

# BUSINESS VOICE

HALIFAX'S BUSINESS MAGAZINE

Ulnooweg unlocks the potential of Indigenous communities

## BUILDING CAPACITY

Pg 18

### GREEN IS GOOD

Program gives businesses a leg up **Pg 22**

### NETWORKING IS CHANGING

Linking works with the hidden job market **Pg 25**

### REDUCE WORKPLACE STRESS

Find a method that works for you **Pg 27**

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We want to increase the entrepreneurial capacity so our communities can play a deeper, broader role in the economy."

— Paul Langdon, Ulnooweg

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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)

## POWER LUNCH

“Smarter Next Year” with  
Dr. David Bardsley

DATE: Friday, June 7

TIME: 12 – 1:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Halifax Chamber of Commerce office

## POWER LUNCH

Dementia Friendly Business

DATE: Wednesday, June 12

TIME: 12 – 1:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Halifax Chamber of Commerce office

## BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

HOSTED BY: Forest Lakes Country Club

DATE: Thursday, June 20

TIME: 4:30 – 6:30 p.m.

LOCATION: 40 Eagle View Drive, Ardoise NS

## WONDER WOMEN CONFERENCE

DATE: Friday, June 21

TIME: 8 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21

## SAVE THE DATE:

DEPUTY GOVERNOR  
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# New faces, organizations and ideas

What's next for the Chamber heading into summer

@prezhfxchamber



**PATRICK SULLIVAN**  
PRESIDENT & CEO

It's summertime in Nova Scotia, the days are longer, warmer and full of sunshine, and for some, that means business slows down. For us at the Chamber, it means planning. We're gearing up for a busy fall with six luncheons already scheduled. Summer gives us a chance to think strategically about what we have left to do for our year and to plan for the coming year. We're updating communications plans, planning our policy documents and cleaning up databases.

This summer, we're kicking off our planning with an all-day session led by our new Chair of the Board and a few

new Board members. If you missed May's issue of Business Voice, we introduced our new Chair, Margaret Chapman, COO and Partner of Narrative Research. In this issue, you'll meet our five new Board members on page 28. It's important for us to have new members every few years, to ensure diverse and fresh representation. We're thrilled to welcome members across key Nova Scotian industries, like transportation and business development.

As many of you know, one of the Chamber's pillars has long been immigration, but we've expanded that focus with the addition of underrepresented groups to the workforce to ensure that our members have access to the pool of talent they need. In this issue, inspired by one of our new Board members, we tell the story of Ulnooweg. I've learned a lot about this organization in the last few weeks. Ulnooweg plays a huge role in business development in Indigenous communities. They offer access to capital, business plan support and so much more — read the story on page 18.

We engage our members by finding issues that impact their business and

then looking for solutions. Did you know 83 per cent of our members are small businesses with less than 25 employees? We support our members however we can, and this issue we're tackling energy efficiency opportunities for small businesses. Read about Efficiency NS' programs to save your business money on page 22.

We're constantly looking for new ways to engage our diverse membership and telling their stories here in the magazine is one of our favourites. Keep an eye out over the coming year for new faces, new organizations and new ideas.

Our last event before the summer months is happening on Friday, June 21. We hope you can join us for the newest edition of the Wonder Women conference. The Wonder Women series offers female-driven content featuring local professional superheroes. Build meaningful relationships with women across all industries and participate in workshops on personal branding, owning your ambition, breaking down barriers and unleashing your superpowers. All superheroes welcome — regardless of gender. Hope to see you there. ■

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Are you a new member?

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Back row: Stewart Hayne, Dr. Marlon Lewis, Ian Thompson Middle row: Chika Chiekwe, Roy Argand, Mohammad Ali Raza, Geoff Breen Front row: Peter Zed, Matt Dorreen

**Smart Growth of our Ocean Innovation Team**

Mohammad Ali Raza, chair of the Cox & Palmer Ocean Innovation Team, is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Marlon Lewis as Senior Ocean Advisor to the Halifax team.

Dr. Lewis is Professor Emeritus in the Department of Oceanography at Dalhousie University and a successful entrepreneur, having created Satlantic, now part of Sea-Bird Scientific. Dr. Lewis will assist the Cox & Palmer Ocean Innovation Team and our clients as we work to turn Atlantic Canada's ocean potential into reality.

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# MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

How our members are growing Halifax



## WELCOME TO EASTER SEALS NOVA SCOTIA

Easter Seals Nova Scotia is pleased to announce that Wanda Sinclair Trider has joined the executive team as Director of Development. Wanda is an ambitious and enthusiastic development professional with more than 12 years experience in non-profit philanthropy. Most recently she worked with the Dartmouth General Hospital Foundation on the \$13 million "Above and Beyond" capital campaign for the DGH Redevelopment. Previously, Wanda spent 11 years as a Development Consultant with RBR Development Associates Ltd., working with numerous clients to expand their development goals.



## RHYSEDITS.COM NOMINATED FOR MEDIA AWARD

Halifax based Producer and Editor, rhysedits.com (aka Rhys Waters) is celebrating two of his projects being nominated for 2019 Celtic Media Awards. Both BBC projects, the TV show Rhod Gilbert's Work Experience has been considered in the Best Entertainment

category and hit podcast The Unexplainers, for Best Radio Comedy. The 40th Celtic Media Festival is being held in Aviemore, Scotland and aims to promote the languages and cultures of the Celtic nations in film, on television, radio and new media.

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**SAY HELLO TO NARRATIVE RESEARCH**

Corporate Research Associates, a leading national market research company headquartered in Halifax, recently relaunched as Narrative Research. The company’s new ownership team (Margaret Brigley, CEO; Margaret Chapman, COO; and Peter MacIntosh, Chief Research Officer)

set out to modernize the organization with a fresh new name, look and approach. Narrative Research is powered by the belief that every insight tells a story and this attention to detail will continue to enable its clients to turn research into strategy and results.



**JUSTIN TRUDEAU VISITS NORTHWOOD**

Northwood was selected to host Justin Trudeau on March 28 as he made a trip to the Maritimes to visit nursing homes to discuss issues facing seniors in Canada. He was accompanied by Andy Fillmore, member of Parliament for Halifax; Darrell Samson, member of Parliament for Sackville-Preston-Chezzetcook;

and the Honourable Bernadette Jordan, Minister of Rural Economic Development. Trudeau spent the morning in the Shirley Burnstein Hall, taking the time to go around and shake hands and speak with every resident and staff member there. (Photo by Adam Scotti)



**DSM TELECOM ADDS ACCESSION SOFTPHONE**

DSM Telecom has added Accession softphone & Telax hosted contact centre to their list of business class phone services in the cloud. Accession allows the use all the features of DSM phone services from any device at the office, home or on the move. Users can seamlessly move from device to device or from cellular to Wi-Fi, even in the middle of a call. They can make and receive voice or video calls, look up contacts and chat with colleagues, all while connected to their office phone number, regardless of the device or location.

**CONCILIATION AND MEDIATION SERVICES OFFERS ALTERNATIVE**

Are you involved with a matter that is before the Labour Board? Did you know that you can pursue mediation as an alternative to a hearing? Conciliation and mediation services (CMS) has entered into an agreement with the Labour Board, whereby matters relating to the Trade Union Act, Labour Standards Code and the Occupational Health and Safety Act can be referred to mediation with CMS. The process is voluntary, without prejudice and confidential. If the matter is not resolved, the parties can proceed with a hearing. If you have any questions, visit: [www.novascotia.ca/lae/labourboard/boardmatters/](http://www.novascotia.ca/lae/labourboard/boardmatters/)



### ALWAYS HOME HOMECARE EDUCATES FAMILIES

Always Home Homecare successfully launched a series of Positive Approach™ to Care workshops this spring in partnership with the Halifax Public Libraries. The workshops had a great turn-out and received very positive feedback. Family members learned practical tips and information to help care for a person with dementia. If you would like our certified dementia trainer, Rosanne Burke, to put on a free workshop or presentation for your church, club, workplace or community group, call 902-405-4400. She's passionate about dementia care and helping family caregivers.



### FDA CLEARANCE FOR NEW CRYOCHECK PRODUCT

In March, Precision BioLogic's CRYOcheck™ Factor VIII Inhibitor Kit was cleared for sale in the U.S. This followed regulatory authorization for Canada, the E.U., Australia and New Zealand in February. The presence of Factor VIII (FVIII) Inhibitors reduces therapy effectiveness and is one of the most complex and costly complications for people with hemophilia A. Because of this, it is important for clinical laboratories to have a testing system that can accurately and precisely quantify FVIII inhibitors in patient samples. Precision BioLogic developed its new kit to address this challenge.

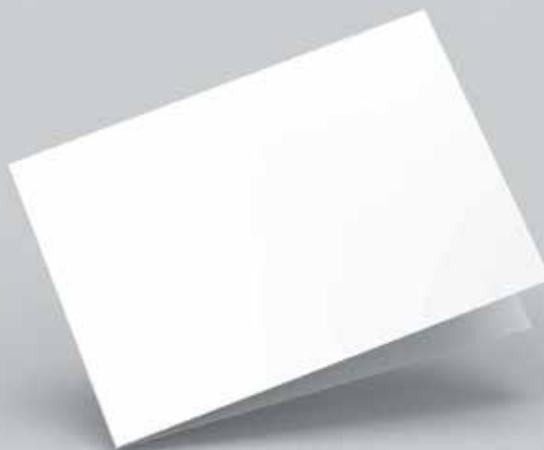


### PARKWOOD HOME CARE'S NEW OFFICE

Parkwood Home Care is happy to announce they have moved into 1535 Dresden Row, Suite 208, City Centre Atlantic. "We are a proud Halifax Chamber member. Our promise to you is

that we will treat your loved ones with the same compassion that we treat our own family members." Come on by for a visit, or call us at 902-421-9191 if you would like to learn more.

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**BREATHING EASIER AT NIGHT**

Over 30,000 Nova Scotians suffer from sleep apnea, a condition that causes a person to stop breathing while they sleep. However, not everyone can afford to treat this condition, with therapy costing anywhere from \$1,500 - \$5,000. That's why the Lung Association of Nova Scotia works with Lions Clubs across

the province to collect gently used sleep apnea machines, which are refurbished with the help of Dalhousie University School of Health Sciences and then donated to people who cannot afford therapy. If you would like more information on this program, please visit [www.ns.lung.ca](http://www.ns.lung.ca).



**WENDY BROOKHOUSE NAMED TO FACULTY**

Wendy Brookhouse, Founder/Chief Strategist of Black Star Wealth has been added to the faculty of the Women's Leadership Intensive. This one year program combines in-person retreats and virtual training to help women in leadership roles realize their vision. Wendy will focus on the role of money and how your relationship with money affects your career and business.

**NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ANNOUNCEMENT**

Meetings and Conventions PEI is happy to announce that our own Susan Freeman has been appointed as our new Executive Director. Susan has over 20 years of hospitality experience in both sales and conference services. At Mount Saint Vincent University, she earned a degree in tourism and hospitality management. She is very proud of the work she has accomplished with the hospitality industry on P.E.I. and is looking forward to collaborating with industry partners to further grow the meetings and conventions mandate in P.E.I. and Atlantic Canada.

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### 35TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Dartmouth TIC Talkers Club #9307 is pleased to congratulate Spirit-ED Toastmasters #5375 on their 35th anniversary celebration. The meeting included members from the past 35 years, as well as current membership. "This is a club that has paved the way and been a positive platform for many members over the years. Former and current members expressed their abundant appreciation and shared many stories of their successes as a result of their membership in the club," says distinguished Toastmaster, Brenda Saunders/Todd, previous member of Spirit-ED and current member of Dartmouth TIC Talkers.

### FIRST TRAINING SESSIONS LAUNCHED

Dress for Success Halifax launched the first ever in-house training sessions offered to team TSB participants of the Bluenose Charity Challenge. The weekly training sessions involve walking, running, yoga, strength training, healthy eating classes and camaraderie to form a supportive team environment. "It's extremely important to provide ongoing support in all that we do with our clients internally, as well as all who continue to support us from the community, such as yoga instructor, Victoria Brittney, leading these classes," says Board Chair, Julie Wisen, "we value their contributions immensely."



### DISCOVERY CENTRE HOSTED CASC CONFERENCE

CASC's 17th annual conference welcomed more than 150 delegates from across our country. This three-day conference, hosted by the Discovery Centre, featured pre-conference activities, engaging learning sessions, keynote speakers and events that included a welcome reception, a trade show and our national CASCADE Awards Gala.

### IS SUCCESSION PLANNING ON YOUR RADAR?

In a CFIB 2012 report titled, *Passing on the Business to the next Generation*, it was estimated that well over \$1 trillion in business assets would change hands by 2017. A secondary source identified that by the year 2022, approximately \$3.7 trillion of business assets will have changed hands. This reality is a game changer and challenge for Canadians unlike anything ever seen before within the small business sector nationwide. With challenges, come opportunities. Reach out to professionals to learn what you can do to prepare your business for transition. Financial, legal and real estate advisors can help.

### AQUALITAS RECEIVES SALES LICENCE

Aqualitas, a Nova Scotian licensed producer of certified organically grown cannabis, is pleased to announce that it has been awarded a sales licence by Health Canada. Aqualitas will soon register a limited number of medical clients and ensure its e-commerce platform and fulfillment processes are running smoothly before opening registrations up more broadly. The sales licence also permits Aqualitas to sell its products in the adult-use marketplace. It is anticipated that its recreational brand, Reef, will be available through Nova Scotia's cannabis retailer, NSLC, in early May. Visit [www.aqualitas.ca](http://www.aqualitas.ca)

### EXECUTIVE COACH WRITES CHILDREN'S BOOK

Olga Manzoni, Avanti Coaching, recently celebrated the launch of her children's book *Mondays with Nonna* (a children's book for adults first). As an Executive Coach and HR leader, Olga channeled her love of Mondays with a message to help us and the children in our lives see the potential in each day — even Mondays. With dashes of French, Italian and beautiful water colour illustrations done by artist Luisa Grottker, Olga is excited to spread this positive message through the book and through her coaching. To get a copy of the book or coaching to work on loving Mondays, visit [www.avanticoaching.ca](http://www.avanticoaching.ca).



**NEW SUMMER CO-OP STUDENT AT CEED**

Over the years, some of the most inspired work being done within CEED’s walls has been from our youngest employees: the co-op student. Fresh and innovative, co-op students have supported and helped to mold CEED through a period of evolution. With high hopes and higher fives, CEED is happy to announce its newest employee, Jenny Dunne. Jenny is a public relations student out of Mount Saint Vincent University. With a rich background in social media and marketing, Jenny will fit right into her new position as Entrepreneurship Program Coordinator. Look forward to meeting her, Halifax.



**REACHABILITY: THE INCLUSIVE EMPLOYER**

reachAbility was honoured to have hosted the Nova Scotia chapter of National AccessAbility Week 2019 (May 27 – June 2) with the support of our many partners and sponsors. The events and open houses showcased our province’s passion and support for accessibility and inclusion. Special thanks to Mark Wafer, one of Canada’s top inclusive employers and disability advocates, for travelling to Nova Scotia and sharing his success with our business community. His message about the benefits and importance of diversity were compelling.



**LUZ LIMA-UPHAM JOINS HALIFAX PARTNERSHIP**

Luz joined the Halifax Partnership recently as Program Coordinator for the Halifax Connector Program. She connects recent graduates and immigrants (Connectees) to business leaders in their industry (Connectors). Through these connections, Connectees expand their professional networks and discover career opportunities in Halifax. Luz is originally from Tabasco, Mexico and came to Canada as an international student. Her personal and professional experiences have greatly influenced her passion for helping newcomers succeed and contributing to the retention of talent in our community.

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**GUEST SPEAKER AT AWE-SUM EVENT**

Verity was recently invited to the AWE-SUM conference in Cape Breton on International Women's Day. It was the first time this event had been held and had in excess of 90 attendees. Verity was asked to talk about her experience setting up a business as a newcomer to Canada. She gave a talk to budding entrepreneurs on how to get started and offered plenty of encouragement and honest advice. Verity also has a series of talks coming up in local libraries about the subconscious mind and how people sabotage themselves and how they can best help themselves.

**CAPTURED ESCAPE ROOMS NEW EXPERIENCE!**



Captured Escape Rooms, in partnership with the Discovery Centre, is pleased to announce its newest, innovative escape experience,

Fully Charged! After Dr. Eno Vachon mysteriously disappears, you must find and prepare his latest innovation for presentation to the World Energy League before his nemesis has time to pry his secrets out of him! Fully Charged! takes place inside the Discovery Centre's innovation lab is now available to the public on Friday and Saturday evenings with three timeslots to choose from starting at 6 p.m.

**HALIFAX STANFIELD HELPS PROPEL N.S. SEAFOOD INDUSTRY**

In 2018, Nova Scotia seafood represented a significant portion of the record 36,938 metric tonnes of cargo processed at Halifax Stanfield. With an increase of 8.5 per cent over 2017, this marks the fifth consecutive year of cargo volume growth. "We work closely with suppliers, shippers and airlines year-round to enable the global export of goods directly from Nova Scotia to destination markets, meaning more people are able to enjoy our world-class quality seafood and other products," said Bert van der Stege, Chief Commercial Officer at Halifax International Airport Authority. In recognition of the increasing global demand for Nova Scotia exports, Halifax Stanfield will begin construction of a new air cargo logistics park this year that is slated to open in late 2020 or early 2021.



**2019 Starfish Student Art Award Winner  
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**Beyond the appearances, 2019**

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# BUILDING CAPACITY

Ulnooweg unlocks the potential of Indigenous communities **By Joey Fitzpatrick**

An abandoned mine shaft beneath Sudbury, Ont. might not be everybody's idea of a dream vacation destination. But if you're a serious science buff, then this underground laboratory specializing in neutrino and dark matter physics will be just your cup of tea. At two kilometres underground, the sensitive experiments carried out at SNOLAB are shielded from the cosmic radiation at the earth's surface.

In July, some 16 Indigenous high school students and their teachers from across the Atlantic region will get to experience this scientific wow-factor with a visit to SNOLAB. The excursion is part of a program called Digital

Mi'kmaq, a unique educational initiative of Ulnooweg.

"We want to expose young people to the world of science, technology and engineering," says Chris Googoo, Chief Operating Officer with Ulnooweg. "This is where the future opportunities are, in areas like big data, robotics, 3D modelling and artificial intelligence. So we want our young people to be comfortable in that world."

Digital Mi'kmaq was launched in January 2018 to deliver an enhanced curriculum in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) to Indigenous youth and children. Strategic partnerships have been forged with

Dalhousie University's Institute of Big Data Analytics, the Canadian Space Agency, DHX Media and Mila, the artificial intelligence learning laboratory at the University of Montreal. Canada's Governor General is a patron of the program and on May 24, 2018 Canadian astronaut Jeremy Hansen visited L'nu Sipuk Kina'muokuum School in Indian Brook, N.S. to inspire students to follow their dreams.

The story of Ulnooweg is a story of reclaiming triumph from tragedy. It's now called the Sixties Scoop and it refers to the scooping up of Indigenous children from their families for placement in mostly non-Indigenous homes. The



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— **Chris Googoo**,  
Chief Operating Officer,  
Ulnooweg

Photos contributed

practice occurred across Canada and the U.S. beginning in the 1950s and persisting well into the 1970s. In many cases the children were forcibly removed from their homes.

“By the 1970s many of those children started returning to their communities,” says Googoo. “They were coming back and looking for their parents, their family members and their communities and asking why they were adopted out of their homes.”

The Indigenous community’s response to this tragedy was multi-faceted and sweeping. The Mi’kmaq Family and Children Services was created to meet the needs of children, youth and

families within the Indigenous communities. It halted the adopting out of children by giving the communities the tools to deal with the social issues.

Dalhousie University’s School of Social Work now has an affirmative action admissions program and in September, 2005 the school welcomed a cohort of 30 Mi’kmaq and Maliseet social work students in a joint initiative with St. Thomas University’s School of Social Work.

It was also recognized that there had to be an avenue for economic development and job creation. The dark side of Canada’s history did much to quash the Aboriginal entrepreneurial spirit that had boomed during the fur trading days

of the 1700s. In 1885 a pass system was put in place that required people living on a reserve to get written permission to be off the reserve and this system was enforced into the 1940s. Before 1960 Indigenous people did not have the right to vote in Canadian federal elections and it was not until the 1980s that the federal government began to address Aboriginal business development. And the government’s first halting steps in that direction, however well-intended, did not exactly hit the mark.

“They really didn’t know how to do it,” says Paul Langdon, Major Projects Manager with Ulnooweg. “At first they just attached it to existing programs for

small and medium-sized businesses. They didn't take into account the degree to which the Aboriginal community had been isolated up to that point and that they mostly did not have access to those programs."

Ulnooweg is a Mi'kmaq word which roughly translated means to make Indigenous or adapt the beliefs, customs and culture of the Mi'kmaq people. Within this context the Ulnooweg Development Group operates as an "Indigenized" development group that incorporates the perspectives of the Mi'kmaq people.

In addition to its focus on economic development, Ulnooweg has extended its scope in recent years and now provides support, training, education and research for employment opportunities of members. It also provides support for recognized benevolent and charitable enterprises.

Ulnooweg was incorporated in 1986, serves all of Atlantic Canada and is a member of the National Aboriginal Capital Corporation. Its team can help aspiring entrepreneurs through every step of the process, from preparing a business plan, to loan and grant applications and ongoing business support.

Since its inception Ulnooweg has disbursed approximately \$70 million, with an average lending of \$3.4 million annually.

"We provide financing for entrepreneurs and for the communities to a maximum of \$250,000," Googoo points out. Ulnooweg also manages a government entrepreneurial program that provides grants totalling \$1.3 million per year.

The oceans sciences sector represents enormous opportunity for economic development. Ulnooweg is a collaborator with COVE, the Centre for Ocean Ventures and Entrepreneurship, a world class facility in Dartmouth for

applied innovation in the oceans sector. It's a hub where start-up companies, small and medium-sized enterprises and post-secondary expertise are housed together.

"This is one of the reasons we focus on STEM for the young people," Langdon says. "There's a lot of overlap between science, engineering and entrepreneurship. Engineers and entrepreneurs both tend to be problem solvers."

Ulnooweg is also well positioned to play a role in the Oceans Supercluster, one of five such innovation superclusters across the country designed to make

Then six years ago it broadened its mandate to include research, training and financial literacy. The Ulnooweg Financial Education Centre was launched to provide research and financial literacy training for Indigenous communities. The centre is a registered charity designed to enhance the financial decision-making abilities of First Nations Chiefs and Council.

The centre has developed, tested and implemented an innovative and proprietary approach to community financial reviews that enables decision makers, who may not have advanced

financial training, to better understand and take control of their finances.

"What we've done is take from 10 to 17 years of a community's audited statements and represent them in pictographs," Googoo says. "It provides trends analyses on revenues and expenses in the community, with a focus on debt capacity. This service is not even available to municipalities."

Then last June the Ulnooweg Indigenous Communities Foundation was established to strengthen the relationship between Canada's philanthropic sector and First Nations communities across

## The eagle takes flight

The Canadian Space Agency (CSA) is one of the original partners with Ulnooweg's Digital Mi'kmaq program, which seeks to bridge the digital divide faced by Indigenous youth. CSA has collaborated on a robotics program in the schools and Canadian astronauts have visited schools to inspire Indigenous students to follow their dreams.

Chris Googoo, Ulnooweg's Chief Operating Officer was looking for a unique way to light the fire of imagination with people of every age.

"We wanted something that would be inspiring, but at the same time be respectful of our culture," he says.

Last December Canadian astronaut David Saint-Jacques carried a

Mi'kmaq basket and eagle feather to the International Space Station. The handwoven basket, about the size of a loonie, was created out of wood from a black ash tree by Shanna Francis of Eskasoni First Nation in Cape Breton.

"The basket represents our culture and Indigenous knowledge and the eagle feather represents our youth," Googoo says.

Encouraging young people to dream, while extending their scientific skills and opportunities, is crucial not only for Indigenous young people, but for the economic well-being of the country, he adds.

"It takes a cooperative effort to give the children the opportunities to go on these journeys."

Canada a leader in the knowledge-based economy. The supercluster will foster new partnerships with industry, post-secondary institutions, government and Indigenous communities to accelerate innovation and commercialization and derive sustainable economic growth from the oceans.

"We're trying to achieve three things through our engagement strategy with the supercluster," Langdon says. "Those are: entrepreneurial capacity over the long term, careers in STEM; and governance — our participation in the process to help steer it through."

For its first two decades Ulnooweg was focussed on economic development.

Atlantic Canada. A 2017 analysis by the Circle on Philanthropy and Aboriginal Peoples in Canada concluded that approximately one per cent of registered charities in Canada are Indigenous-focused. That is, have a purpose that includes serving the Indigenous population — this despite the fact that Indigenous people make up five per cent of the Canadian population.

"This is obviously an area where we needed to be a disruptor," Googoo points out.

The foundation's directors are chiefs and leaders from Atlantic Canada's Mi'kmaq and Maliseet communities, supported by experienced professional



“That’s the kind of role Ulnooweg wants to play going forward. We want to increase the entrepreneurial capacity, so our communities can play a deeper, broader role in the economy.”  
— Paul Langdon,  
Major Projects Manager, Ulnooweg

advisors. The foundation will work with businesses, individuals, families and other organizations to achieve their philanthropic goals.

“Having 35 years experience and ISO certification gives us the credibility and gives our clients the confidence to come to us to deliver these programs,” Langdon says.

Capacity building has been a large part of Ulnooweg’s history. A Supreme Court of Canada ruling in 1999 affirmed the right of Indigenous people to catch and sell fish under relevant treaties. But the establishment of a native fishery was no simple matter. It was a tumultuous time, with wharf burnings and

confrontations with non-Indigenous fishermen. There was also great uncertainty, as the Indigenous communities at the time lacked the infrastructure and expertise to manage a fishing industry.

“There was a lot of money rolled out, but nobody had looked at building the capacity within the communities,” Googoo recalls.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans approached Ulnooweg to become involved in establishing a viable Indigenous fishery. The Fisheries Business Development Team was established in 2008 through a partnership between Ulnooweg and the Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs.

The team has expertise in fisheries, aquaculture and community economic development.

“We are able to help people in the industry make informed decisions,” Langdon says.

The Indigenous fishing industry has grown from \$4 million annually in 1999 to more than \$100 million today and provides thousands of full-time jobs across the region.

“That’s the kind of role Ulnooweg wants to play going forward,” Langdon says. “We want to increase the entrepreneurial capacity, so our communities can play a deeper, broader role in the economy.” ■



Julie Senior of Fisherman's Picnic General Store in Lunenburg said Efficiency Nova Scotia's small business program cut her electricity bill in half.

Josh Healey

# Green business is good business

Efficiency Nova Scotia programs give local entrepreneurs a leg up By Josh Healey

**B**usinesswoman Julie Senior says making her business energy efficient only took one call.

Senior, who operates the Fisherman's Picnic General Store in Lunenburg, said she contacted Efficiency Nova Scotia shortly after buying the business in 2017.

"I gave them a call and they were extremely helpful," she said.

With that call, Senior joined the other 9,500 small business owners across the province who have tapped into Efficiency Nova Scotia's Small Business Energy Solutions (SBES) since 2011.

Efficiency Nova Scotia — Canada's first energy efficient utility — helps residential and business clients implement sustainable energy practices.

Jon Grace, Efficiency Nova Scotia's

Small Business Program Manager, said the organization provides small businesses like Senior's with options.

"Enrolling in energy efficiency programs has a number of benefits that extend beyond just dollar savings, although the savings can be pretty significant too," he said.

Through their programs, said Grace, small businesses can reduce maintenance issues and costs, increase working conditions and cut their carbon footprint.

Simply put — energy efficiency is good for business.

"Not only are they reducing their operating costs and adding to their bottom line, but they are demonstrating their commitment to the environment and making their business a nicer place for both

employees and customers," said Grace.

"Our small business customers definitely have a competitive advantage."

And for small businesses unsure if Efficiency Nova Scotia's programs are right for them, Grace noted the organization offers, dependent on some criteria, a free energy assessment to help find clients' needs.

Senior explained that as a grocer dealing with food products, she was recommended an energy efficient fridge and freezer and also a heat pump.

Once her appliances and heat pump had been purchased and installed, the contractor also dropped off her rebate paperwork.

Senior said she was impressed by the ease of the whole process.

"It was less than a month and you had the rebate," she said.

Grace said many have misconceptions about applying for energy efficiency programs, especially concerning the rebate process.

"In reality, feedback from customers is that the process is quick, our team is helpful and that there was way less paperwork than expected," he said.

The free energy assessment is a key piece in getting businesses to realize the environmental and monetary impact of becoming energy efficient.

The assessment provides the small businesses the tools and information they need to actively manage their own energy consumption and although he couldn't provide the percentage of businesses that pursue the program following the assessment, Grace said Efficiency Nova Scotia's programs are having an impact.

To date, energy efficiency programs in Nova Scotia have helped to avoid nearly one million tonnes of carbon dioxide annually or one tonne for every Nova Scotian.

"We know that Nova Scotians want to not just save money on their energy bills but also want to reduce their carbon footprint," said Grace.

When asked about the availability of programs and their effects, Energy and Mines Minister Derek Mombourquette praised the province's energy rebates.

"Organizations like Efficiency Nova Scotia and Clean Foundation are doing a remarkable job of delivering these programs," he wrote via email.

"As a result of efficiency efforts, including those by small business, Nova Scotians are now saving more than \$180 million each year on their electricity bills." Mombourquette added that Nova Scotians are some of the best in the country at changing their energy habits.

But who is eligible to tap into the province's programs?

Grace said small businesses whose monthly utility bill is less than \$3,800 may qualify for the program. This may include the free energy assessment, rebates up to 60 per cent and 24 months of interest-free financing.

From her experiences, Senior said she is surprised more business owners aren't exploring energy upgrades.

"For you to go and spend \$5,000 or \$6,000 on a heat pump and for someone to turn around and give you money back on it — it's absolutely amazing," she said.

"I really think more people should be looking into it."

Senior said she runs her store's appliances on a continual basis and had budgeted around \$600 on electricity.

But with the energy efficient fridge and freezer, she said her bill has been cut in half.

"I don't think I've ever paid over \$250 a month and that's with running the fridges, the freezers, the lights full time," she said. "It's definitely a lot less than we expected."

Grace noted an increase in applicants in the last three years, but hopes more small businesses will make the switch from old, wasteful technologies.

"Every kilowatt hour saved by Nova Scotians translates into greenhouse gas savings by needing to generate less power," he said.

In 2018 alone, the small business program helped local businesses save 9.5 gigawatt hours.

Senior said the incentive from a business owner's perspective is twofold: It is beneficial to both the environment and your wallet.

"The money that you're going to

save (through the program) is going to pay for itself," she said.

The trickle-down impact is significant, too.

In addition to the 9,500 businesses who have used the small business program, Grace pointed out that the organization has provided efficiency training and support to over 200 businesses through their Efficiency Trade Network.

Efficiency Trade Network members are designated professionals who can help with energy improvements, whether they are electricians or contractors.

Grace added Efficiency Nova Scotia also administers the mercury collection program funded by Nova Scotia Power.

In the end, he said the organization's programs are out to find energy solutions which provide local businesses with a sustainable advantage.

"We help businesses of all sizes achieve savings in their day-to-day operations," Grace said.

And the result of that approach is an annual carbon dioxide reduction of 1,000,000 tonnes.

Hopefully, that number continues to rise. ■



# Generosity reigns at Ray's

How one restaurant owner is using his culture and love of food to keep Halifax well fed By Erin Elaine Casey

**H**ady Bahliss likes nothing better than introducing the authentic flavours of Lebanon to new customers and welcoming his loyal clientele back to his restaurant over and over. The core value of his business? Generosity.

"I want people to try the variety that Lebanon can offer on one plate at an affordable price," says Bahliss. "Being generous is what I learned from my father."

Bahliss says his customers are amazed by the quantity of food on the plate. "The first reaction is wow! This is filling!" he laughs, mentioning that he is also a big fan of delicious leftovers.

"Ninety per cent of my customers need take-out containers," he says, "and I like that because then they have lunch or dinner, too!"

Ray's Lebanese Cuisine is located in Bayer's Lake Business Park and has been voted The Coast's best falafel for multiple years running and landed multiple times in the top three best Middle Eastern/Persian restaurants in Halifax.

The secret? Top quality, fresh ingredients, great customer service and high standards of cleanliness and food safety.

"Lebanese foods comes from a base of healthy ingredients," explains Bahliss. "Internationally speaking French cuisine is still number one worldwide and second is Lebanese cuisine — it's spreading across the globe. Nova Scotians love to eat healthy food, they like fresh ingredients and they want to try a wide variety of food."

Bahliss immigrated to Canada from Lebanon in 2005 with his Canadian wife, Tina. He had earned an MBA in Lebanon and worked as an account manager and financial planner with RBC and as a national manager with Eastlink for nine years. But food was always his passion.

"I got my love of cooking and the art of cooking from my father," says Bahliss. "He always told me to feed my eyes before I feed my stomach. I am the one who's cooking at my home, so I came to the conclusion that I need to open up my restaurant."

If you're a lover of Lebanese food, you likely remember the original



David Grandy

**“Being generous is what I learned from my father.”**

**— Hady Bahliss,**  
Owner, Ray's Lebanese Cuisine

Ray's Restaurant in Scotia Square, now relocated to Burnside. "Ray was one of the first people to introduce Lebanese food to our lovely Canadian people," explains Bahliss, who is close friends with Ray's family. He wanted to honour Ray's legacy and their friendship, so he opened Ray's in Bayer's Lake four years ago. It's been going strong ever since.

The platters at Ray's are truly impressive. All come with rice, lentils and noodles, mixed veggies with homemade tomato sauce, potato wedges marinated in garlic and lemon juice, a choice of hummus or baba ghanoush and a choice of coleslaw, tabouli or fatoush salad. The customer only has to choose their protein — chicken, beef, lamb, fish or falafel.

Ray's can accommodate almost any food preference or restriction and Bahliss believes in sourcing top quality ingredients, local whenever possible.

"My message to the customer is: Know what you're eating because your life depends on it — especially now with cancer surrounding us," he says. "Our chicken comes from Eden Valley and it's grain fed, hormone free and waterless. We debone the chicken, marinate it in house, put it on skewers. Our beef is made with AAA prime beef, marinated in house. It comes from P.E.I. or Calgary and my donair meat comes from Leo's Donairs which has been in the market for 40 years and is super clean."

Vegetables are sourced in season and locally from the valley when available.

Plus, almost everything on the menu is gluten free with the exception of pita and the rice and noodle dish. "There is no flour in my kitchen," emphasizes Bahliss. There are also plenty of vegetarian options.

Ray's restaurant in Bayer's Lake isn't your only option for trying Bahliss's fantastic food. He caters everything from huge weddings to private parties to meetings. And he loves to branch out: Greek, Italian, French and many other cuisines are also available. All you have to do is check out the beautiful photos on the restaurant's Facebook page to get a feel for the delicious choices he offers.

If you'd like to try a more fine dining experience, Bahliss also offers private bookings in his restaurant, with white tablecloths, Lebanese wines and table service. "This is what I would like to focus on for Canadians," he explains, "weddings, conferences, private catering, private bookings in the restaurant — we can accommodate anything. The largest event we did was about 400 people."

Bahliss is taking the long view with his business. It's all about excellent customer service and building long-term relationships with diners. "I'm not here to make money in one night," he laughs. "I love it. I love people. I want them to taste and enjoy the difference quality makes."

Find out more about Ray's Lebanese Cuisine at [rayslebanesecuisine.ca](http://rayslebanesecuisine.ca). ■

# Networking is changing

Connector program aims to introduce qualified workers to the hidden job market



**ROBYN WEBB** DIRECTOR  
OF LABOUR MARKET  
DEVELOPMENT,  
HALIFAX PARTNERSHIP

In my 15 years working at the Partnership I have learned so much about our business community and economy. During my time on the SmartBusiness team, we identified and understood the challenges that employers face. One of the top challenges, regardless of size or industry, is attracting and retaining the right talent for their business.

As my role evolved, we launched the Connector Program in 2009. We recognized there was a gap between employers looking for the talent they needed to

grow their business and new immigrants settling in Halifax who were looking for employment in their field. These two groups were not connecting.

The Connector Program bridges this gap and creates opportunities for intentional networking. Employers (Connectors) who connect with these emerging professionals play a role in helping to grow our economy by building opportunities for these people to stay here, while also keeping a pulse on the local talent pool. Immigrants and as the program expanded, local and international soon-to-be and recent graduates (Connectees), build their professional networks and increase their chances of finding employment by connecting to the hidden job market.

The Connector Program is stronger than ever, with last year's results being our best to date — 218 new Connectors and 539 new Connectees joined the program. More than half of these new Connectees found jobs relevant to their industry and experience in Halifax.

In an increasingly competitive talent landscape, we are evolving the Connector Program to meet the changing needs of employers. That is why the Partnership has expanded the program

to include Connector+, supported by the Province of Nova Scotia and Government of Canada, in partnership with the five Connector Programs across the province. Connector+ is a simple and effective digital networking platform, which creates opportunities for business leaders to connect with soon-to-be and recent graduates who want to live and work in Nova Scotia.

Like the face-to-face Connector Program, it's a simple three-step process: match, connect and refer.

1. Business leaders and young talent are matched based on skillsets and industries of interest.
2. Next, participants connect through a video or face-to-face meeting.
3. Professionals then refer Connectees to three contacts, helping to quickly build their network. Connector+ offers flexibility to choose when and how they meet.

By becoming a Connector through Connector+, you are helping to build strong communities and keep talent in Nova Scotia. Networking is changing and one way to keep in touch with the latest trends is by visiting [ConnectorPlus.ca](http://ConnectorPlus.ca) to sign up.

# My business, my baby!

Steps to set your business up for success once you exit



**MARK ZIRKA**  
CEO, STRATEGY UP

“No one knows my business better than I do! I built this business from scratch, who are you to tell me what to do?” said a business owner when prompted about the need for external support.

Indeed, as entrepreneurs, we did great, we brought the business to this level. We deserve a rest, we deserve to retire and keep on watching how our business will grow without us.

But, are we ready for this crucial decision-making moment?

Succession planning can be your best friend should you want to see your business flourish once you have exited.

## STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL SUCCESSION PLANNING:

- Business risk prioritization →
- High potential talent identification →
- Succession planning impact →
- Ongoing assessment

Some research shows that only 54 per cent of boards of directors were mentoring a specific successor and 39 per cent had no viable internal candidates who could immediately replace the CEO in case of emergency.

On average, half of all businesses have either no or poor succession planning practices. We'd better make sure that our business is not part of this statistic. Succession planning is about classifying business-critical roles, which if remained vacant for a long period, could impact the business' performance.

On average, half of all businesses have either no, or poor, succession planning practices. We'd better make sure that our business is not part of this statistic. Succession planning is about classifying business-critical roles, which if remained vacant for a long period, could impact the business' performance.”

According to the Business Development Bank of Canada, a good practice is to have an informal advisory board to support the decision makers.

Only six per cent of Canadian entrepreneurs have an advisory board for their business. 86 per cent of entrepreneurs who have an advisory board say it's had a significant impact on their business.

## THE BENEFITS OF AN ADVISORY BOARD:

- The advisory board has no legal responsibility.
- Could fill expertise and contact gaps.
- Provides unbiased fresh perspectives to your business.
- Very low cost.

Many families could be very hesitant to acknowledge the need for transition planning and of sharing the outcome of such planning with the right stakeholders. If the succession planning exercise is done properly, it will provide high chances for your business to remain sustainable well beyond the leadership transition.

Family business does not come without its own particular challenges. This definitely doesn't make it easier for the entrepreneurs, however there are ways to mitigate and reduce the risks significantly.

Let's talk about the elephant in the room:

- **Financial returns:**  
What is the value of the company? Should we look at the balance sheet, or at the earning capitalization model?
- **Family interest:**  
Retirement income is the objective

on the horizon. How to align the interests of all stakeholders, from current business leaders, to the potential newcomers.

- **Time for the next generation:**

Not all businesses succeed at passing the flame to the next generation. On average, only 35 per cent of family owned businesses succeed.

- **Disputes within the family:**

My interest is different than yours. It could arise from a simple dispute, a divorce, voting rights of non-executive members and even death.

- **Inheritance and estate complexity:**

Think about the tax impact. A big weight on our shoulders! To avoid such complications, planning would become a crucial component of the business.

Steps for efficient succession planning:

1. Fix goals and objectives: A strategic planning exercise is a must for family-owned and small businesses.
2. Corporate governance: Set a clear decision-making process. Define triggers and communication processes.
3. Write a succession plan: The best time to do it is when there is no conflict yet.
4. Define a handover plan: Let it be clear with timelines, action items, financing options, etc.
5. Business and estate planning: Get advice from a professional tax advisor. Have a business advisor on your side to help you build the strategy going forward.

# Reducing stress in the workplace

Find the method that works for you



**DR. ANDREW KLEINKNECHT,**  
ST. MARGARET'S BAY  
CHIROPRACTIC CENTRE

Everyone is faced with stress on a daily basis.

We all have families, deadlines, pitches, bills and employees to keep happy, or employers who can produce an overwhelming amount of stress. As a Doctor of Chiropractic, a family man and owner of a small business, I see these issues all too often. I may see some of you, or your co-workers as patients due to stress-related illness.

Depending on what research you read, visits to all types of doctors can be related to stress 80 per cent of the time. Workplace costs of stress-related absenteeism and lost productivity are estimated to be in the billions in our country each year.

First, let's debunk the notion that all stress is bad — it's not. In fact, some stress can be helpful in meeting deadlines, focusing and refining teamwork. We all want to be able to better cope with stress. Put another way, you want a big, empty bucket to handle stress, versus a small, full bucket. You need to be able to empty your bucket faster. I feel that this metaphor is really the key to the stress game.

There are two parts to your body's nervous system. Part one is the sympathetic part, otherwise known as the fight/flight mechanism, where too many of us live on a daily basis. Part two is the parasympathetic part, which is the state



Dmitriy Shironosov /123rf

“We all want to be able to better cope with stress. Put another way, you want a big, empty bucket to handle stress, versus a small, full bucket. You need to be able to empty your bucket faster. I feel that this metaphor is really the key to the stress game.”

where healing, rest and relaxation come from. Increasing the size and ability to quickly empty your metaphorical bucket comes down to doing things that shift you out of fight/flight mode, to a state of rest, partway between sympathetic and parasympathetic dominance. Chronically elevated levels of the stress hormone cortisol can lead to anxiety, sleeplessness, chronic pain, weight gain, high blood pressure, headaches, gastric upset, bowel issues, etc. This is the wheelhouse of my practice as a chiropractor.

This is where you come in. You can do what I used to do to feel good, like overeating or self-medicating. But there are much healthier things you can be doing that we discuss daily in our office. Things like morning meditation and physical exercise — go for a walk at lunch and unplug. Proactive workplaces support taking care of yourself. Smart employers

know it boosts your productivity in the workplace.

Take action and get active. Eat foods high in good fats and low in sugar laden refined carbohydrates. Bread, pasta and cereal should not be staples in your diet. Good fats like olive oil, avocados and omega-3's (fish oil) are all excellent for brain function.

Head to a chiropractor that can run the heart rate variability test to figure out what part of your nervous system is stressed. It is simple and can be done in the office. Chiropractic treatments are useful as part of stress proofing your body.

Don't be victimized by stress — learn to dance with it. Stress is part of life.

If you have any further questions about this topic, please contact me for more information about our free lunch and learn programs.

# NEW BOARD MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Meet the Halifax Chamber's new board members

**HALIFAX  
CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE**



**ANDREW DE FREITAS**  
CANADIAN NATIONAL  
RAILWAY

Andrew de Freitas is a National Account Manager with CN. CN is the backbone of the economy, with over 32,000 kilometres of track connecting Halifax to over 75 per cent of the U.S. population and all major Canadian markets. CN moves over \$250 billion in goods annually. Our diverse product offering of rail, intermodal, warehousing and trans-load services, coupled with our broad network reach, provides a wide array of transportation and supply chain solutions for Atlantic Canadian businesses.

Andrew holds an MBA from Saint Mary's University and is a Certified Sales Professional. Andrew brings over 15 years of sales and marketing experience in building relationships and connecting businesses throughout North America, with a focus on implementing custom-tailored supply chain solutions. These solutions are helping SME's and large multi-national corporations control costs, while expanding their business and network reach.

Andrew is a past Area Governor with Toastmasters International and holds a CTM designation. Andrew resides in Halifax, Nova Scotia with his wife, Dana and three children.



**CAROLINE WOLFE STEWART**  
THE BERKELEY RETIREMENT  
RESIDENCES

Caroline has worked extensively in the health-care field throughout her career in both the private and public sectors in the areas of senior living, acute care, home care and long-term care with a focus on providing exceptional customer services.

Currently, as Vice President Operations at The Berkeley, Caroline focuses on strategic planning, financial performance, customer service and employee engagement. She leads the operation in support of its goals in the areas of sales, administration, care, asset management and human resources.

Caroline has also held various senior roles within the Shannex organization as Director, Organizational Effectiveness and Service Excellence and Regional Director, Health Services. She has also worked with Crothall Services Canada, a division of Compass Group Canada, as Regional Vice President Atlantic Canada/Quebec, working with health-care facilities across Canada and the United States. Caroline is passionate about achieving growth, driving transformational change and delivering quality results. She has also previously owned and operated her own consulting business, providing strategic and operational support and advice to small businesses regarding operational efficiencies and customer excellence strategies.

Caroline holds an MBA from Saint Mary's University and a B.Sc. Nutrition (Professional Dietitian) from Mount Saint Vincent University.



**CAYLA STRYNCL**  
 FIERA PROPERTIES LIMITED

Cayla Stryncl is currently the Senior Manager, Financial Reporting, at Fiera Properties Limited, a real estate investment-management firm. Fiera manages over \$3 billion in office, retail and industrial commercial real estate across Canada through investment funds and accounts, on behalf of clients and partners.

Cayla has a Bachelor of Business Administration from the University of Prince Edward Island and holds her CPA, CA designation. Cayla brings her expertise from over a decade of progressive audit, accounting and financial reporting experience. She built her foundation auditing with Grant Thornton and has spent most of her career within hotel and commercial real estate industry, including time with a public company. Her passion is working amid growing and/or evolving companies with complex changes to provide finance solutions that benefit the efficiency and results of the organization.

Cayla grew up in rural PEI before moving to Nova Scotia in 2010 and now lives in Dartmouth, NS with her husband, Tomas and dog, Letty. Cayla enjoys staying active and traveling to new and exciting places any chance she gets! She also serves on the Board of Directors for Metroworks.



**CHRISTOPHER GOOGOO**  
 ULNOOWEG

Christopher Googoo is a proud member of the We'koqma'q First Nation. Since joining Ulnooweg in 2000, he has helped hundreds of Aboriginal entrepreneurs secure loans and access business services. He also co-led the development of the N.S. Mi'kmaq Economic Development Strategy and played a key role in bringing the Digital Mi'kmaq initiative to Mi'kmaq communities in N.S.

He was appointed to General Manager in 2006 and in 2017 to Chief Operating Officer. He is also the Executive Director of the Ulnooweg Indigenous Communities Foundation, strengthening the relationship between Canada's philanthropic sector and Indigenous communities of Atlantic Canada.

Chris is a board member of the Centre for Local Prosperity, Rural Communities Foundation of Nova Scotia, Innovacorp, Atlantic Provinces Chamber of Commerce and the Community Sector Council of Nova Scotia. He holds a BBA from St. Francis Xavier University.



**ROGER BOUTILIER**  
 NOVA SCOTIA ASSOCIATION  
 OF REALTORS

Roger Boutilier has been at the Nova Scotia Association of REALTORS® (NSAR) since 2004. He started as the Director of Finance and has been CEO since 2011. During his tenure as CEO, NSAR has undergone a rebrand, improving its public profile and stakeholder relations and launched a marketing campaign promoting REALTOR® value. He has led NSAR to win six CSAE awards, four North American Education Awards and three National Government Relation Awards. In addition, NSAR was the first in Canada to launch a REALTOR® Career Development Program and was the first in Canada to convert to the Paragon MLS® System.

Roger was an Association Executive Network (AEN) board member from 2012-2014 and served as the Chair of the AEN Benchmarking Task Force.

Roger has served as the President of the Certified General Accountants Association of N.S., a board member of the Nova Scotia Nature Trust and coached basketball for eight years, guiding his daughter's team to a provincial championship. He is also a Trustee of the HMCS Sackville Memorial Trust and is an active volunteer for Feed Nova Scotia.

Roger lives in Sackville, Nova Scotia with his wife, Michelle, of 23 years; their 21-year-old daughter, Victoria; and 2-year-old puppy, Jasper, who keeps everyone active. Roger enjoys fishing and travelling, however his true passion is the game of golf. Roger is an adamant supporter of buying local and is a huge ambassador for his native province of Nova Scotia. It is his belief that every Canadian should visit Nova Scotia at least once in their lifetime to experience its lobster and golf.

# Making real food for real life

Over 400 products and the customer experience makes M&M 'uniquely convenient' Contributed

M&M Food Market has been one of the nation's leading retailers of frozen foods for almost 40 years. With nearly 330 traditional and express locations across Canada, M&M offers more than 400 easy to prepare products and personalized customer service in a uniquely convenient shopping environment.

Back in 2014, the transformation of the M&M brand began based on a promise of "helping make real food for real life." As part of this change, customers saw a new contemporary store concept, full-colour packaging design, a reinvention of the product portfolio and a new loyalty program.

## NEW STORE DESIGN

After testing its new store design concepts, M&M Food Market began renovating its network of retail locations

across the country. The revitalized in-store shopping experience features a modern kitchen design — without the counter — so customers can shop the freezer doors, along with inspiring menu boards to showcase products.

## REAL FOOD FOR REAL LIFE

M&M Food Market is the only national food retailer in Canada with a full-food portfolio that has absolutely no artificial colours, flavours or sweeteners in any product. The recent overhaul of their product portfolio and the new full-colour packaging has made a world of difference for many customers. One area of focus has been the prepared meals category (i.e. new simmer sauces, soups, pastas and meal kits) that caters to all ages and families, including millennials and seniors. Another recent innovation

has been the new line of M&M Food Market premium single serves. These products are sold in new cutting-edge packaging, which flash freezes and then vacuum seals the product to lock in freshness and flavour. Each product in this new packaging is microwavable and ready in five minutes — without having to take the product out to stir midway through. The film covering the food rises, creating a bubble and essentially steams the meal.

## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IN OUR TRADITIONAL LOCATIONS

Personalized, one-on-one customer service is offered every day by Meal Advisors at M&M Food Market. They offer complementary product suggestions, meal preparation advice and tips on new ways to enjoy a variety of products, along with the product of the month program and taste of M&M Food Market sampling program. Also, M&M Food Market's Click & Collect Program allows customers to order products online and pick them up at any location across Canada with a one-hour guarantee — no minimum order and no fees.

## NEW LOYALTY PROGRAM

Recently, the company launched its new loyalty program — M&M Food Market Rewards. By tapping into years of customer data and using an industry-leading artificial intelligence platform, the new one-to-one based program reaches customers on a personalized level by offering discounts on their favourite products. A new app will be introduced soon to complement the rewards program that allows customers to load and view offers, locate the nearest store, view flyers and display rewards card barcode for quick in-store scanning.

M&M Food Market has gone through a major transformation over the past few years and will continue to pursue innovative programs and initiatives to support its network of franchisees coast-to-coast.

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FLAVOURS or  
SWEETENERS  
in **ANY**  
of our food

**NEW FOOD. NEW LOOK. NEW SHOPPING EXPERIENCE.**

Come check out our new store and exciting new products for the grill.

**FRANCHISE OPPORTUNITIES  
AVAILABLE NATIONALLY.**



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