

BUSINESS VOICE

HALIFAX'S BUSINESS MAGAZINE

THE URBAN WILDLAND BLUE MOUNTAIN

Keeping Halifax wild

Pg 13

NUANCES IN BUSINESS

Looking at business resilience
in a pandemic

Pg 16

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Celebrating women in podcasting

Pg 21

LOOKING AHEAD AT VOGUE OPTICAL

Offering unique value

Pg 26

AFFINITY PARTNERS

As a member of the Chamber you gain access to many benefit programs that can save you or your company money. You can recover the cost of your membership many times over just by taking advantage of these money and time saving benefits from our Affinity Partners. Find out more [here](#).



BUSINESS INSURANCE

Bauld offers a complete portfolio of insurance solutions for a range of business types and not-for-profit organizations.

Chamber members have access to a wide range of business insurance products and services, advice and other benefits.



PAYROLL DISCOUNT PROGRAM

Chamber Members gain access to Ceridian's convenient payroll solutions by phone or PC for businesses of all sizes.

Members receive a 20% discount for all payroll services along with free implementation.



OFFICE PRODUCTS DISCOUNT

Grand & Toy offers the most diversified portfolio of office solutions in the industry, a sophisticated set of e-commerce tools.

Chamber members receive up to 85% off of products with delivery right to your home or office!



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE GROUP INSURANCE PLAN

The Halifax Chamber offers a comprehensive health plan that provides great coverage for your employees at competitive prices. 600+ member businesses in Halifax have already signed on.

The Chambers of Commerce Group Insurance Plan has been protecting Canadian firms for over 40 years and is regarded as the #1 Group Plan in Canada for Small Businesses!



GROUP HOME AND AUTO INSURANCE DISCOUNT

Being a member means you have privileged access to the TD Insurance Meloche Monnex program, which provides savings through lower preferred insurance rates, plus enhanced protection that can be adapted seamlessly to your changing needs.

On average, our members save \$420 annually!



BANKING WITH BENEFITS

CUA is a full-service banking institution with a 70-year history of helping individuals, businesses and community organizations achieve what matters most.

Whether you are looking for small business, non-profit or personal banking, CUA provides flexible products, personalized service, and quick decisions to suit your needs and help you achieve your goals.



MERCHANT SERVICES

SONA provides competitive pricing and tailored solutions to simplify payment acceptance. Powered by First Data, SONA offers cutting-edge technology to improve business and commerce transactions.

SONA Guarantees cost savings for your Business, or they will pay your Halifax Chamber Membership!



FUEL DISCOUNT PROGRAM

Members are offered a fuel discount savings of 3.5 cents per litre at all Canadian ESSO-branded service stations, specializing in fleet services.

Last quarter, our members saved \$850,516.37 with the Fuel Discount Program!



AVIS/BUDGET

Avis Preferred Service with free upgrades. Receive the Halifax Chamber corporate rate in 100% smoke free vehicles.

Available for member companies and individuals across North America.

HALIFAX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- 04 Events & Policy**
- 05 President's message**
- 06 New & Noted**
- 09 Members in the News**
- 13 The Urban Wildland Blue Mountain**
Keeping Halifax wild
- 15 NovaScotian Crystal Tribute**
- 16 Nuances in business**
A look at business resilience



21 Special Feature

IWD: Women in podcasting

26 Profiles:

REDspace: Celebrating 20 years

Looking ahead at Vogue Optical

30 Trends

Work life balance? How about work life sway?

Professionals upskilling to stay relevant

In a negotiation, those who offer first win

34 Working for you

Untangling workplace conflicts

35 Thank you to our webinar speakers

“ We started out of the ashes of the dot-com crash in 2000, unsure if there was a business to be had, or whether it was even possible to survive in Nova Scotia, let alone thrive.”
— Mike Johnston, President & CEO, REDspace **25**



Board of Directors – Officers

Gavin MacDonald, Cox & Palmer, Chair
Mark Sidebottom, Nova Scotia Power, Vice-Chair
Margaret Chapman, Narrative Research, Past Chair
Richard Butts, Clayton Developments Limited
Faten Alshazly, WeUsThem
Roger Boutilier, Nova Scotia Association of REALTORS

Directors

Stefanie MacDonald, Halifax Paper Hearts
Michele Peveril, Halifax Port Authority
Brad Proctor, McInnes Cooper
Captain D.E. Mazur, Maritime Forces Atlantic
Caroline Wolfe Stewart, Nova Scotia College of Nursing
Andrew de Freitas, Canadian National Railway
Christopher Googoo, Ulnooweg
Hon. Joanne Bernard, Easter Seals Nova Scotia
David Rideout, MetroWorks
Martha Casey, VOLTA
Karim George, InTouch Communications
Ann Divine, Ashanti Leadership
Chris Cowper-Smith, Spring Loaded Technology

Chamber Staff

Patrick Sullivan, President and CEO
Becky Davison, Vice President, Marketing
Kent Roberts, Vice President, Policy
Sandra White, Director of Finance and Administration
Emma Menchefski, Communications Manager
Mina Atia, Communications Coordinator

Volume 30 • Issue 03

Business Voice is published 11 times a year for members of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce and Metro Halifax's business community. Views expressed in Business Voice are those of the contributors and individual members, and are not necessarily endorsed by, or are a policy of, the Halifax Chamber of Commerce.

No part of this publication may be reproduced without written consent of the publisher. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, the publisher cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions that may occur.

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
www.halifaxchamber.com

Cover photo credit: Corey Isenor

HALIFAX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

CHAMBER EVENTS

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

Contact chris@halifaxchamber.com for sponsorship opportunities

WEBINARS

Building Resilience and Confidence in Canada's Financial System

March 11
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM
REGISTER [HERE](#)

Chamber 101

with Patti Dow,
Member Services Specialist

March 17
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM
REGISTER [HERE](#)

CHAMBER MASTERCLASS:

Finding Your Dream Customers Online

March 19
12:00 PM - 1:15 PM
REGISTER [HERE](#)

VIRTUAL EVENTS

BUSINESS SUPPORT SERIES:

New forms from CRA - How Will This Affect your Tax Return?

March 23
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM
REGISTER [HERE](#)

2021 HALIFAX BUSINESS AWARDS

FREE!

March 25
5:00 PM - 9:30 PM
REGISTER [HERE](#)



Cindy's Benefits Meeting

March 26
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM
REGISTER [HERE](#)

POLICY & ADVOCACY

For more info on Chamber policy and advocacy work, please visit halifaxchamber.com/advocacy

Thoughtful Thursdays

Over the past eleven months, the Halifax Chamber has been working diligently to ensure our members are up-to-date and aware of the programs, services, and announcements that could impact their business. We have also spent countless hours chatting with members, producing relevant webinar material, and advocating the government for increased supports and common-sense policies. While there is still much work to be done as we begin recovery, we thought this might be a great time to introduce a new series to the Chamber's LinkedIn page: **Thoughtful Thursdays**.

Our advocacy work is often quite specific, focusing on issues like taxes, transit, and red tape. But now we are providing another platform for more open discussions on trending issues, current events, and business ideas. Check back on Thursdays for a new piece once a month and leave us a comment or send us a message. We would love to get a conversation going in hopes of inspiring a more thoughtful Thursday.

This month's piece is on Affordable Housing. [Read here](#) and let us know your thoughts in the comments!

International Women's Day

Reflecting on how far we've come and how far we have to go

@prezhfxchamber



PATRICK SULLIVAN
PRESIDENT & CEO

It's hard to believe we've been in this pandemic for one full year. It was mid-March 2020 when Prime Minister Trudeau asked Canadians to 'stay home'. Since then, the world has adapted to Zoom meetings, virtual workouts and mask-wearing.

With the arrival of vaccines, there's a hopeful feeling in the air in Halifax. We've stayed the course for so long, but people are still kind, still generous and still respectful.

We know it's been a long year on Zoom, but Nova Scotians know the more we work together to stay safe, the sooner we can get back to meeting and being together in person.

And the sooner we can start tearing down the inequalities highlighted by the pandemic.

It's no secret—COVID affected women significantly more. After hosting Wonder Women last month and with International Women's Day happening on March 8, I wanted to reflect on how far we have to go for equity in Canada.

Women find themselves in industries greatly restricted by the pandemic such as the service industry and the self-employed.

Women are still the primary caregivers for children and elderly parents. Several Canadian studies last year showed women still do most of the housework, and it actually increased during COVID.

They manage the unpaid work.

And for women entrepreneurs, they lack access to capital. The pandemic amplified these structural barriers.

Black, indigenous and immigrant women, women with disabilities and women in the LGBTQ2S+ community are all impacted by these barriers even more.

We did see some positive news this year like the first woman mayor in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality, Amanda McDougall, and gender parity on the Halifax council.

We also elected our first Black woman on council, Iona Stoddard, for District 12 in our 200-year history as a city.

This is a huge milestone, and we are so proud of Amanda, Iona and the rest of the councillors, but this just proves how far we have to go.

There were no women in the Nova Scotia leadership race.

One of the potential candidates said the \$60,000 entry fee was a barrier for her. And I imagine others felt this way as well!

These structural issues need to be addressed at the root: we need more women in government leadership roles. We need more women making decisions.

We've done the studies; we've seen how to address the inequalities. It's time to get to work.

Celebrate International Women's Day this year by supporting women in business, donating to not-for-profits that support women, and by educating yourself and others on the inequalities that still need addressing.

Enjoy reading this issue and especially the **IWD: Women in podcasting** story about women entrepreneurs in Halifax.

TAP CANADA'S TRADE ACCELERATOR PROGRAM

HALIFAX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
n | s | b | i
Nova Scotia Business Inc.

**DON'T WAIT FOR THE ECONOMY TO BOUNCE BACK.
BE READY WHEN IT DOES.**

APPLY TODAY!

HALIFAXCHAMBER.COM/TAP

NATIONAL SPONSORS:

AIR CANADA CARGO bdc EDC RBC

NEW & NOTED

We welcome our new Chamber members

440PARK STRATEGY MANAGEMENT

90 per cent of companies have a strategic plan, but 89 per cent of those companies' plans fail. We help companies get better results by showing them how to directly connect strategy and execution. We enable functional leadership with easy to deploy tools that facilitate strategy formulation, visualization, measurement, execution, operations and monitoring.

Mark Fraser

Bedford, NS
(902) 441-9113

Mark@440park.com

440park.com

BUSINESS & PROF. SERVICES -
Management Consulting

AEROVISION CANADA INC.

Trevor Bergmann

504-6940 Mumford Rd
Halifax, NS
(902) 450-2824

trevor@aerovisioncanada.com

aerovisioncanada.com

ARBOUR WEALTH INC

Ed Hickey

1 Kingswood Dr Suite 211
Hammonds Plains, NS
(902) 431-5500

ed@arbourwealth.ca

arbourwealth.ca

FINANCE & INSURANCE - Financial
Planner

ATLANTIC HOME BUILDING AND RENOVATION SECTOR COUNCIL

The Atlantic Home Building & Renovation Sector Council (AHRSC) was established in Halifax in 1991 as a regional industrial training committee and became an industry sector council in 2000. The AHRSC is a federally-registered, non-profit corporation dedicated to human resource management and labour market planning and

programming on behalf of the 2,000 companies and 25,000 trades workers engaged in the new home construction and renovation industry in Nova Scotia.

Michael Montgomery

PO Box 312
Halifax, NS
(902) 240-1133

michael.montgomery@ahbrsc.com
ahbrsc.com

NOT-FOR-PROFIT GROUPS -
Associations/Agencies

BIG WAVES

Brook Thorndycraft

Halifax, NS
(647) 218-8303

brook@bigwaves.ca

bigwaves.ca

EDUCATION & PROF.
DEVELOPMENT - Org. Development

BLAIR BROWN - RETIRED MEMBER

Blair Brown

Halifax, NS
(902) 209-0925

blair@redcapinc.com

OTHER - Retired Member

BNV MEDIA INC.

BNV Media Inc. is a podcast production and multimedia company that offers brands, companies, and individuals full service audio/video production for podcasts and other digital media. BNV Media's studio is located in the heart of downtown Halifax with a beautiful view of Halifax Harbour.

Marc Boudreau

5121 Sackville St Suite 601
Halifax, NS
(902) 497-4099

marc@bnvmedia.ca

bnvmedia.ca

COMMUNICATIONS - Podcasting

CAPTURE IT PHOTOGRAPHY

Capture It Photography specializes in Headshots, Family Photos, Portraits, and

Performing Arts Photography. Located in Dartmouth, and proudly serving the HRM, we offer studio or on-location services for both businesses and individuals. We take the worry out of photography, so you can enjoy the moment and get images you'll love.

Jay Fisher

Dartmouth, NS
(902) 297-7667

info@captureit.photography

captureit.photography

PERSONAL CARE & SERVICES -
Photography

CASABLANCA AUTHENTIC MOROCCAN CUISINE

Abdelmalek Saoudi

1532 Queen St
Halifax, NS
(902) 434-2272 (CASA)

Casablanca.authentic@gmail.com

casablancahfx.ca

RESTAURANTS, FOOD & BEVERAGE
- Restaurant

CONSEIL DE DÉVELOPPEMENT ÉCONOMIQUE DE LA NOUVELLE-ÉCOSSE (CDENE)

Le Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse (CDÉNÉ) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the economic advancement of the Acadian and Francophone community in Nova Scotia. Founded in 1999, it is the only provincial Francophone economic development organization in Nova Scotia. The CDÉNÉ delivers solutions to businesses, not-for-profit organizations, job seekers, economic immigrants and communities to ensure their economic development and advancement. With our personalized approach and the expertise of our team members, we can develop solutions that contribute to your success.

Julie Oliver

Halifax, NS
(902) 424-3970

joliver@cdene.ns.ca

cdene.ns.ca

BUSINESS & PROF. SERVICES - Bus. Service Centres

DELMON GARDENS INC.

Delmon Gardens Inc. is specialized in international trading, export, import, and commercial representation, located in Halifax, Nova Scotia in Canada. Delmon Gardens Inc. was founded by Matoonq Alyagoob in 2019 when he exported the first container of Canadian natural honey to Saudi Arabia. Since then, we are expanding our capacity for exporting foodstuffs to serve our global customers especially in the GCC countries.

Matoonq Alyagoob
Halifax, NS
(437) 999-7824

matoonq@delmongardens.com

BUSINESS & PROF. SERVICES - Import/Export/Trading

DILIGENT ESTIMATING CONSULTING

Daniel Arsenault

Halifax, NS
(782) 414-1097

dparsenault7@gmail.com

REAL ESTATE/CONSTRUCTION - Builders Commercial

DRS PIVOTAL POWER

In business for over 40 years, DRS Pivotal Power is a world leader in the design and manufacture of high reliability power conversion equipment for defense customers worldwide.

Located in Atlantic Acres Business Park, DRS Pivotal Power is part of the Leonardo DRS family based out of Arlington, Virginia.

Ryan Daye

150 Bluewater Rd
Bedford, NS

rdaye@drs.ca

pivotalpower.com

INDUSTRIAL & MANUFACTURING - Manufacture/Process

FDG-CONSULTING LTD.

FDG-Consulting Ltd. is a highly-organized and customer success-driven company managed by an entrepreneur with an engineering degree, with over 20 years of international expertise (Europe/NAM) in complex projects in various industries such as Automotive, Marine & Offshore, Industrial Equipment. Eager to create customer success utilizing defining the most efficient Product Lifecycle Management and digital processes and strategies, track progress against goals, manage execution projects, and manage execution projects goals. The ability to quickly understand the complicated company and customer situation as well in a large organization, their challenges, and deliver a sustainable resolution. As well, we provide Virtual Reality in-person meeting solutions concerning high efficient and environmentally friendly global collaboration.

Heiko Oldendorf

Suite 200 - 375 Water Street
Vancouver, BC
(604) 398-3626

heiko.oldendorf@fdg-consulting.ca

fdg-consulting.ca

BUSINESS & PROF. SERVICES - Consulting (General)

HEADLINE PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS

Headline Promotional Products helps increase your brand recognition with promotional goods. Offering unmatched customer service, exceptional product knowledge and innovative client solutions. Specializing in custom screen printing, embroidery and promotional products. Serviced locally in Halifax.

Kelly O'Sullivan

6375 Bayne Street
Halifax, NS
(902) 329-6125

kelly.osullivan@headlinepromotions.ca

headlinepromotions.ca

ADVERTISING, PR & MEDIA - Promotional Products

SUBMIT CONTENT TO BUSINESS VOICE
HALIFAX'S BUSINESS MAGAZINE

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS
EACH MONTH YOU HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SUBMIT UP TO 100 WORDS AND A PHOTO RELATING TO YOUR COMPANY'S NEWS.*

TRENDS ARTICLE
INCREASE YOUR CREDIBILITY AND BUILD YOUR ORGANIZATION'S PROFILE BY WRITING ABOUT A HIGH-LEVEL TOPIC RELATED TO YOUR INDUSTRY.*

HALIFAXCHAMBER.COM/BUSINESS-VOICE/SUBMIT-CONTENT-TO-BUSINESS-VOICE

HALIFAX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

JOSTENS MARITIMES

Jordan Lorette

Mineville, NS
(506) 461-6569

jordan.lorette@jostens.com
jostensmaritimes.ca

SHOPPING & SPECIALTY RETAIL -
Retail (General)

LAKE CITY CIDER

A Taproom and retail shop located in Downtown Dartmouth that celebrates Nova Scotian cider made from 100% NS apples. 8 rotating taps celebrate the flavours of NS and beyond pushing innovation and collaboration to create the most dynamic ciders in NS.

Poet Comeau

35 Portland St Unit 2
Dartmouth, NS
(902) 403-2953

poet@lakecitycider.ca
lakecitycider.ca

RESTAURANTS, FOOD &
BEVERAGE - Brewery

NEAT LAWN CARE & LANDSCAPING

Chris Little

Halifax, NS
(902) 403-1408

Chrislittle@neatlawn.ca
neatlawn.ca

HOME & GARDEN - Landscaping/
Lawn Care

PAUL SKERRY ARCHITECTS

Paul Skerry

Halifax, NS
(902) 455-4361

pauls@pskerry.ca

BUSINESS & PROF. SERVICES -
Architecture

PITA PIT DARTMOUTH

Dwayne Robichaud

15 Cuddy Lane
Dartmouth, NS
(902) 484-7482

Dwayne.Robichaud@mypitapit.ca
pitapit.ca

RESTAURANTS, FOOD &
BEVERAGE - Restaurant

PRIME STRENGTH CLUB

Prime Strength Club is more than just a gym, it is a community of people all with one common goal... to get stronger, both physically and mentally. We specialize in strength sports, including Olympic Lifting, Powerlifting and Strongman. Come try something different today!

Dave Prime

590 Portland St
Dartmouth, NS
(902) 223-4911

dave@primestrengthclub.com
primestrengthclub.com

SPORTS & RECREATION -
Recreation/Sports/Fitness

RISHABH ARORA - MASTER OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP, SMU

Rishabh Arora

Halifax, NS
(902) 989-0192

rishabh.arora@smu.ca

OTHER - Student Member

SOUTHLAND TRANSPORTATION LTD.

SOUTHLAND Transportation Ltd. is committed to safety and service in the people transportation business.

Coady MacNeil

11 Frazee Ave
Dartmouth, NS
(902) 802-9506

coadym@southland.ca
southland.ca

TRANSPORTATION - Freight/Moving

TAY-DOM IMPORT/EXPORTS

Donovon Collie
Halifax, NS
(902) 402-5804

collie.donovon@gmail.com

BUSINESS & PROF. SERVICES -
Import/Export/Trading

THE 7 VIRTUES BEAUTY INC.

The 7 Virtues is a social enterprise founded in 2010. We source fair trade, natural and organic essential oils to support farmers rebuilding after war or strife. Our peace perfumes are available exclusively at SEPHORA across the USA and Canada.

Mike Velemirovich

229 Amesbury Gate
Bedford, NS
(902) 221-2024

mike@the7virtues.com
the7virtues.com

BUSINESS & PROF. SERVICES -
Import/Export/Trading

THE UNITY VALUES FOUNDATION

The Unity Values Foundation is a charity whose goal is to help other charities create impact. Unity has both state-of-the-art campaigning, technology and the ability to help businesses connect with the values of their customers through loyalty integrations and every-day giving. Unity is a must see for every organization.

Stephen Skinner

Halifax, NS
(902) 456-8628

stephen.skinner@unityvalues.com
theunityvaluesfoundation.com

NOT-FOR-PROFIT GROUPS -
Fundraising

VROOMCREW MOBILE CAR SERVICES INC.

Vroom Crew is a mobile auto detailing company that brings the service to you at your home, work, apartment, or parking garage. Our customer-friendly booking platform provides an effortless experience from booking through payment.

Quinton Gorman

Halifax, NS
(902) 394-1378

qgorman@vroomcrew.com
vroomcrew.com

TRANSPORTATION - Automotive
Cleaning/Detailing

WORK GLOBAL CANADA INC.

Wanda Young

69 Elizabeth Ave
St. John's, NL
(709) 700-1983

wanda@workglobalcanada.com
workglobalcanada.com

HR, EMPLOYMENT & STAFFING -
Recruitment Services

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

How our members are growing Halifax

HALIFAX SEAPORT TO BEGIN NEXT STAGE OF TRANSFORMATION

The **Halifax Port Authority** is transforming the historic Halifax Seaport District. The Seaport Farmers' Market will be reimagined as a dynamic outdoor operation during the warmer months and a successful indoor weekend farmers' market operating within Pavilion 22 during the winter. The building will be renamed "The PIER" at the Seaport—short for Port Innovation, Engagement & Research—and will be transformed into a living lab for the transportation industry. It will include permanent leased storefront spaces for retail/eateries, providing those tenants with the best of both worlds: weekday traffic from those working at the living lab and traditional weekend farmers' market customers. This transition will take place this spring starting in mid-March.



MERIDIAN DLT EXPANDS GREEN ENERGY POWERED DATA NETWORKS

Advanced technology continues to provide sustainable solutions to address problems faced by businesses. Many software applications process thousands of data transactions every minute, which uses a tremendous amount of energy. To address this, **Meridian DLT** has developed a digital data sharing and storage service that is powered using 100 per cent renewable energy, offering a secure way for businesses to share and store

data while reducing environmental impacts. Government of Canada is investing a repayable contribution of \$363,750 to support **Meridian DLT's** work and enable growth. This funding will enable Meridian to scale-up and increase the variety of data sharing and storage services it can offer, as well as the speed and diversity of servers and machines. This project will allow the company to grow its team, market its technology and increase revenue.

SHELTER NOVA SCOTIA ANNOUNCES NEW CHAIR

Shelter Nova Scotia is pleased to announce Jamie O'Neill as the new Chair of our Board of Directors. She has served on the Board for Shelter Nova Scotia since 2015, participating and leading stakeholder engagement and fundraising initiatives. Jamie is an experienced Human Capital Strategist with over 20 years of organizational, business consultancy

and training experience. She is currently a Partner with **Uprise Consulting**, a Halifax-based consulting firm. Jamie's previous board experience has included the **YMCA** and the **Halifax Chamber of Commerce**. Shelter Nova Scotia supports people in times of crisis and transition through residential, trustee and outreach programs.

WE NEED NATURE NOW MORE THAN EVER

People across the world are rediscovering the joy of spending time in nature. But here in Nova Scotia, many of our most important natural areas, including critical habitat for endangered species, are privately owned and at risk. For 25 years, the **Nova Scotia Nature Trust** has protected more than 15,000 acres of ecologically significant land using a strategic, science-driven approach. But nature needs all of us to move faster and before it's too late. So they have set an ambitious goal: to double their protected spaces to 30,000 acres—'**Twice the Wild**'—by 2023.



NEW SPCA VETERINARY HOSPITAL

The new **SPCA Veterinary Hospital** is open and accepting patients. Families can book services including medical, surgical, wellness and preventative health care from their location in Burnside. Dr. Jacenta Snyder, Dr. Kyla Wuhr and Dr. Penelope Graben are the latest veterinarians to join Dr. Kellie Haggett at the SPCA Veterinary Hospital. "With more than 45 years of combined comprehensive veterinary knowledge, you can trust your pet with the SPCA Veterinary Hospital team," said Elizabeth Murphy, CEO of the Nova Scotia SPCA. "We look forward to providing your pet with the care they need to be a healthy and happy part of your family."

NEW SCOTLAND CLOTHING CO. REPLANTS ROOTS IN NEW DOWNTOWN

Dartmouth-based clothing company, **New Scotland Clothing Co.**, is moving to 17 Prince Street in Downtown Dartmouth, which has always been its home. This new location allows New Scotland to remain in the neighbourhood, expand its e-commerce business, add office space and be closer to New Scotland Brewery. With the entire

New Scotland Company now located on the same block in Dartmouth, the team is set to become even more efficient and offer an easier commute for their customers. Owners Kevin and Scott Saccary hope to keep their local roots firmly planted while expanding their global presence through their online shopping portals.





DGHF WELCOMES NEW STAFF

We are delighted to announce that Nina Brien has joined the **Dartmouth General Hospital Foundation** team as our Philanthropy Officer, Annual Giving. Nina is a graduate of Mount Saint Vincent University and most recently worked with the Nova Scotia Sport Hall of Fame. She brings experience in the charitable sector, event planning and

community engagement. She is an active volunteer with Cystic Fibrosis Canada, chairing Atlantic Canada’s largest Walk to Make Cystic Fibrosis History and is also head coach of the Citadel High School Girls Basketball Team. Nina is excited to build on the success of our longstanding events and has great ideas for new ones. Welcome to the team Nina!



SOLID STATE PHARMA WELCOMES NEW TALENT

Solid State Pharma is pleased to welcome several employees to its ever-expanding team of dedicated professionals! Vice President and Dr. Sam Tadayon, Scientists Dr. Marivel Samipillai, Dr. Luke Murphy, Dr. Bitu Hurisso and Dr. Danae Guerra are all recent additions to the company’s technical team. Solid State Pharma

also welcomes Adam Mowery to his new role as Administration Specialist. We continue to keep Atlantic Canada at the forefront of scientific innovation in the field of pharmaceutical development for years to come. Bringing innovative and reliable drugs to patients is our primary mission statement.

JDRF LAUNCHES NEW CAMPAIGN TO ACCELERATE

As 2021 marks the 100th anniversary of the discovery of insulin in Toronto, **JDRF Canada**, the largest charitable funder of type-1 diabetes (T1D) research, is launching its \$100M Campaign to Accelerate. The goal is to defeat the T1D monster and build upon a long legacy of outstanding Canadian diabetes research, fast-tracking towards cures and improving the lives of those living with T1D. JDRF Canada’s **\$100M Campaign to Accelerate** will renew hope that a cure is within reach for all Canadians living with T1D. It will achieve this through a multi-faceted plan of attack that drives multiple breakthrough research initiatives, such as stem-cell based therapies.

SONA WELCOMES A NEW TEAM MEMBER!

We are excited to welcome Matt Bourque to the team as **SONA's** newest Account Executive based in Moncton! Matt and SONA’s values are completely aligned. As an organization, SONA’s focus is and has always been, helping our customers. Matt has shared this same focus throughout his professional career. We are excited to support him in achieving his goal of helping more businesses understand how technology can help them, while at the same time reduce the cost of their merchant services.



GOLF FOR LUNG HEALTH

As warmer days near, why not think about activities you can do to improve your lung health this year? Did you know that, on average, most golfers walk eight kilometers during an 18-hole round? That's a lot of activity! Getting out and walking the course regularly can also help strengthen lung function and keep your respiratory system healthy. **The Lung Association of NS** wants to help you with your golf game, with our **Links For Lungs Golf Book**. Featuring over 100 BOGO green fees, you'll be enjoying golf at 60+ courses around the Maritimes AND helping lung health in our province.

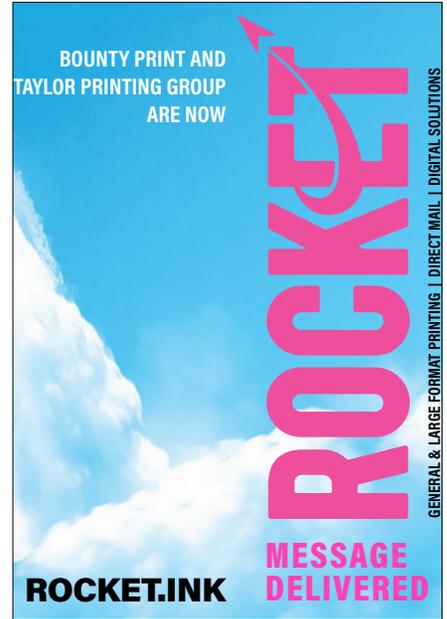


HAPPY 75TH EASTER SEALS MONTH!

Easter Seals Nova Scotia is celebrating its 75th Easter Seals Month and 19th Paper Egg Campaign this 2021! The team works towards a fully accessible and barrier-free province by providing quality programs and services for Nova Scotians living with disabilities. Whether it's creating employment opportunities, carrying out inclusive sport and recreation programs or providing funding assistance for assistive devices, **Easter Seals NS's** goal is to always improve the quality of life for persons with disabilities. We see a world where everyone is included. We are also excited that our New Leaf Café in Burnside had its second anniversary in January! Come visit 22 Fielding Ave, Dartmouth.

BOUNTY PRINT IS NOW ROCKET

With the merger of Bounty Print and Taylor Printing Group, it's time to refresh our brand. Between our two locations, **ROCKET** boasts decades of experience that have earned us the trust of countless businesses and government agencies across the Maritimes. Specializing in full-service commercial printing, we're staying current and expanding our offering by embracing multichannel marketing. This helps us deliver a more comprehensive service to our clients by fusing two strong companies into one powerful, bold brand. Guided by our shared values, we'll grow bigger and better together.



MSVU & CPHR NOVA SCOTIA PARTNERSHIP

The **MSVU Business Administration** program's major in Strategic Human Resource Management has achieved accreditation by **CPHR Nova Scotia**—the granting body for the CPHR designation. It's a nationally recognized level of achievement in the field of Human Resources. "This accreditation confirms the exceptional quality of the MSVU Business

Administration program in Human Resource Management," said Dr. Peter Mombourquette, **MSVU Business & Tourism Department** Chair. "Through partnerships like this one, we're able to help equip Canada's workforce with people leaders skilled in ensuring successful workplaces and organizations," said Nick Beynon, CEO, CPHR Nova Scotia.



THE YMCA RECEIVES A \$1 MILLION DONATION TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The **YMCA of Greater Halifax/Dartmouth** has received a \$1M donation to help support its work with youth in the community. Inspired by the YMCA's long-standing history and mission to meet its community's needs, Paul and Debbie Lavers decided to invest in that mission through this transformative gift for the YMCA. The generous donation is a great relief for the YMCA, which, like many

non-profits and charities, faces challenges due to COVID-19 from the loss of donations to closures and limited in-person services for the community. The YMCA expresses its gratitude to community members like the Lavers whose generous donation will go a long way to ease the mental and societal strain on vulnerable communities bogged down by the pandemic.

THE URBAN WILDLAND BLUE MOUNTAIN

Keeping Halifax wild

By Mina Atia

“This project is part of our larger campaign to double the lands the Nature Trust protects across Nova Scotia by 2023.” — **Bonnie Sutherland**, Executive Director, Nova Scotia Nature Trust

Thanks to a collaborative effort spearheaded by Nova Scotia Nature Trust, Halifax’s value proposition just got a little greener.

Last year, the Nature Trust, community groups, the municipality and the province agreed to purchase and protect a large protected urban wildland only minutes away from downtown Halifax.

The Blue Mountain – Birch Cove Lakes area is coined a natural “backyard” due to its rich recreational opportunities and ecological significance. Located between Hammonds Plains, Timberlea and Halifax, Blue Mountain is known for its extensive forests, bogs and wetlands, rocky barrens and hills, sparkling rivers and three lakes.

First initiated by the province’s designation of two large Crown land blocks as Wilderness Area in 2009 and 2015, the urban wildland used to be separated at its heart by a gap of land.

That 560-acre land property called the Blue Mountain Wilderness Connector was **recently purchased** in December

2020. As a newly protected connector property, it bridges the large gap and ensures more than 5,000 acres of the Wild Blue remains undeveloped.

“This project is part of our larger campaign to double the lands the Nature Trust protects across Nova Scotia by 2023,” says Bonnie Sutherland, Executive Director of the Nova Scotia Nature Trust.

“It secures the future of one of the largest expanses of urban wilderness in North America.”

In October 2019, **Nova Scotia Nature Trust** launched a \$2.8 million campaign to Save the Wild Blue by connecting the gap. The Blue Mountain Wilderness Connector then became a realized vision after its purchase with the support of the Natural Heritage Conservation Program, the Nova Scotia Crown Share Land Legacy Trust and donations from a huge number of community groups and individual donors, plus a contribution of \$750,000 from the City of Halifax’s Park Reserve Fund.

“It’s one thing to donate lands to create

wilderness and something else when you have to go and buy them,” says Mayor Mike Savage. “It’s a major commitment that we’ve made.”

“By working with Nova Scotia Trust, we were able to leverage some money. And I was very happy that we did it because it allows us to have the full area protected.”

The connector land used to be owned by well-established businessmen Robin Wilber and Bill Fenton, whose donation of the land was made through the Government of Canada’s **Ecological Gifts Program**.

“Robin Wilber described this as being the foundation of creating our own Central Park, a landmark renowned not only for the refuge it provides within a major city but also for its widespread usage by locals and travellers,” says Sutherland.

Since the beginning of this project, they imagined how this land would grow and attract visitors decades from now. Wilber imagined Blue Mountain’s century-long development turning into a large and wild green space within our major city.

And he's counting on generations to come appreciating what the Nature Trust was able to accomplish back in 2020.

"Most other cities in North America would kill for this opportunity," says Raymond Plourde, Senior Wilderness Coordinator at the Ecology Action Centre.

"Not only does it provide important spaces for citizens' mental and health benefits, but also from an economic point of view we increasingly see people are interested in moving to our beautiful little part of the world for the easy access to nature."

With the pandemic driving people to spend more time outdoors, nature has become an important outlet for many. Having access to a naturally intact ecological environment so close to home is a huge factor in our quality of life, and Nova Scotians should consider themselves quite lucky – pandemic or not.

"People have learned or realized that perhaps we have taken for granted, in the past, just how important access to nature-based parks and wilderness areas is to our mental and our physical health," says Plourde. "That green infrastructure in a city is as important as any other type of infrastructure."

Blue Mountain is protected for its vast greenspace, as it supports Municipal economic development strategies focused on promoting Halifax as a green and inspiring place to live, work and do business.

"In other words, it's an economic advantage," says Plourde. "But only if we preserve and keep these large green spaces connected. And Blue Mountain is certainly one of them."

The response is echoed by Mayor Savage who has been a full supporter of Blue Mountain all along. "The city has put in money so that we can preserve these kinds of spaces for generations to come," he says.

"Businesses and individuals are more likely to move to a city where they have these kinds of opportunities. So it's an economic as well as an environmental, social and recreational asset."

The Halifax Chamber continues to support sustainable initiatives to grow the population of the province and the city. The local business community needs skilled talents to lend a hand in prospering our recovering economy. To do so, businesses need to be on board with diverse projects that are pushing for the attractiveness of our communities and welcoming newcomers from across

the country as well as internationally.

"Businesses like the idea that we invest in and protect greens," says Mayor Savage. "We have urban wilderness areas that are very special and not something that everybody has, so it's really good for the business community as it is for the entire community."

"This isn't completely altruistic. There are real benefits like the City of Minneapolis did with preserving a lot of **green infrastructure** and marketing itself to the rest of the US based on that," says Plourde. "It's really quite remarkable and the kind of thinking and action that Halifax would be well advised to adopt and follow."

There are two other essential areas connected to the **Halifax Public Greenbelt**: The Purcell's Cove Backlands and Sandy Lake. Both of which are being sought out by the Ecology Action Centre for expansion.

"You're going to continue to see us protect green space," says Mayor Savage. "While we were able to develop in other areas, we keep some areas undeveloped for generations to come."

"And I think that makes us more than the sum of our parts; it makes us a very special community." ■

"The city has put in money so that we can preserve these kinds of spaces for generations to come." — Halifax Mayor Mike Savage



Nova Scotian CRYSTAL



Irish craftsmen arrive in Nova Scotia committed to preserving the integrity of their ancient craft.

1996



CITADELLE & MARGAREE PATTERNS

Introduced our first distinctive patterns that promote Nova Scotia culture, history, and geography.

1997



STEMWARE
Redesigned to purpose-shaped bowls.

1998



TITANIC PATTERN
To commemorate Halifax's role in the ship's story.

1999



LIMITED EDITION MILLENNIUM FLUTE
A glass to ring in the new century.



First Canadian Apprentices are certified as Crystal Craftsmen.

2000



SINGLE MALT SCOTCH GLASS
This popular piece cements our reputation for finely wrought functional design.



ORNAMENTS
Started making annual ornaments.



ANNAPOLIS PATTERN
While our crystal-making techniques are centuries old, our modern patterns break with tradition.

2002



Created the World Junior Ice Hockey Trophy. Photographed with Alexander Ovechkin.

2003



WINDSOR PATTERN
Continues our tradition of stylish interpretations of Nova Scotia's history.



Created the Women's World Hockey Trophy. Photographed with Cassie Campbell.

2004



PORT GLASS
Designed to enhance the enjoyment of port.



10TH ANNIVERSARY
Our crystal is made to be used. Our 10th anniversary was a fine excuse to lay down our tools and raise our glasses in celebration.

2006



LUNA PATTERN
Inspired by the timelessness of the moon, yet totally fitting with modern décor.



Created The Wonder Music Award.

2009

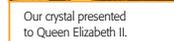


Created the Pengrowth Cup.



SEAFARER'S RUM GLASS
A tribute to sailors, mariners and rum-runners alike.

2010



Our crystal presented to Queen Elizabeth II.



CANADIAN SPIRIT PATTERN
As Canada's only makers of fine crystal, we introduce a pattern to honour our country of origin.

2012

First Canadian Cutting Apprentice.

2013



Created Nova Scotia Open Trophy and RBC Canada Cup.

2014



Created the Cunard Award.

2015



BEER GLASS
Continues the tradition of creating crystal you can use.



LUNENBURG DORY
launched.



Nova Scotian Crystal recognized around the world with customers in more than 75 countries.

2016



STEMLESS WINE GLASS
launched.



ASTRAL PATTERN
It emulates the scintillating effect of the stellar constellations in a cloudless night sky.

2017



Nine new pieces launched – most ever in one year.



SPHERE LAMP
launched.

2018

Craft Certification Ceremony: Apprentices become Craftsmen, Craftsmen become Master Craftsmen.



CELEBRATION PATTERN
The cuts create their own dazzling display of light in your home and their own glow of warmth in your heart.



New shapes, new sizes, popular pieces meet new patterns.

2019



For more than 20 years we have exemplified high craft and Canadian excellence.

Nuances in business

A look at business resilience in a pandemic

By Mina Atia



JAMES INGRAM - JIVE PHOTOGRAPHIC PRODUCTIONS

The overused sayings of “unprecedented times” and “new normal” have been losing their impact. When it comes to the resilience and perseverance of our local business community, however, that impact is still making waves.

Last year was packed with surprises, low blows and unforeseen challenges. Yet, many entrepreneurs have defied those odds by opening a new business during a pandemic, pushing for success, fighting for more chances or inadvertently closing doors on a high note with an outpouring of support.

Business Voice interviewed four of the many cream-of-the-crop establishments, who represent the current nuances of doing business.

NovaScotian Crystal hand-making a treasured exit

Starting over two generations ago with a group of master craftsmen committed to preserving this ancient and vanishing craft, NovaScotian Crystal has become a

truly Canadian story. It’s a valuable one about respect for tradition, beauty and fine craftsmanship.

Every piece created bears the mark of its maker. Its uniqueness is manifested every step of the way from the original design inception, to the mouth blown shape, to the hand-cut pattern.

“Our mission has been to create a brand of Canadian crystal and a story of passion and excellence,” says company owner Anne Campbell.

The NS Crystal brand embodies respect for the craft, its customers and team members. Using traditional tools and techniques of European crystal makers, the company’s versatile team has worked with grace under pressure since 1996.

“We honour tradition as we create each piece of crystal,” says Campbell. “Gratitude has a strong presence in our workday, and we are grateful, particularly our craftsmen, to have an outlet for our creativity.

NS Crystal has been embraced tremendously and thoroughly supported by many communities in Nova Scotia, Canada and the world. “We are thankful to our many loyal customers and corporate partners, here and around the world, for the tremendous outpouring of support we have received,” says Campbell.

Recently announcing the company’s permanent closure at the end of February has catapulted the number of requests and orders made by customers. They received so many, in fact, NS Crystal had to suspend taking further orders.

“We have absolutely loved being able to create Canada’s only mouth blown, hand-cut crystal and we feel incredibly privileged to have been able to do this for and with those who share our love of this art and craft,” says Campbell.

NS Crystal fostered its own tight-knit community, consisting of hard-working team members and endlessly loyal

customers and partners. The team relentlessly continued putting their talent and care into the work to the very last day. Meanwhile, the customers have been lucky to secure one last NS Crystal piece.

“We couldn’t have come this far without the many customers and partner organizations that have supported us along the journey,” says Campbell. “To all we say thank you.”

Saké keeping the Teppanyaki flame burning

As CEO of Comvest, a real estate firm operating various restaurants throughout Halifax, Zoey Boosey spent a great deal of time and effort turning Sea Smoke Restaurant and Bar on the waterfront around and building its team. Upon being informed that the restaurant was up for sale, she decided to purchase it and not see all her time and effort go to waste.

Always wanting to own a fleet of restaurants, Boosey considered Sea Smoke to be her perfect building block for the next step: Saké Restaurant & Bar. Since her favourite cuisine is Asian, she saw it as the opportunity to offer Halifax a different and unique experience she felt the city was missing.

“We aimed for an intimate and cool vibe paired with a cherry blossom tree to give a great Asian feel to the restaurant,” says Boosey. “I had always had a vision of offering something to the people of Halifax which it hasn’t had before.”

Boasting an authentic feel, a world-class mixology and an unmatched experience, Saké celebrates Asian cuisine by embracing only the finest ingredients, experts and traditional techniques when creating its uniquely rooted yet modern dishes.

“We offer an experience to our guests like never before rather than the usual in dining of other restaurants,” says Boosey. “Unfortunately we were only open for a month before the second shutdown came and we had to close our doors for another period.”

Saké’s opening during a pandemic remains to be very challenging, in particular for a new business owner. “There is no help out there at the moment

for new businesses,” says Boosey. “Help was offered to those open before the pandemic but unfortunately not much support to those who were new.”

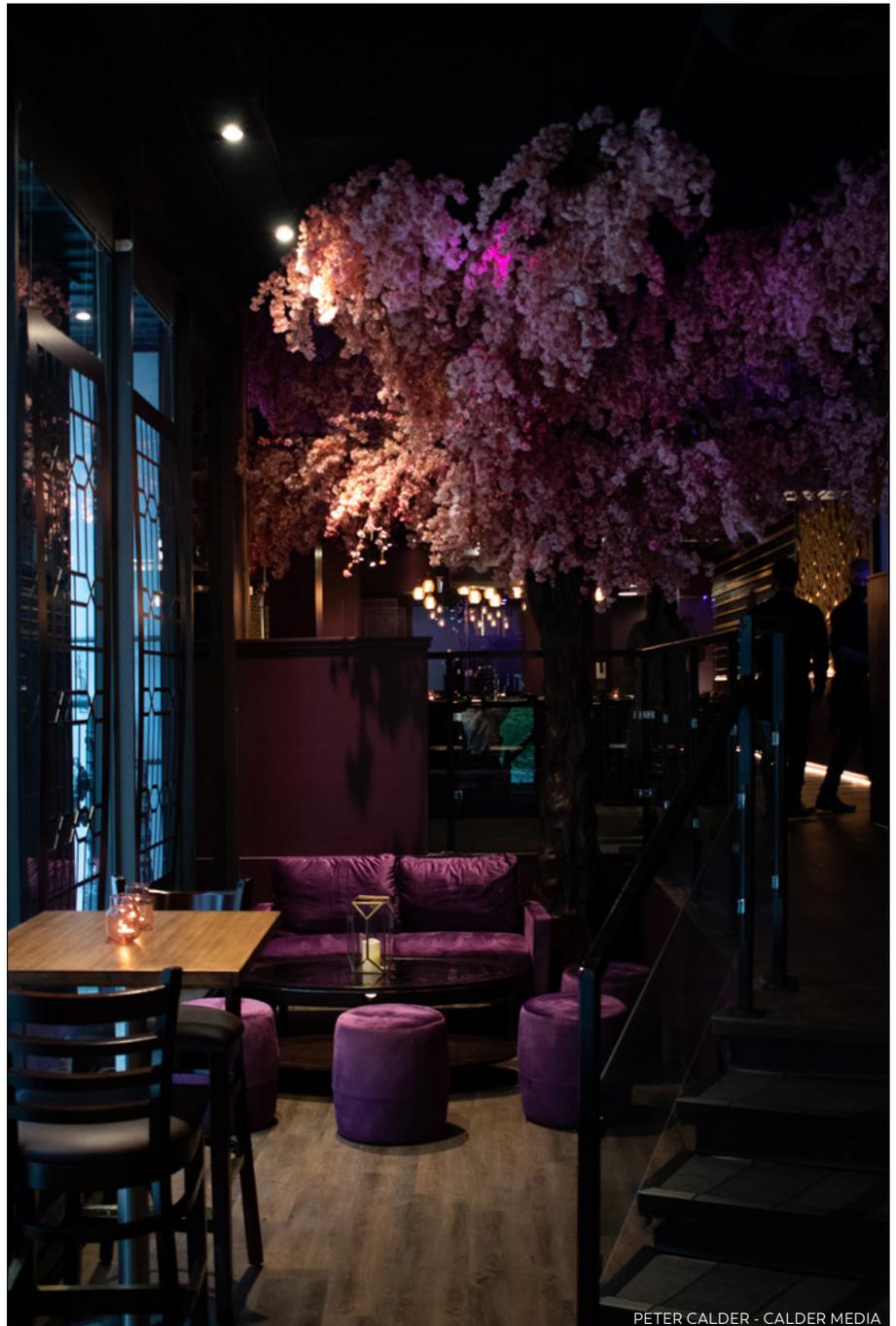
“However, the good news came at the start of January when we were able to reopen.”

Saké’s unique experience revolves around several offerings such as Teppanyaki, Hot Pot and À la Carte dining. Recently launching a new and well-received Teppanyaki brunch on

weekends, the team has the confidence to push for other exciting offerings.

“People are of course very cautious about coming back out with the different variants of COVID-19 at the moment,” says Boosey. “But we have a 7,300 square foot restaurant, which is great for social distancing, and are very strict when it comes to our safety protocols.”

Business for **Saké** is growing steadily since people have started to feel confident again in stepping outside and



PETER CALDER - CALDER MEDIA



LUMI STUDIOS MEDIA AND PRODUCTION

supporting local business. “And we would love for everyone to come and enjoy the experience we have created,” says Boosey.

“Whether you are looking for the flames of the Teppanyaki, a cocktail like never before or to try one of our homemade and exquisite desserts, we hope to see you soon.”

The Highlander Spa goes against the grain

Feel good and look sharp is not just a slogan for The Highlander Spa & Lounge – it’s a mantra that allowed this masculine-friendly establishment to get started when weathering the unknown brought on by the pandemic.

It’s been more than seven years in the making for owner Bruce Herron and his vision for this spa to come to life.

“My daughters just kept saying it’s a great idea. Why don’t you just do it; why don’t you take the leap of faith,” he says.

“It’s just simply born from a place that I would feel comfortable in as a man when going to a traditional spa, getting services done and taking care of myself.”

— Bruce Herron,
Owner, The
Highlander Spa &
Lounge

And he did. In late 2019, Herron started to build on South Park Street, got some staff in, tested out the process and the design, and decided to finally actualize his dream by debuting the spa on opening day of August 17, 2020.

“Overall it’s been scary but very satisfying,” he says. “And ultimately I don’t regret it because I’m in it for the long haul.”

“The best part of it is people’s reaction when they come into the space and connect with it.”

Designed with rich-blue walls, wooden finishes and a fully-stocked cozy bar in a ceiling-high glass windowed space, the spa hosts a number of large pedicure chairs comfortable for any body size.

“It’s just simply born from a place that I would feel comfortable in as a man when going to a traditional spa, getting services done and taking care of myself,” he says.

With knowledgeable professionals

on staff and an exclusive selection of products, **The Highlander Spa & Lounge** caters to the dignified relaxation of customers seeking a masculine atmosphere. Women are also more than welcome to enjoy the many treatments and services available.

“We have a large feminine clientele,” says Herron. “Everybody’s welcome.”

His daughter is now co-managing the spa since they’ve been operating six days a week, and they recently started opening on Sundays. Herron is hopeful that travellers and business professionals will soon start staying at the Convention Centre, which is a short walk up to the spa. He believes it will probably be a large lift for the business.

“Once we’re a bit more established, I’d like to certainly take the design and what I learned from going through it and expand out to West Bedford,” says Herron.

“As challenging as it has been, it’s truly been a great experience!”

“Once we’re a bit more established, I’d like to certainly take the design and what I learned from going through it and expand out to West Bedford.”
— Bruce Herron,
 Owner, The Highlander Spa & Lounge

Chanoey’s Pasta creating its starch mark

Small business owners, Catherine Paulino and Carl Mangali saw limited options for fine food in the take-out choices available to them. They decided to fill what they think was a gap by specializing in pasta.

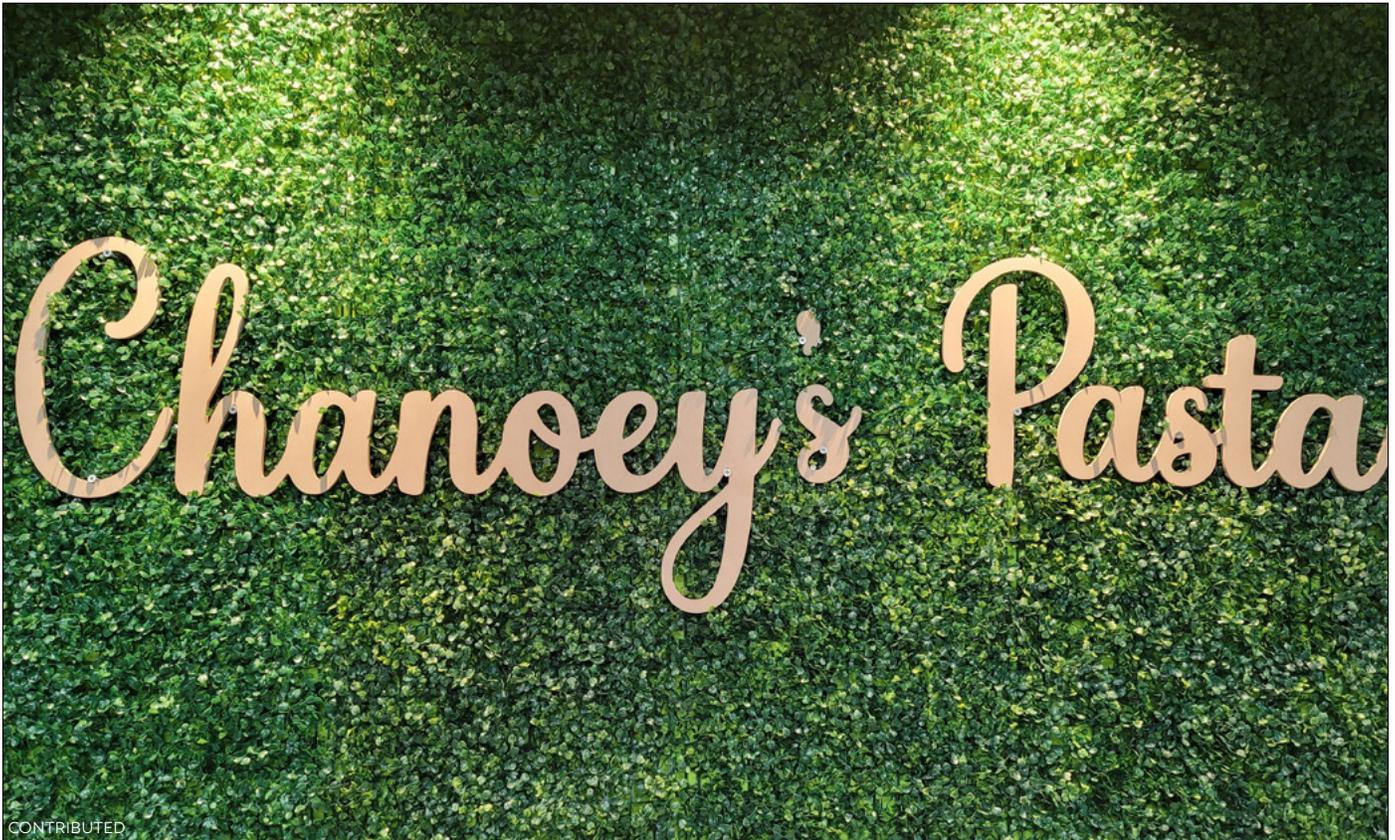
“We built Chanoey’s Pasta because we want to operate a small business and cater to the needs of the downtown Dartmouth community,” says the husband and wife duo.

Serving other non-pasta options like salads, sandwiches, soup and breakfast, Chanoey’s creates something different for everyone’s taste. “We are introducing foods from different parts of the world especially our place of origin, the Philippines.”

The restaurant’s namesake is a word play on names, Chandler and Joey, of two of the main characters of famous tv show ‘Friends’. “We liked them so much we named our small business after them; plus it’s unique and catchy,” they said.



LUMI STUDIOS MEDIA AND PRODUCTION



CONTRIBUTED

“My husband and I have been in the food business for a long time now, but opening our own restaurant and being in charge of all the aspects of it in the middle of the pandemic has been a roller coaster ride,” says Catherine.

Despite finding it challenging at times, the duo tries to take as many advantages of the pandemic as they can. “It caused us a lot of stress and uncertainties, but on top of that we also took it as a challenge because if we can survive a year in the pandemic, we can survive anything after this.”

Confessing this drive is what kept them going against all odds, they give special thanks to their landlord for helping out especially when they first started. “Because of him, we continue forward with our restaurant.”

Carl and Catherine purposely designed **Chanoey's Pasta** for takeout without even thinking about the impact of the pandemic on foot traffic. “We think we hit the 'sweet spot' at that point,” they say.

“It's been almost a year now, and we see

“*My husband and I have been in the food business for a long time now, but opening our own restaurant and being in charge of all the aspects of it in the middle of the pandemic has been a roller coaster ride.*”

— **Catherine Paulino,**
Owner, **Chanoey's Pasta**

new faces every day. People are coming from Lower Sackville, Halifax, Bedford, Enfield and sometimes New Brunswick just to try our pasta,” they said. “Now 95 per cent of them are regular customers.”

“We are thankful and humbled because they are willing to cross the bridge for us; they are thinking about us every time they want to celebrate special occasions,” says Carl.

The duo feels the same way about the challenges facing many new businesses. They don't qualify for most of the government support programs since they only opened last June. However, that's not a roadblock they're unwilling to get around.

“We will hire employees in the summer to help us make more pastas, but we are certain that we want Chanoey's to stay small and simple,” says Catherine about the future of their quaint restaurant.

“We plan to continue bringing more and new flavours to Nova Scotia, something unique and tasty for everyone.” ■

IWD: Women in podcasting

Celebrating through conversations and new connections

By Mina Atia

International Women's Day (IWD) falls on the eighth day of March, when we also celebrate Women's History Month. It's a day dedicated to celebrating and honouring the trailblazers and those continuing the fight for equality. These ambitious women pave the way for a new generation of leaders. Spanning across industries, disciplines and passions, they inspire us and challenge us to reflect on women's experiences across the globe.

While radio and TV were male dominated for decades, we have ushered in a new era of podcasts where women's voices are being amplified. Growing in popularity in most places, Halifax boasts its own tight-knit podcast community.

In celebration of IWD, three women in that community are hosting a special episode together. Titled 'The Power of Our Voices — Empowering Female Podcasters', it acknowledges women in podcasting under the theme of 'Women in Leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world.'

Business Voice got in touch with them about their podcasts. They are uplifting, educational and provide a platform for unheard voices to tell stories, share lived-in experiences, start conversations and make life-long connections.

Martina Kelades of Life out Loud, Sarah Murphy and Ashley Kielbratowski of Harbr are all entrepreneurs with growing and thriving businesses. Craving a creative outlet to stretch their skills and develop, they started their own podcasts while holding full-time jobs. The podcasts allowed them to become creators who share wisdom and bring on new voices to help encourage, inspire and empower others.

Women take on podcasting

"Sarah and I were both interested in doing something that didn't carry the same stress or responsibility as our work did," says Kielbratowski, Co-Creator and Co-Host of Rival & Queen Podcast.



Ashley Kielbratowski (FAR RIGHT) is Co-Creator and Co-Host of Rival & Queen Podcast and Co-Founder & CGO of Harbr, a software company in Halifax.

"This was a way for us to connect further with others who are doing exciting things and inspiring us."

— Ashley Kielbratowski, Co-Creator and Co-Host, Rival & Queen Podcast

"We wanted a space where we could just be ourselves and create whatever we wanted."

Every Thursday, the lifestyle podcasters' mission is to elevate lives in many ways. The cohosts discover new topics, delve in deeper and get inspired by people from all walks of life.

"We love learning about the cool things that people are doing, especially here in Nova Scotia," says Kielbratowski. "This was a way for us to connect further with others who are doing exciting things and inspiring us."

Podcasting has provided so many people in the past decade or so with platforms to find their voice and to share them with their communities. "We all believe there is so much value in lived experiences, and such an opportunity to learn from others,"

says Murphy, Co-Creator and Co-Host of Rival & Queen Podcast.

“Being a woman in podcast is incredible! We have learned so much, created bonds with every guest,” says Kielbratowski. She highlights an emerging community in Halifax of podcaster women that is exciting to be part of and see it grow.

“There is room for everyone; we all have different visions and goals,” she says. “So, it’s nice to support each other and we can’t wait to see what comes next.”

The significance of podcasts and what’s next

The cohosts often joke about wanting to be friends with more people. Their podcast offers them an incredible approach to connect with their guests on a whole other level.

“It really creates a special community and bond that couldn’t have been created elsewhere,” says Kielbratowski.

“We have built an incredible network

“We learn so much from our collaborations with guests and other podcasters; it leads to really deep friendships and networks where we can support each other.”

— Sarah Murphy,
Co-Creator and
Co-Host, Rival &
Queen Podcast

locally and throughout North America, and each episode is a chance for us to grow personally and as a podcast.”

Rival & Queen fosters a safe space where the cohosts, as well as their guests, are able to use the platform for authentic storytelling and personal narratives.

“Personally, the reward is the opportunity we’ve created to meet and spend time with really interesting people,” says Kielbratowski. “That has pushed us to ask anyone to come on the show and the worst they can say is no.”

Kielbratowski and Murphy learned a valuable lesson about their ability to do the work behind the scenes and on the mic. They leave the editing to Producer Marc Boudreau from BNV Media, but beforehand Murphy was the star behind all the editing.

“We also value being consistent and professional,” says Kielbratowski. “Although our content is fun and relaxed, we take what we do seriously and value people’s time and focus on making them feel prepared and comfortable for our show.”

There are huge benefits to listening and learning from others’ experiences, especially when they bring up topics that may seem taboo for radio.

“One of the things that I love about The Life of Loud podcast is its focus on an often private topic like mental health,” says Murphy.

“Martina does such a great job of creating a safe space for honest conversation and it reminds me it’s good to bring those conversations up with others, which inevitably leads to really meaningful human connection.”

Podcasts have been known to expand on topics and viewpoints. This is only possible in a space where people feel safe in having conversations, are willing to listen and comfortable responding in a collaborative format—all of which leads to stronger if not better connections across the board.

“Those connections pour over into our day-to-day life,” says Murphy. “We learn so much from our collaborations with



Sarah Murphy (BOTTOM MIDDLE) is Co-Creator and Co-Host of Rival & Queen Podcast and Co-Author at genderdiversitypledge.com, the pledge to build more diverse organizations.

guests and other podcasters; it leads to really deep friendships and networks where we can support each other.”

Kelades looks forward the most to making conversations and connections, which are the two main reasons why she started Life Out Loud Podcast. The mental health podcast offers a professional and specialized platform to expand on conversations about wellness at work, in personal lives and in daily living.

“There is so much power in our stories, and each of us brings unique life experiences and insight,” says Kelades. “I’m also excited to have the chance to meet some of the other BNV female podcast hosts and learn about them and from them as women building our podcast brands.”

International Women’s Day and diversity

Studies show that only 20 per cent of podcast hosts are women—it’s a big underrepresentation. “Of course, as women, we are inching our way to closing the gender gaps, but there’s still lots more work to do, especially when it comes to sponsorship and compensation disparities,” says Kielbratowski.

Kelades celebrates IWD by commemorating and recognizing the accomplishments of the many women in her life and honouring their contributions towards creating a world of gender equality.

“I reflect on the journey that we have travelled as women,” she says. “Acknowledging the many challenges that women before me have faced and how they have overcome barriers and broke through glass ceilings and providing more opportunities for the future of women.”

Diversity for these women podcasters means different voices are offered a platform to express their ideas, their perspectives and share their lived experiences. “We place priority on giving people from different backgrounds, ethnicities and experiences a place to share their stories and their unique magic with the world,” says Murphy.

Rival & Queen co-creators have made a conscious decision to ensure diversity

“There is so much power in our stories, and each of us brings unique life experiences and insight.”

— Martina Kelades,
Founder, Life Out Loud Podcast

is brought into their work and to the audience through their guests. They have invited Siera Bearchell of **Universally Judged Podcast**, Taye Landry of **The Taye Anita Show**, Grace McNutt and Linnea Swinimer of **Minute Women Podcast**, Jessica Beauchamp of **Strong Feelings Podcast**, Wendy Sparks of **Court-Side Moms Podcast** and Jean-eva Dickie of **Book of Love Podcast** on the upcoming episode.

These guests will share their own stories in celebration of IWD. They will talk about diversity in podcasting but also in other fields that still lack representation.

“We are choosing to challenge by identifying gender biases and choosing to discover and celebrate women’s achievements,” says Kelades. ■

*The upcoming episode will be pre-recorded and released on both platforms **Rival & Queen Podcast** and **Life Out Loud Podcast** on Monday, March 8. Don’t miss out and give it a listen!*



WE MAY NOT SHAKE HANDS, BUT WE ALWAYS LEND ONE.



When the future is defined by uncertainty, be certain that you have a community to lean on. The Halifax Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to supporting local businesses like yours with virtual events, networking opportunities, advocacy on your behalf, and a strong voice in the Halifax business community. We're all facing unprecedented challenges. Chamber members never face these challenges alone. We're with you, every step of the way.

Become a member today.

HalifaxChamber.com

**HALIFAX
CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE**



REDspace: Celebrating 20 years

Transforming the media and entertainment industry from Nova Scotia

By Mina Atia



CONTRIBUTED

As a software company with 95 per cent of its clients located outside of Canada, REDspace was no stranger to remote work. The company has extensive experience collaborating with remote teams from other regions. Upon hiring its employees, REDspace ensures they're provided with laptops and other necessary equipment to work from home effectively.

"As part of our culture, we have always allowed flexibility and work from home options—both full-time and on an "as-needed" basis," says Mike Johnston, President and CEO of REDspace.

The transition to a fully distributed team was relatively seamless for the company, and that kind of operational ease is directly related to its legacy. REDspace achieved a major milestone by celebrating 20 years in business last year.

"We started out of the ashes of the dot-com crash in 2000, unsure if there was a

business to be had, or whether it was even possible to survive in Nova Scotia, let alone thrive," says Johnston.

By starting off with building corporate training applications for IBM's internal teams, REDspace recognized the irrefutable appeal of combining well-built and scalable software platforms with engaging and unique user experiences.

"At our core, our mission is to help our partners be global leaders in their business and transform the future of their industries with innovative technology," says Johnston.

Landing Nickelodeon as its first media client almost 15 years ago, REDspace has since grown exponentially in building innovative technology. It transformed the media and entertainment industry for leading broadcast networks like WarnerMedia and ViacomCBS.

"We have navigated our way through

a lot of industry transformation," says Johnston. "And we continue to see a need for the work we do across a variety of industries."

REDspace boasts a tailored and flexible approach to software development that allows it to work closely and build decades-long relationships with clients and partners.

"As someone born and raised in the province, I'm personally proud that REDspace offers meaningful careers for 220 people, and growing, from all over the world."

Johnston acknowledges being in Nova Scotia, the home base of his company, is one of the biggest assets when competing internationally. "We come from a region where working hard and being helpful is instilled in us," he says.

The company strives on fostering a diverse, collaborative, passionate and

hard-working team. It continues to grow and is expanding the team presence across Canada by **attracting talent** from all over the world to Nova Scotia.

“At our heart, we’re a service business,” says Johnston. “We invest in our people and their skills and work hard to foster the collaborative spirit needed to accomplish great things together.”

The company’s culture is heavily built around its people, and that is reflected in its diverse, cross-functional team from over 20 countries and various backgrounds.

“Our tight-knit learning culture is woven into everything we do,” he says. “We use weekly Tech Shares, internal Slack channels, Lunch-and-Learns, code reviews and paired programming to share knowledge within the company.”

This type of environment enables the entire REDspace team to provide the best service for clients by staying at the forefront of technologies and trends. Every single team member is passionate about solving problems for the clients and

“*At our heart, we’re a service business. We invest in our people and their skills and work hard to foster the collaborative spirit needed to accomplish great things together.*”
— Mike Johnston,
President and CEO,
REDspace

helping their businesses transform and thrive.

“As a company, we do our best to support our partners as we’re invested in seeing them succeed,” says Johnston. “It’s exciting to see their growth, to build on that momentum and it still feels like the best is yet to come.”

During COVID, REDspace has been renovating and expanding its space. The company is currently undergoing another expansion of the Bedford office as part of its long-term plans. At the same time, REDspace is also hiring remote team members across Canada and around the world to sustain its short-term growth during the pandemic.

“Our future is looking bright!” says Johnston. “We’re growing our team and diversifying into new areas with our partners.”

“After 20 years, we have so much to celebrate and I’m incredibly proud of what we’ve accomplished together. I’m excited to see what the future has in store for REDspace.” ■



CONTRIBUTED

Looking ahead at Vogue Optical

Offering unique value for over four decades

By Mina Atia



Originally called Gray’s Optical, Vogue Optical opened in 1979 with one store on the corner of Brackley Point Road and Belvedere Avenue in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. It has expanded from this modest beginning to 70 plus locations across Canada—eight of them are in HRM—employing over 400 people.

“With our unbeatable ‘**2nd Pair Free Policy**’, our initial vision was to offer a unique combination of quality eyewear, professional services and unbeatable value,” says Ernie Yarn, Nova Scotia Regional Supervisor at Vogue Optical.

Vogue Optical believes in its products and services, and that’s why they offer simple, hassle-free policies. After more than 40 years in the business, the team continues to provide customers with terrific value.

“And we attribute our success to an excellent staff, loyal customers and great products and prices.”

“We attribute our success to an excellent staff, loyal customers and great products and prices.”

— Ernie Yarn,
Nova Scotia
Regional Supervisor,
Vogue Optical

The team’s dedication to ensuring customers’ eye health is the primary focus. That dedication was put to the test during the pandemic shut down last year, when the team continued to go into stores with their doors locked to provide curb side service for emergency eyewear services.

“They ensured everyone had at least one pair or working eyewear to get them through until we reopened,” says Yarn.

Some staff members even went out of their way to pick up, repair and deliver to some of the most vulnerable customers such as seniors. “This is really how this team operates all year long,” she says. “They truly care about their customers and their needs and concerns.”

Like all other businesses, Vogue Optical had to adopt an **aggressive protocol** to protect staff, customers and doctors during COVID. “There are stringent guidelines we must adhere to as far as

social distancing, sanitizing, etc.,” says Yarn. “It has been challenging, but our staff has risen to the occasion.”

Thousands of Vogue Optical customers reached out about broken or lost eyewear during the shutdown. The pandemic served as a reminder to have up-to-date eye exams and a “spare pair” in case of an emergency.

“I think it’s really made people realize how important their vision and eye health are to their everyday life,” she says. Successfully built by creating strong relationships with customers, the eye-care community and its suppliers, “Vogue values each and every client to make sure we have a long standing relationship between us.”

This dedication is a true reflection of the culture at Vogue Optical. It’s built on hard work, attention to detail and a real team approach to supporting one another.

“We have a very well rounded diversified

“We have a very well rounded diversified staff in a wide range of ages and knowledge.”
 — Ernie Yarn,
 Nova Scotia
 Regional Supervisor,
 Vogue Optical

staff in a wide range of ages and knowledge,” says Yarn. “They work together as a team especially in markets such as the Halifax area, and they’re quick to fill in for a staff member not only in their store but in another location if needed.”

“We try especially hard to make working at Vogue an extension of family.”

With majority of the staff working there for more than 15 years, the company is set up for success thanks to their **wealth of knowledge**. “We always strive to be leaders in products and technologies available in order to offer our customers products that fit their individual lifestyle,” she says.

Vogue Optical plays an active role in the communities they serve. It’s also growing internally and expanding as new stores are being added to the company’s pool with new acquisitions across the country.

“We see a bright future!” says Yarn. ■





Work life balance? How about work life sway?

Leaving space for change as priorities shift

CONTRIBUTED:
**CENTRE FOR WOMEN IN
 BUSINESS**
CWBBUSINESSDIRECTORY.CA

Since the mid 1980s, work life balance has been bandied about in board rooms and happy hours alike. Now, as we prepare to celebrate the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women for International Women's Day, is the perfect time to revisit this important concept and often benchmark of success.

Work life balance challenges the workaholic, the new graduate, and the entrepreneur to balance their time between work and personal life. While common, its definition and what it means to achieve this balance is elusive and vague.

In 2019, we released a [study](#) that found that work life balance is the number one challenge reported by women business owners in Atlantic Canada. This was even before COVID-19 began to emphasize and further exasperate these business challenges and added new ones.

Balance can be described as an even distribution of weight enabling someone or something to remain upright and steady. With this definition, it's easy to see how shifting needs of the business,

clients, family, friends, and personal time can be a veritable juggling act.

Around the office, we're embracing a new perspective - work life sway. Sway sets a different expectation and leaves space for change as priorities shift. We're embracing it for ourselves and encouraging our members to as well.

To dive more into the topic, we asked Eleanor Beaton what she thought. Eleanor is a local and globally recognized women's leadership expert, working 1:1 with thousands of women business owners over the years. "I don't think it exists," she said. "The term balance suggests that there is a perfect balance between work life and home life." She adds that work life balance is another thing that women think they need to achieve to be perfect. Another thing that could easily make you feel like you are failing. Another pressure.

Eleanor sees women making very conscious trade-offs when it comes to growth. When evaluating business success, most turn immediately to revenues. Women often take a more holistic view - do I have time to run my business and take time for myself, spend time with my kids, volunteer, take vacation. "It's not money and growth at all costs," she says.

But she has a suggestion. "Every woman," she suggests "should have a reckoning with herself about what her priorities are and then honour those priorities in a way that feels good for them." She adds that on weeks when women feel "out of balance", it's ok if they are in tune with their priorities and where they are at that time.

So wouldn't it be nice to leave work life balance behind us? Wouldn't it be nice to sway between priorities based on what you (yes, you!) need at that time? To go with the ebbs and flows of everyday life?

As an organization who supports women business owners and sees balance struggles daily, we say good riddance to work life balance and let's let our priorities guide and sway us where we need and want to be.

The Centre for Women in Business is Nova Scotia's leading resource for women entrepreneurs. They support women business owners through complimentary one-on-one advisory sessions, business skills training, trade missions, networking opportunities, and more.

Professionals upskilling to stay relevant

Making themselves more employable



GILLIAN OSBORNE
DIRECTOR, ATLANTIC &
OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE,
AGILUS WORK SOLUTIONS
GOSBORNE@AGILUS.CA

Being laid off or working reduced hours due to COVID-19 can feel pretty challenging and demotivating.

Whether you are looking for a new job or pausing your professional life, you probably have more time on your hands now. Hence, it could be a good time to consider “upskilling”.

During this quarantine, many people are actively upskilling to make themselves more marketable or investing in skills to make them more relevant to their existing job and role.

“By 2030, 375 million workers globally will have to master fresh skills as their current jobs evolve.” –McKinsey Global Institute

About Upskilling

It can be regarded as developing a new skill or learning new technologies that can help improve your efficiency in your current or future roles.

If you are wondering whether it makes sense to spend your time and energy in pursuing a career skill or learning a new technology, I believe that ‘now’ is the best time. Here’s why:

- Pursuing a new course or certification shows that you are proactive.

- You can pursue the changing job market with relevant skills and technologies.

- You can look for a new or second career depending on your certification.

- You can expect a higher role with more job functions in your current organization with your newly acquired skills.

- You become more employable than before – as organizations across the world are looking to fill skill gaps and employ people with advanced technological and soft skill capabilities.

Where to Upskill?

Upskilling no longer means investing a lot of money in expensive certifications and courses. Many training companies and universities are offering free courses during the pandemic.

Here are some top resources that you can use:

- [Coursera](#)
- [MIT openCourseware](#)
- [Open Yale Courses](#)
- [John Hopkins Open Courses](#)
- [HubSpot Academy](#)
- [LinkedIn Learning](#)
- [Shaw Academy](#)

In addition to the resources above, many business associations are also offering low-cost programs for individuals to upskill. It may be the perfect time for you to take advantage of these courses during the pandemic.

You can also check out your local public library, which often has free access to learning tools, eBooks and audiobooks.

“Globally, four out of five CEOs have identified employees’ lack of essential skills as a threat to growth.” –LinkedIn [Talent Update 2019](#) from PwC’s 22nd CEO Survey

How to decide what certification/course to take?

It can be difficult to choose which certification is the best for your profile. Thankfully, there are a few ways you can figure that out:

- Use Google to search for your “field” and “what certification should I get?”

- Speak with senior business leaders to get recommendations.

- Try to anticipate job demands in the future and select a course that can help you stay relevant.

- You can consider taking up a general skill course that is in demand. For instance, currently, certifications in business fields like data science and risk management are in great demand.

Upskilling is not just relevant if you have lost a job; it can also be beneficial if you are eyeing potential career growth post-COVID. It can also help you build new networks and new opportunities to socialize.

Challenging your mind and learning a new skill promotes a growth mindset, demonstrates self-motivation and continuous learning—all valuable traits employers are looking for.

And if I haven’t convinced you yet, upskilling is also a great way to stay mentally healthy and stimulate your brain during these unusual times.

THANK YOU TO OUR
SPONSORS OF

The Untapped
Labour
Market
Webinar



MEDAVIE

In a negotiation, those who offer first win

Making an aggressive first offer will lead to better results



GEORGES LEVESQUE
PRESIDENT,
LEVESQUE NEGOTIATION
GEORGES@LEVESQUENEGOTIATION.COM

Albeit a source of significant debate amongst negotiation experts, we strongly believe that that in most negotiating circumstances, you should make the first offer. This is because of a well-known cognitive bias in negotiation called ‘anchoring’.

The anchoring bias describes the common tendency to give too much weight to the first number put forth in a discussion and then inadequately adjusting from that starting point, or the anchor.

We are regularly anchored and barely notice. The price tag on an item in a retailer is an anchor. The store is telling you what it is worth and, generally, the transactional price becomes the listed price (or close to it). Even when discounting is applied, it is done so from the original anchoring point.

Here is an excerpt from an article from the program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School explaining the concept:

“There are competing objectives in all negotiations, and offering a choice allows for an increased chance at acceptance.”

‘Research on the anchoring effect suggests that the party who makes the first offer in a negotiation can gain a powerful advantage by steering talks in her favour. But that doesn’t mean that it’s always wise to make the first offer, as the anchoring effect could work against you if you choose the wrong anchor. Instead, the decision of whether to “drop an anchor” should be based primarily on two factors: your knowledge of the zone of possible agreement, or ZOPA—the range of possible outcomes that each side will find acceptable—and your assessment of the other side’s knowledge of the ZOPA.’

In other words, try and offer first unless you are not prepared or know little about the issue (or item) being negotiated. Then you should wait until the other side makes the initial offer.

Substantial psychological research shows great biases for numbers that are introduced earlier which show increased value. The brain immediately locks in that number and correlates it with a higher innate value, promoting greater credibility to the initial offer.

This is particularly effective when selling a company or making a salary offer. As per a detailed paper from the Kellogg School of Management in 2010,

most deals that actualize occur within proximity of the anchor point. Those who offer first and offer aggressively generally come out the winners.

This is more so when multiple equivalent simultaneous offers (or MESO) are made. Presenting more than one offer at a time increases the alliance's satisfaction as well as the odds that an agreement will be implemented.

The idea is to qualify the value of every portion of your objectives and make multiple (ideally three) offers that have the same value to you but look different to your counterpart.

There are competing objectives in all negotiations, and offering a choice allows for an increased chance at acceptance.

MESOs are an effective strategy at the beginning, middle and end of the negotiation, allowing us to constantly anchor, learn, detect, persist and reframe.

Negotiation is not an exact science but, as a rule of thumb, you should always attempt to make the first offer.

Untangling workplace conflicts

A neutral third party can help you resolve multi-faceted conflicts



PETER LLOYD
ACTING CHIEF
CONCILIATION AND
MEDIATION OFFICER,
CONCILIATION AND
MEDIATION SERVICES (CMS)

Workplace conflicts are complex. Often you can see the symptoms, but the underlying causes remain unclear. They are multi-layered, multi-armed, and most people want to ignore them at all costs! At Conciliation and Mediation Services (CMS), we help unionized workplaces in Nova Scotia who are experiencing conflict, every day. We achieve this by doing what most people avoid: we get in the middle.

Leadership Training Company VitalSmarts says that 95 per cent of **employees have trouble** even voicing a difference of opinion! Clearly, people are, by and large, conflict avoiders. But that can have real impacts on people and organizations. When not managed properly, conflict can lead to morale and performance problems, stress and mental health issues, absenteeism and presenteeism, grievances, and recruitment and retention issues, to name a few. So, what is an organization to do?

Have you ever considered obtaining the assistance of a neutral third party



to resolve workplace conflicts? A neutral is an individual outside of your organization, who has no stake in the conflict or outcome. They have no decision-making power and are not necessarily experts in the facts of the case. Rather, they assist individuals in voluntarily reaching their own settlements, by utilizing a neutral process.

They slow conversations down, remind parties of their goals and ground rules, and even separate parties when necessary, ferrying messages back and forth in a practice known as shuttle diplomacy. They can also provide individuals with a different view of the issues and behaviours, 'from the balcony' as negotiation expert William Ury famously explained it.

Does all this sound too good to be true? A neutral process is not guaranteed to work and needs three key pillars to be effective. It must be:

- 1) Voluntary - All parties, including the mediator, must choose to participate and can withdraw from the process at any time.
- 2) Impartial - Any perceived or real power imbalance must be eliminated, and ulterior motives and conflicts of interest must be set aside/removed.
- 3) Confidential - The contents of discussions are only shared and/or used in a fashion agreed to by all participants.

Sitting down and talking through issues with a neutral party allows for time to consider solutions that might otherwise be over-looked. Mediation lets participants craft mutually agreeable outcomes that are more durable and reflective of their day-to-day realities. No one wins, no one loses, and everyone collaborates and compromises. This in turn can help the relationship, the labour relations climate, and the workplace as a whole.

CMS has a variety of free-of-charge programs and workshops available to assist unionized workplaces in Nova Scotia, including providing neutral third parties to act as mediators for grievances and acute workplace conflicts. We also have skill-building workshops on relevant topics, such as conflict management and resolution.

To find out more and apply, go [here](#), email conciliation@novascotia.ca or call (902) 424-4156.

THANK YOU.

Our members continue to lead the way. They share insights, knowledge and expertise to support businesses. We continue hosting webinars with field experts to keep you informed and provide an outlet where your questions could be answered. Thank you to the following organizations for actively participating and reaching out to keep the business community up to date and prepared.



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

