thanks to programs like Graduate to Opportunity and increased co-op placements, Kousoulis says Nova Scotia is now retaining more youth than it's losing, the first time that's happened since the 1980s.

Since Graduate to Opportunity launched in February of 2015, more than 500 recent graduates have used it to secure full-time work in their chosen fields.

Kousoulis says he likes to remind university students to mention the Graduate to Opportunity program during job interviews, since their potential employer may not have heard of it.

"If you're the only candidate that tells them about it — 'Hey, if you hire me, you can get reimbursed 37.5 per cent of my salary over two years' — you're probably going to be the one they choose." ■

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# The rise of real-time

Atlantic Live Stream finds a much needed niche **By Matthew Halliday**



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**“LTE networks had arrived, internet speeds were getting faster and faster and high-quality streaming video was becoming really possible. And I realized, ‘oh God, it’s happening. I better get on it before it’s too late.’”**

— **Michael Hall,**  
Co-Founder,  
Atlantic Livestream

Sometimes an idea seems so obvious that you wonder why no one has thought of it before — and just as quickly realize that, if it’s really as good as you think, you’d better jump on it ASAP, before the field gets too crowded.

For 31-year-old Michael Hall, co-founder of Atlantic Live Stream, that idea was simple. Since 2009, Hall has operated Word of Mouth Media, a Halifax photography and video production company. “In the photography world, you’ve got to fight for years, tooth and nail, to come out on top,” he says. “I was looking for a niche.”

The idea he kept coming back to was to use his expertise as a professional videographer to build a new company focused on professionally, slickly produced live streaming, as an antidote to the webcam-at-the-back-of-the-lecture-hall approach most common at the time.

He sat on the idea until a couple of years ago, when the advent of social media live streaming gave him a kick in the pants.

“That’s when live streaming saw a rebirth with Facebook Live and other social media apps,” says Hall. “LTE networks had arrived, internet speeds were getting faster and faster and high-quality streaming video was becoming really possible. And I realized, ‘oh God, it’s happening. I better get on it before it’s too late.’”

Last summer, Atlantic Live Stream was born, partly in anticipation of a crowded field of competitors. A year later, the professional live streaming space is still curiously empty. Hall thinks this must be a temporary situation, though he’s hoping to use the breathing room to establish his company as a local leader.

“There are lots of gear-heads who are doing live streaming,” says Hall, “but they probably don’t have an eye for framing, for photography, for lighting. So you’ve got these heavily produced streams that don’t actually look or sound that great because the people producing them don’t have that particular expertise.”

Atlantic Live Stream has so far developed a significant roster of clients,

each necessitating a different creative and technical approach.

They do a weekly show with Halifax lifestyle video blogger Erin Trafford, which can focus on everything from home renovation, to guest interviews or to road shows. In October, they did a traditional live stream of the Art of City Building Conference, but embellished it with roaming, live, on-the-floor interviews. That same month, they worked with Live 105 to stream a Gord Downie tribute concert at Garrison Brewery, requiring collaboration with a sound engineer and the addition of a wireless gimbal camera for close, dynamic performance shots.

For big events, like the Halifax Chamber of Commerce Halifax Business Awards this January, they’ll marshal up to six camera operators working with wireless cameras — minimizing cables and other impacts to the event, as well as giving them freedom to roam. Another operator will be responsible for switching between cameras.

It’s a big step up from streaming to YouTube or Facebook Live with an iPhone, which Hall believes works just fine for some purposes, but not when variables start piling up — noise, lighting challenges, large spaces, big crowds and so on. Atlantic Live Stream will also produce after-the-fact, broadcast-quality highlight reels, with full post-production.

Hall has also worked with smaller clients, streaming weddings and even funerals.

“That’s an area where you wonder, ‘why would you want to live stream a funeral?’” asks Hall. “But of course it makes sense when you think about it. Family might not be able to make it, the costs of travel, that sort of thing.”

Hall believes that just about any event a client might hire a photographer or videographer for is fair game.

“It’s going to become standard for a lot of things and in the next year or so, you’re going to see a surge in companies like ours. It’s going to become a much more competitive field, so I’m just glad we got here first.”



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# The power of innovation and immigration



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Innovation and immigration are critical to Halifax’s growth and prosperity.

Innovation — which means committing resources in the form of time, human resources and money to develop new products and services, or to find new ways to generate value — will be a catalyst to ensure our local businesses grow, especially if they have an eye to serving a global market. This increased productivity, alongside increased immigration, will fuel the prosperity we are striving for.

We are at a critical point in time, where all of our citizens, not-for-profits, corporations, academic institutions, risk capital and governments need to go all-in, so that we can reach our economic goals. It is integral that we all work together, passionately and collaboratively, to ensure the outcomes that we want. This includes more graduates staying here, more newcomers calling Halifax home, more local businesses growing and selling outside of our region, a thriving arts and culture scene, attractive job opportunities and supporting entrepreneurs.

With one of the highest concentrations of academic institutions in the country, we are connecting our students with local companies and providing them with opportunities to stay. We are also maximizing research and development assets at our post-secondary institutions by connecting them to businesses near and far to explore and develop new products, services and value with and for businesses.

At the Partnership, we will focus on strategies to be more inclusive of newcomers and young talent so we can become known as a welcoming place to live, work and study. One program addressing this is the Atlantic Immigration Pilot. Through this program, we will continue to work with business and post-secondary partners to support companies in finding the talent they need to grow.

Halifax’s Innovation District is also becoming a reality and exciting things are happening: the Volta expansion, COVE opening its doors, Creative Destruction Lab-Atlantic, Dalhousie’s ideaHUB and Saint Mary’s University’s Entrepreneurship, Discovery and Innovation (EDI) Hub, to name a few. Funding for Atlantic Canada’s Ocean Supercluster is another great catalyst for innovation in our region.

New and viable product and business ideas attract funding, which in turn enables entrepreneurs to grow businesses and create jobs, which drives GDP — all of which is in line with the Halifax Partnership’s mandate to keep, grow and attract business, talent and investment.

If Halifax maximizes the power of innovation and immigration in an aligned effort to grow and prosper, we will all win.

We look forward to working with you toward a prosperous 2018-19.

# Plan for a healthy future

A holistic approach to overall health and wellness



**DR. CHRISTINE SAUER**  
DOCCHRISTINE.COM

You all know of financial planners, career planners, project planners, wedding planners, even funeral planners. But have you ever heard of a health planner?

As much as it is important to plan for things like career, finances and more, wouldn't it be more important to plan for one's health?

Why are there so few? Is it because people think that health, illness and disease are things that just happen to you? That may be true in a case where you fall down a flight of steps and break your arm, but most cases of chronic illness can be prevented, much improved or even reversed with careful and comprehensive health planning.

For example; when you want to build a complex and well-functioning house, you would hire an experienced architect, who assesses your needs, then crafts a detailed blueprint for the house and guides you through the build.

We need more people planning for our "house of health" and helping us build it on our "property," our body and mind. Good health planning involves a comprehensive assessment and multi-faceted plan, with a process that comprises of steps to build or re-build your health from the ground up and provide you with a comprehensive and transformative experience and a health maintenance plan to follow.

This type of health planning and coaching is not limited to one dimension — fitness, weight loss, stress reduction, diet, mindfulness and so on — it really involves all aspects and facets of our health and demands special knowledge and experience.



**“**Health is a team effort — but a good team needs a team coach. That's where I see specially trained health and performance coaches come in and fill the void. They would be trained not only to assess and help with nutritional and lifestyle needs, but especially to optimize your health for ultimate performance at work and in life.”

Health planning and coaching can be done completely online, confidentially and in co-operation with your past, current and future health care and wellness providers.

Health is a team effort — but a good team needs a coach. That's where I see specially trained health and performance coaches come in and fill the void. They would be trained not only to assess and help with nutritional and lifestyle needs, but to optimize your health for ultimate performance at work and in life. They can help manage stress and sleep, co-ordinate efforts of other health and wellness providers, devise a comprehensive health, nutrition, lifestyle and supplement plan, help with meal planning, recipes, even cooking classes as well as coach you through necessary lifestyle changes, hold you accountable and — in short —

always have your back!

Like a good sports coach they listen and ask the “good questions,” find out where you need to improve, craft your individual health plan around nutrition, lifestyle and health education. They also challenge and hold you accountable to reach your best physical, mental, spiritual and financial health and wellness and to continue your new habits for life.

What would it mean for your company and employees if they had a health planner and coach on their team? I believe it would drastically cut sick time, improve performance, happiness and employee retention.

Dr. Christine Sauer is a Naturopathic Doctor, an expert Health Planner and Certified Health Coach.

# Hiring for fit

Clearly defining what candidates need to succeed with your organization



**LAURA GODSOE** PRINCIPAL & DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION LEAD, KNIGHTSBRIDGE ROBERTSON SURRETTE

For years, organizations have been advised to pay close attention to cultural fit in their hiring practices. Screening for fit has often been touted as the solution to hiring misfires, poor retention and negative morale. But what do we mean by fit? And how do we decide that a potential candidate doesn't fit?

One of the dangers of screening for fit in a hiring process is that "fit" can often mean "sameness" and that hiring for fit can act as a roadblock, preventing organizations from achieving a truly diverse workforce.

The solution is not to stop assessing for fit — it's important that a potential employee aligns in key areas with corporate culture — it's to be sure not to conflate personal fit with organizational fit and to carefully examine how you are measuring fit in your recruitment and selection process.

So how do you do this?

## Clearly define what allows people to succeed in your organization

Take the time to define the competencies, skill sets and behaviours that have proved most successful in your organization and then strategize ways to assess candidates objectively against those criteria, so that you can avoid relying on a "gut check" in the midst of your screening process.

## Clearly define the role and the selection criteria

Define the absolute must-have criteria then define the nice-to-haves. How might a person who comes to the table

with the must-haves, but not the nice-to-haves, add value in a different way? While a good search begins with clear criteria, you don't want to overly narrow the potential pool to the extent that only those with a particular rarified degree are screened in.

## Deconstruct your screening process

Make sure that those who are screening resumes on the front line understand how to assess candidates objectively against your baseline, but also feel empowered to think through how a candidate with a non-traditional career path might add value in a different way. It may also help to offer unconscious bias training or trial a blind hiring screening process whereby candidates' names and identifying characteristics are removed from resumes.

## Question the interview process

Develop a set of structured and

behaviourally based questions and use them consistently. Think through who is on the interviewing panel: do potential candidates see themselves represented in the room? Keeping your interview process consistent and allowing for a diversity of voices in the room will steer decision-making away from instinctual affiliations with candidates and toward a more objective assessment of fit.

## Don't throw the concept of fit away, just measure it more effectively

Evaluating for cultural fit, while still a valuable part of your search process, should be done carefully, thoughtfully and systematically. The end goal of this process of re-evaluation is that you emerge at the end of the hiring process with a new teammate who offers a fresh perspective on your current challenges and better equips you to provide service to a wide diversity of clients.



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# Assets vs. expenses

Valuing the power of employees



**THERESA TIPERT**  
OWNER, BRIGHTSHADOW  
BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

I have heard many employers say over the years that payroll is the largest operational expense for their company. It stands to reason that when times are tough, companies think that the best way to cut their expenses is to cut staff. We have all heard the terms: down-sizing,

**“**As employers, do we believe that our employees are something that we ‘use up’ to generate revenue?**”**

right-sizing, re-sizing. These are all just words used to say the same thing — the company is reducing its perceived highest expense.

What is an expense? Accounting professionals define an expense as: “The reduction in value of an asset as it is used to generate revenue.”\* Wow! “The reduction in value of an asset ...” As employers, do we believe that our employees are something that we “use up” to generate revenue?

An asset is defined as: “An item of economic value that is expected to yield a benefit to the owning entity in future periods. Expected to yield a benefit in future periods...”\* That sounds like employees.

With expenses and assets clearly

defined, we need to take a moment and think about how each of these are treated in an organization.

Expenses, as defined above, are used up to create revenue. In most organizations, these will include such items as office supplies, fuel and utilities. We can clearly understand how all of these items are depleted over time. Pens run out of ink, we use electricity to run everything and fuel makes our cars go. But should we be thinking that because people make our business run, that they are something we should use up in the process?

Assets provide long-term financial benefit to a company. Examples of company assets are: buildings, equipment and vehicles. Buildings provide us with a place to do our work, equipment makes our jobs easier and sometimes quicker — but vehicles? A common belief is that vehicles depreciate by almost half as soon as we drive them off the lot. So why do we treat cars as assets and people as expenses?

We should be treating people as the biggest asset we have in any organization. People are the ones who generate revenue on an ongoing basis. They are the ones who process everything, run the machines, show up to the buildings, drive the cars and take care of everyone that interacts with our business. Employees are assets that we should invest in. Teach them to grow and achieve so that we can all grow and achieve more, each and every day.

The growth of our economy is a hot topic, especially when times are tough. Cutting out our greatest assets during tough times will not spur this growth, it will lessen your ability to be innovative and will likely result in the opposite effect. When employees earn money, they spend money. Consumers spending money make companies busier, who in turn will then have to hire more people. This pattern of earning and spending is the very thing the economy needs to continue to grow and make our city, region and country prosperous.

\*Accounting Tools, 2017

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# So, you've hired a co-op student ... Now what?

Maximizing your experience with a star student on staff



**ABBY TUCKER**  
PROGRAM COORDINATOR,  
CO-OP, HALIFAX CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE

For employers, hiring a co-op student can be incredibly exciting. Opening up your doors for a student to gain real life experience, while still in school, is something that can change a student's perspective on education. Here are some tips about maximizing your next co-op experience.

## **Be prepared**

Coming into a new workplace as a student can be very intimidating, but nothing is worse than coming into a new workplace and feeling like a nuisance. The best thing you can do to start your student off on the right foot is to prepare a plan for them. Lay out exactly what you want them to work on over the course of their semester. Having a plan and clearly defined expectations shows your student that you are eager to have them on the team and that you value them.

## **Answer their questions**

As students, many of us have never worked in an office environment so we will probably feel a bit out of place at first. Giving your student an opportunity to ask questions on those first few days is going to help get the silly things out of the way.

## **Understand why they are there**

Your new student chose to do a co-op because they want to learn above and beyond what a classroom lecture can teach them. Being able to see things



Ashley Stobo, Abby Tucker and Emma Menchefski at a Hire Me Halifax event.

from their point of view can give you a huge advantage. Understanding that your student may still be in the beginning stages of their post-secondary education is something else to keep in mind. They are likely going to want to get their hands dirty with everything they possibly can.

## **Make them feel like part of the team**

Depending on the size of your organization it may take time for them to get the chance to work with everyone, so give your student the opportunity to meet the staff early in the term. This gives your student the chance to start building relationships with their new co-workers. Plus, it saves your staff from an awkward kitchen encounter.

## **Give them some space**

Similar to when you move into a new home, you need some time to settle in. Your student will want time to organize their personal space and to absorb their new environment. Giving them some extra space during those first few days

is going to allow your student to adjust at their own pace, setting them up for success in the workplace.

## **Talk to them**

It takes time for any new employee to wrap their head around roles and responsibilities, office norms and organizational culture. Set aside time, even 15 minutes, once per week, to let them bring forward their successes and their concerns. This provides an opportunity for you to build a rapport, build on their strengths and discuss any potential issues early on, while encouraging them to succeed.

As students, we are just discovering who we are in the workplace, and where we fit in with most office cultures, so allowing time to adjust and absorb is crucial. Setting your student up for success within the first week of their new placement is going to ensure that you have a productive and exciting work term with the newest addition to your team.



# Budding boards

Things to think about before joining a board of a cannabis company **By Richard Blackwell**

So, you've been approached to join the board of a nascent public cannabis company and it looks like a pretty attractive offer. The chance to make a significant financial gain as a shareholder or option holder looks impressive. And the CEO looks like a real player with the skills and drive to make it work. Should you take the plunge?

As you would when considering any board seat, you need to think about whether you have the skills needed to make a contribution. In the case of cannabis companies, experience in finance, marketing and even packaging will probably be valuable, as would a background in highly regulated industries, the pharmaceutical business or agribusiness.

Then ask yourself, are you confident in management and the other directors around the table? Is the board diverse enough to get a broad range of perspectives?

This is a fast-growing, highly volatile business and you will need to set aside more time than you would on a more traditional board. Don't expect monthly

**“***When there is a lot of volatility in an industry, there is more potential liability.***”**

— Cheryl Reicin,  
Partner, Torys LLP

meetings — they will likely be much more frequent. And there will be middle-of-the-night calls if there is M&A action.

“We're talking about big time commitments,” says Cheryl Reicin, a Partner at Torys LLP and Chair of the firm's life sciences practice. “There are so many things happening on a weekly basis.”

At some point, she adds, directors might have to make tough decisions on who is going to manage the company. It may not be pleasant to usher the founder out of the CEO's office.

Is there adequate directors and officers (D&O) insurance? While liability

issues are similar to other businesses Reicin says: “When there is a lot of volatility in an industry, there is more potential liability.” This is also an industry selling a product with health effects that are not yet fully studied — and it is possible the company may get caught up in legal tangles, especially if it has any operations in the United States, where federal law still deems cannabis illegal.

And then there is your reputation. Are you on other boards where some members might balk at your participation on a cannabis board? Attitudes are changing, but don't expect everyone to be enthusiastic if you decide to take the plunge.

Richard Blackwell is a former business reporter at the Financial Post and The Globe and Mail. Over three decades, he covered many sectors, including technology, financial services, media and energy.

Permission to re-print being granted by the Institute of Corporate Directors.

# Candidate care

Knightsbridge Robertson Surrette creates program to support candidates from start to finish **By Carol Dobson**

The search for a new position involves a great deal of stress, especially on behalf of the searcher. One of the hardest parts is waiting to find out where in the search process the person is, after they have reached out to a potential employer or search firm. Being kept in the communication loop helps eliminate at least part of that stress.

Knightsbridge Robertson Surrette (KRBS) specializes in searches for mid-level professionals and above and has developed a new program to ensure that prospective candidates are kept informed as the search process develops.

“We’ve been working on our ‘Candidate Care’ program for the past year and we’re ready to launch it,” says Jeff Forbes, KRBS President and Managing Partner. “It involves looking at the process differently and making sure the candidates feel comfortable during the recruitment process.”



Yuliya Tsyhun, 123RF

When a candidate has been selected to move on to the interview process with a client, their consultant works with them to ensure they are well prepared to put their best foot forward. That includes telephone calls to establish a personal relationship with the candidate, regular emails to keep them in the loop so they know what is going to happen next, tip sheets to help the candidate prepare for

the type of interview they will have — and after the interview, updates as to whether or not the candidate will be hired.

“We surveyed hundreds of past candidates to determine their experience with our company,” he says. “We want our candidates to feel comfortable in dealing with us.”

The feedback KRBS received has been incorporated in the new program so the consultants are aware of how they are meeting the needs not just of the clients who are using the company to fill positions but also those who have put their names forward as potential employees.

“The ‘Candidate Care’ program was developed in-house and all of our staff, not just our consultants, were involved in its creation,” he says. “We want to be the best in the business when it comes to providing services to our clients and our candidates.”



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# Franchise family

Pizza Pizza looking to expand in Nova Scotia **By Heather Laura Clarke**



Contributed

If you've always wanted to be your own boss but felt nervous about going out on your own, a franchise might be the perfect solution.

Sebastian Fuschini, Pizza Pizza's Senior Vice President of Franchising, says they have 762 locations across Canada that operate as independent small businesses under a unified brand.

"You're self-employed, but you're not in business all by yourself," says Fuschini. "It's like being in business with an older brother who helps you out."

Pizza Pizza's first Halifax location opened on Grafton Street in June of 2010 and recently reopened in a brand-new spot on Argyle Street. Pizza Pizza locations popped up in 2012, on Joseph Howe Drive, Forest Hills Parkway and Peakview Way — and Fuschini says they're hoping to open even more franchises in HRM.

"We're continuing to look for new opportunities in the marketplace for individuals who want to be part of the Pizza Pizza family," says Fuschini. "We're not looking for investors — we want people who are going to be hands-on operators and want to be involved in running their business."

Pizza Pizza is a Canadian-founded, owned and operated company that has been rapidly expanding across the country. The original Pizza Pizza opened in Toronto in 1967. Fuschini says they've grown "one store at a time" as they secured the right people in each area. In western Canada, they operate the brand



Contributed

*Steve Ramalho, Pizza Pizza franchise owner located in Brampton, Ont., owns one of more than 700 franchises across Canada.*

Pizza 73, and there are now more than 100 Pizza 73 locations.

"We help our franchise owners secure financing, select, design and build restaurants — and provide outstanding marketing and operational support," explains Fuschini. "We give them the tools they need — a retail marketing plan, a business plan, training, standards and procedures — but they're the ones driving the vehicle."

The first year can be tough for any new business, but Fuschini says Pizza Pizza helps its franchisees "get off the ground" and provides training and support from the management team.

"With restaurants coast-to-coast, we have a diverse team of franchise owners coming from various professional backgrounds. Our franchise owners are passionate about our Pizza Pizza and Pizza 73 brands," says Fuschini. "Together, we are committed to providing the highest quality products and service to ensure a lasting and profitable relationship. When you join us as a franchise owner, you become part of a team of professionals who have made Pizza Pizza one of the most successful

pizza franchises in the country."

While franchisees need to have a commitment to preparing high-quality food for their customers, Fuschini says it's even more important that these small business owners work hard to support their local communities.

Pizza Pizza locations in HRM support minor hockey league teams, the Halifax Mooseheads Hockey Club, Bowl for Kids, the Breast Cancer Association of Canada and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Halifax.

"It's about so much more than serving pizza. We want people who are pillars of their community and want to get involved and give back," says Fuschini.

Food trends are always changing, but he says there's a comfort in knowing your business is based on something that always remains a favourite for people of all ages.

"It's one of those staple foods that you can eat so many different ways depending on what you like," says Fuschini. "It's a go-to food that you share with friends and it caters to every demographic. Everybody loves pizza."

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# Expanding efforts

Tate Engineering continues to use unique and flexible approaches for facility solutions **By David Pretty**

Necessity is certainly the mother of invention for Roxanne Tate. In 2011, she was expecting her third child and her husband, Murray Tate, was on the verge of relocating the family to advance his career. In light of this — and the fact their eldest child would be starting school soon — she informed her employer she wouldn't be returning from maternity leave. "Family is our first priority," says Roxanne. "We knew we needed work closer to home to be there for our children. That's when I decided I would start a company."

After spending an exhaustive year doing research and building a contact base, Roxanne started the incorporation process in 2012, to open Tate Engineering.

"Eighteen months into it, Murray decided to join the company," she says with the hint of pride.

With Murray handling project management and Roxanne covering energy management, the duo continued to expand their reach. They focused on collaborations to compete for larger mandates.

One of Tate Engineering's biggest jobs involved the new Nova Centre, for which Murray chaired the Works Committee, comprised of the four major stakeholder groups. Since the opening of the Convention Centre, reviews of the facility have been positive.

"We wanted to be a part of this project because of the impact it's now having on the province," says Roxanne.

Then there was Milton Christian Church in Queen's County, which the parishioners could scarcely afford to maintain.

"We did a needs evaluation and determined that the sanctuary area was near and dear to their hearts," says Roxanne. "If they built a new building it was going onto the property next door, so we thought 'What if you could have both?'"

After a detailed assessment it was determined that relocating the original church was a feasible option and the sanctuary was preserved, reinforced and placed on a new foundation.

"Now the parishioners have a facility that they can afford to heat, that is comfortable and accessible — and they host



*Murray and Roxanne Tate, owners of Tate Engineering.*

Joe Robichaud Tanglewood Studios

**“***Nobody wants to waste money and time, so we strive to clearly define our objectives at the beginning of a project and we outline our approach to success.***”**

— Roxanne Tate, Co-Owner, Tate Engineering

activities there throughout the week.”

Tate Engineering has also taken some creative approaches to energy management.

“We initiated an energy efficiency competition with a few long-term care facilities. Since they have limited capital we worked with the premise that they wouldn't pay anything if they didn't save energy.”

Despite the gamble, this paid dividends because all but one home reduced their energy use and the initiative has led to additional work with homes on a larger scale.

“It also demonstrated the value of behaviour change and monitoring energy use, because you need to measure what you want to manage.”

According to Roxanne, Tate Engineering's consistent integrity, effectiveness and tenacity are key to their success.

“We follow through. Nobody wants to waste money and time, so we strive to clearly define our objectives at the beginning of a project and we outline our approach to success. This provides opportunity for stakeholders to engage

in the process and tailor the solution to meet their specific needs.”

Flexibility is another cornerstone of their unique approach.

“We can also change and adapt by identifying roadblocks, digging down to the root cause and then work through it. The solution needs to be effective and it needs to align with the client's core values.”

Thanks to the relationships Tate Engineering has cultivated over the years, the company's pool of resources continues to expand.

“If we're working on a small project, we build the appropriate team to suit that project — if we have something larger and dynamic which requires a diverse team, we now have a network of experienced professionals.”

Looking to the horizon, Roxanne sees Tate Engineering's expanding roster as a healthy sign.

“We're a growing team. We've recently hired a Senior Project Manager and have plans to recruit a junior or intermediate team member later this year. We're really excited to have them on board and look forward to what we can do together in the future.”

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