

BUSINESS VOICE

HALIFAX'S BUSINESS MAGAZINE

CONVENTION CENTRE
CONVENTION CENTRE
CONVENTION CENTRE

1650

Let's
run
this
town

COLLABORATION AND COMMUNITY

How the new convention centre is opening doors for the city of Halifax **Pg 14**

A WELCOMING CITY

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THE POWER OF PHILANTHROPY

Eradicating poverty through education **Pg 26**

PROBLEMATIC POLICIES

How zero tolerance puts employers at risk **Pg 31**



RECENT GRADUATES DRIVE BUSINESS GROWTH

Dalhousie University grad, Ben Schulman, is helping GoodLeaf Farms take its vertical farming to new heights.

The company produces ultra-fresh, pesticide-free greens through a relatively new practice of growing indoors in stacked layers. This innovative method uses advanced engineering, horticulture, and data analytics, making it a perfect place for the bright minds of recent grads.

That's where Ben, an industrial engineering graduate, came in. "For the first year, I was the engineering lead primarily focused on designing a new farm in Ontario and supporting our farm in Bible Hill," says Ben. "I have a range of responsibilities, but I focus on high-level process design, working with vendors and managing our external engineers."

Trevor Grandy, director of engineering at GoodLeaf Farms, says he's floored by Ben's impact on the company. "The vertical farming industry is relatively new, so an engineer with the most up-to-date training and knowledge, like Ben, gives us a great competitive edge," says Trevor. "Ben came in, learned, and applied what he was learning, trial-by-fire. Now, I would put his knowledge up against any other professional working in this field."

Hiring innovative young talent was made easier for GoodLeaf Farms by the province's Graduate to Opportunity (GTO) program. GTO provides salary incentives to small businesses, start-ups, social enterprises and non-profits who hire a recent post-secondary graduate for a

permanent, full-time job. Employers receive 25% of the grad's first year salary (35% if the grad is diverse) and 12.5% of the grad's second-year salary.

"The economics of the GTO program are fantastic," says Trevor. "To be able to bring someone in and have that amount of the salary subsidized, why not take advantage of that? You get the immediate benefit of new ideas, knowledge and energy, and then the longer-term benefit of futureproofing your business by hiring the next generation."

YOU GET THE IMMEDIATE BENEFIT OF NEW IDEAS, KNOWLEDGE AND ENERGY, AND THEN THE LONGER-TERM BENEFIT OF FUTUREPROOFING YOUR BUSINESS BY HIRING THE NEXT GENERATION.

The GTO program can help bring value, energy and talent to a small business while helping to create opportunities for recent grads.

"This extra funding means creating jobs and making employee training possible," says Trevor. "Why wouldn't we give young people studying here or wanting to live here — a chance to stay? It is up to us as employers to create the opportunity."

More than 1,000 graduates have already secured good jobs in their chosen careers with the support of GTO funding. Complete applications are normally turned around within 3 to 5 business days.

Interested in learning more about the available funding to hire talented grads? Visit novascotia.ca/GTO



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Halifax is emerging as a global business destination.”
 — Carrie Cussons, President & CEO, Events East Group **14**

COVER STORY:

COLLABORATION AND COMMUNITY

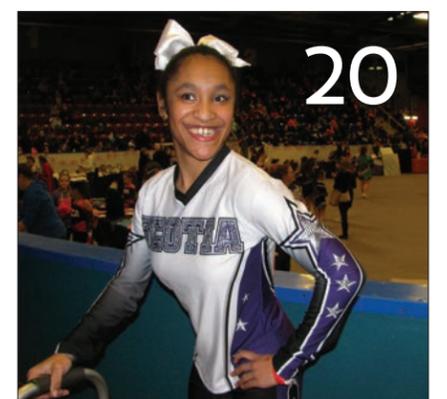
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How the new convention centre is opening doors for the city of Halifax



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CHAMBER EVENTS

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

PINTS + POINTERS

DATE: Thursday, November 7
TIME: 3:30 – 5 p.m.
LOCATION: Garrison Brewing

POWER LUNCH:

Ceridian
DATE: Friday, November 8
TIME: 12 – 1:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Halifax Chamber office, 32 Akerley Blvd.

ANNUAL STATE OF THE CITY:

Mayor Mike Savage
PRESENTED BY: **RBC and Halifax Partnership**
DATE: Friday, November 15
TIME: 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Halifax Convention Centre

BUSINESS AFTER HOURS:

Sandler Training
DATE: Tuesday, November 19
TIME: 4:30 – 6:30 p.m.
LOCATION: 1595 Bedford Hwy., Suite 602, Bedford

CATALYST BREAKFAST:

From unconscious bias to inclusive leadership
DATE: Wednesday, November 20
TIME: 8 – 10 a.m.
LOCATION: Halifax Chamber office, 32 Akerley Blvd.

CHAMBER 101

DATE: Wednesday, November 20
TIME: 12 – 1:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Halifax Chamber office, 32 Akerley Blvd.

LUNCHEON:

Perrin Beatty, CEO, Canadian Chamber of Commerce
DATE: Thursday, November 21
TIME: 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Halifax Marriott Harbourfront Hotel

NETWORKING FOR SUCCESS

PRESENTED BY: **Fairwinds Training & Development Inc.**
DATE: Thursday, November 28
TIME: 2 – 4 p.m.
LOCATION: Halifax Chamber office, 32 Akerley Blvd.

WONDER WOMEN

PRESENTED BY: **BoyneClarke**
DATE: Friday, December 6
TIME: 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.
LOCATION: The Westin Nova Scotian

SAVE THE DATE:

POWER LUNCH:

AIR CANADA
JANUARY 17, 2020

2020 HALIFAX BUSINESS AWARDS

JANUARY 23, 2020

BUSINESS AFTER HOURS: THE COAST

JANUARY 29, 2020

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It takes a village

Halifax's growth can be attributed to collaboration

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PATRICK SULLIVAN
PRESIDENT & CEO

As we start to wind down our busiest time of the year, I've been reflecting on this city I love, Halifax.

We've seen incredible growth in Halifax in the last several years.

Our downtown core is lined with exciting projects. New businesses are popping up every day, from retail to restaurants.

There's never been a better time to be in Halifax.

We're retaining our population, we're on track to meet our GDP targets and we want to be able to boast an open-for-business investment climate.

We even threw our hat into the ring for Amazon HQ2! Halifax Regional Municipality and the Halifax

Partnership, with support from a number of other organizations each contributed to the overall submission and made us contenders for this game-changing economic impact.

While we didn't snag the Amazon contract, we did land eBay's retail revival program, a hands-on training program to equip small businesses with the skills they need to thrive in the global economy.

The Chamber also recently launched our Trade Accelerator Program, an innovative and dynamic program aimed at helping Halifax's enterprises overcome barriers to exporting.

We're constantly finding new opportunities for growth and we're not stopping anytime soon.

A huge contributor to our growth is our collaboration. Once upon a time in Halifax, we were a siloed bunch. We worked and lived in our circles and didn't venture beyond them. Now, we're seeing Halifax's community leaders collaborate on projects, share ideas and lift each other up, like the Halifax Partnership supporting our luncheon with the mayor this month at the Halifax Convention Centre.

Last month, the business community came together to celebrate Small Business

Week. We saw 500+ attendees, hosted events at local venues with our seven community partners and our two main sponsors and reached thousands more with our social media promotions.

Our team is also dedicated to diversity and inclusion in the business community and has partnered with organizations like the Black Business Initiative to invite their clients and members to our events and vice versa. Through this, we're able to host a more holistic representation of our business community.

United Way's poverty strategy is the culmination of concerned citizens wanting to make a difference. A diverse group of 22 community leaders combined their efforts to combat poverty in Halifax and to address the inequalities that come with growth.

We can achieve more when we work together — when we collaborate. We're all working towards the same goal: Halifax's sustainable and inclusive growth. Pooling our resources and working collaboratively allows us to look at the big picture and take definitive action. So, cheers to you, Halifax! Let's keep up the momentum and continue making an impact, both locally and globally. ■

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Common Good Solutions is a consulting and training firm working with clients to grow their positive social, cultural, environmental and economic impact. As Atlantic Canada's first certified B Corporation and community interest company, CGS is committed to supporting businesses in enriching their local community and the lives of its employees and customers.

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Presented by: RBC

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NOVA SCOTIA LEAGUE FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

As a registered non-profit charity, the League, an affiliate of the Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD), takes a leading role as a cross-disability voice for Nova Scotians. We are a major contributor and catalyst in building social, community and political leadership where people with disabilities are recognized as equals.

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MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

How our members are growing Halifax



COMMUNITY AGENCIES EXPAND RELATIONSHIP

Dress for Success Halifax is pleased to announce the recent appointment of CEO, Brenda Saunders/Todd to the Board of Directors for **Big Brothers Big Sisters Halifax (BBBS)**. “We are a supporter of BBBS as a referral agency and through our ongoing clothing donations for their fundraising efforts. We are a connected community and are committed to supporting the agencies we serve in as many ways as possible therefore this is an ideal match,” said Board Chair, Julie Wisen. Pictured are Executive Director, Carol Goddard of BBBS and Brenda Saunders/Todd, who is wearing the organization’s newly branded logo.



PRIORITY MANAGEMENT NEW OWNER & OPERATOR

Priority Management is thrilled to announce that Tonya Lundrigan has acquired Priority Management Atlantic Canada operating out of Halifax and Moncton. Lundrigan has been successfully contributing to our success since 2016 and is now positioned to continue the legacy and leadership of Priority Management for the Atlantic Canada region. Before Priority, Lundrigan

provided workplace solutions in change management, organization effectiveness and process facilitation. For 30 years, Priority Management has helped over 50,000 Atlantic Canadians find a better way to work by providing development solutions in personal productivity, project planning, leadership, sales skill and customer service.

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BULLETPROOF NAMED CYBERSECURE CANADA ACCREDITED CERTIFICATION BODY

BULLETPROOF is one of just a handful of companies nationally to qualify as a CyberSecure Canada accredited Certification Body. CyberSecure Canada is a new federal cyber certification program that aims to raise the cyber security baseline among Canadian small and medium-sized businesses (SMB), increase consumer confidence in the digital economy, promote international standardization and better position SMB to compete globally. “It’s huge that the government of Canada is showing leadership and actively supporting this important initiative now to secure our nation’s business landscape,” said Bulletproof’s Chief Operating Officer, Jeff Shaw. “The threats aren’t going away and are amplifying year over year. It’s important that business takes the initiative to actively protect their client data, intellectual property and revenue streams.”



BIONOVA NAMED #BIC2019 SEMI-FINALISTS

BioNova named eight early-stage health and life sciences companies from Atlantic Canada to compete in the BioInnovation Challenge, a business development program and pitch competition taking place during BioPort 2019 on Nov. 5-6 at Pier 21. The eight finalists include:

- **AffinityImmuno Inc.** (Jonathan Zuccolo – PEI)
- **Dr. Gordon’s Bum Cream** (Dr. A.K. Gordon – NS)
- **Fieldetect Inc.** (Dr. Andrew Trivett, William Whalen – PEI)
- **Motryx** (Dr. Franziska Broell – NS)
- **MRB Beverage Corp** (Gregg Curwin, Dr. Mary Lynch – NS)
- **REACH Orthopaedics Inc.** (Dr. David Johnston, Dr. Andrew Trenholm – NS)
- **Sparrow Acoustics Inc.** (Nadia Ivanova – NS)
- **Spirits by the Sea** (Sabrena MacKenzie – NS)

In addition to the grand prize of \$25,000 in seed funding and a \$30,000 advisory services package, BIC puts finalists in front of investors, the media and influential people in the industry. The BIC semifinalists will also receive pitch training from expert pitch training coach Linda Plano.

LOCAL PROFESSIONAL COACH LAUNCHES BOOK

Brian Duggan, PCC is excited to announce the launch of his new book, **Coaching from the Inside Out**. The book discusses coaching techniques and philosophies for coaches, leaders and managers who coach their employees.



BOYNECLARKE LLP WELCOMES KYLE MACMULLIN

BOYNECLARKE LLP is pleased to announce and welcome Kyle J. MacMullin to the firm. MacMullin joins our business law team and will be focusing on tax planning for business owners and trust law. MacMullin was called to the Nova Scotia Bar in 2017. Prior to studying law, he worked as a Chartered Professional Accountant. This background and experience provides MacMullin with unique insights into the corporate structure and taxation needs of small and medium-sized businesses. “We are excited to have Kyle join us as the newest addition to our team. Our business clients will greatly benefit from Kyle’s business and accounting background combined with his legal experience with tax planning, business incorporations and restructuring, as well as corporate transactions,” said Managing Partner, James MacNeil.



HALIFAX STANFIELD BREAKING NEW GROUND

The rich, fresh flavor of Nova Scotia lobster and superior quality of locally-made aeronautical components are just two examples of why the global appetite for Atlantic Canadian goods shows no sign of slowing down. “HIAA is thrilled to officially break ground on our new Air Cargo Logistics Park which will further increase cargo capacity at the airport,” said CEO, Joyce Carte. “This facility

will create jobs, enhance trade and expand international capacity to foster exports not only for Nova Scotia, but also for the entire region.” The Air Cargo Logistics Park has been made possible thanks to investments of \$18 million from the federal government, \$5 million from the provincial government and a contribution of \$13 million from HIAA.



MAD SCIENCE LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

We at **Mad Science** of the Maritimes are excited to announce the launch of our newly redesigned website featuring a brand new look, more information on our products and services and a simpler

layout. We hope parents, teachers and organizations will find it easier to navigate and book the parties, workshops and science camps that they want. Come check it out at maritimes.madscience.org.



PAUL ROY CO-FOUNDER CPA BUSINESS COACH

Paul Roy, CEO of **Business Coach Atlantic** has co-founded CPA Business Coach with Doug Hoffman, CPA MBA from New York. Along with their partners Scott Lippitt, MBA and Pam Lippitt of Denver, they have created a first of its kind training program for CPAs teaching them how to add complete advisory services outside of compliance work to their accounting practices. Every business has numbers that are not on the financial statements. “Who knows numbers better than accountants? We teach CPAs how to create profitable action plans for their clients based on those hidden numbers,” said Roy. You can learn more at www.cpabusinesscoach.com

SIMPLYCAST CELEBRATES 10 YEARS

SimplyCast, an ISO 27001:2013 certified leader in engagement automation celebrated its 10-year anniversary on Sept. 20 at the Cunard Centre. The event also played host to several major announcements from SimplyCast. SimplyCast has been dedicated to hiring, training and giving experience to the next generation of workers in Nova Scotia. This has included hiring over 200 new graduates, co-ops, high school students and interns for paid work terms. Over the course of the past 10 years, SimplyCast has had the privilege of providing service to clients in over 175 countries and working with many organizations to support the local economy.

NOVA SCOTIAN INNOVATION SHINES THROUGH A GLEAMING SET OF FINALISTS

Atlantic Canada’s most prestigious science recognition event, the Discovery Awards for Science and Technology, has released the names of this year’s awards finalists, Youth Award winner and Nova Scotia Science Hall of Fame inductees. Chair of the 17th Annual Discovery Awards, the Honourable Myra Freeman, is thrilled with the final selections. “There was an unprecedented number of nominations this year, all with incredible merit. Nova Scotians will be excited to learn about the work being done by these incredible innovators, educators and researchers. We are host to a great deal of forward-thinking talent here in our province and this event presents an opportunity for the **Discovery Centre** to showcase this talent,” said Freeman. More information at discoverycentre.ca

SEGWAY NOVA SCOTIA PROMOTED IN NATIONAL VIDEO

Segway Nova Scotia, operating as HFX e-Scooters, is working closely with Segway Discovery on an e-scooter sharing and rentals pilot project now operating in Halifax. We are excited to announce that Segway Discovery selected Halifax as the location and HFX e-Scooters as the company to highlight for a promotional video. Segway Discovery sent a professional video production team to Halifax on Aug. 29, 2019. Their intention is to produce a video about the Segway Discovery turn-key solution and promote it worldwide. It is a great opportunity for us as a business and a great way to showcase Halifax.

WELCOME TO THE ISANS TEAM

ISANS is pleased to announce that Julie-Ann Vincent has joined our leadership team as Director of Programs — Business, Language, Employment, along with D’Arcy Poultney who takes on the role of Online Services and Manager of Business and Workforce Integration. Vincent joins us with more than 15 years of experience working in both the private and not-for-profit sector, most recently as a Senior Consultant for Dunsky Energy. Poultney joins us with more than nine years of experience in business development, working most recently as a Small Business Advisor with Scotiabank. We welcome Vincent and Poultney to the team and look forward to working with them.



WELCOME TO THE TEAM, HANNAH!

Hannah Edgar has recently joined the **Digital Nova Scotia** team as their Project Co-Ordinator. Edgar holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Mount Saint Vincent University, where she graduated in 2015 with a major in communications and a minor in business administration. During her time at the Mount, Edgar joined the recruitment

team, welcoming prospective and new students onto campus and it was there that she found her knack for relationship-building, which she now brings to Digital Nova Scotia. Once she finished her degree, Edgar followed her passion for travelling and spent several years abroad living and working in both Australia and New Zealand.



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COLLABORATION AND COMMUNITY

How the new convention centre is opening doors for the city of Halifax

BY ERIN ELAINE CASEY

With over 120,000 square feet of event space, the new Halifax Convention Centre has become an internationally desirable destination for business gatherings of all kind.



Carrie Cussons is excited. The transition to the new Halifax Convention Centre that began 18 months ago is paying off in ways even she didn't expect. "I think what's been most amazing for me, our shareholders, the city, the province, the business community and the tourism sector is how the Centre is really living up to and exceeding expectations. And all those people who put in their time and energy — they accomplished exactly what the Centre was envisioned to do: bring exciting events and visitors to Halifax and create community and economic impact, in addition to building networks, partnerships and business opportunities."

As President and CEO of Events East Group, Cussons and her team manage the 120,000-square foot Halifax Convention Centre, the 10,000 plus-seat Scotiabank Centre and Ticket Atlantic, the region's primary ticket provider. Cussons joined the organization in 2009 and has led its transition to the new downtown Halifax Convention Centre, including operational preparations, corporate restructuring and human resources strategy. She is a member of the Women's Leadership Collaborative

"I think what's been most amazing for me, our shareholders, the city, the province, the business community and the tourism sector is how the Centre is really living up to and exceeding expectations."

— Carrie Cussons,
President & CEO,
Events East Group

and the International Women's Forum of Canada and chairs the Host Committee for 2020 IIHF Women's World Hockey Championship.

"Traditionally, you think people would come here for a convention or meeting, do some sightseeing and go home," Cussons explains. "But what I'm finding is that visitors are so impressed by what's going on in this city and this province that they're thinking about how they can do business here, send their kids to school here and come up with business and research partnerships here."

Last year, the Halifax Convention Centre hosted 163 events with 102,000 visitors, generating an estimated \$65 million in economic impact. "At Events East, we've been in the event business for a long time, but this is the best year we've had in terms of groups wanting to come to Halifax, because of the Halifax Convention Centre and because of how interesting Halifax has become as a destination," says Cussons.

The coming year promises to be just as good. The International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association Annual Meeting and Exhibition took place in mid-September, with 650 delegates from

around the world in attendance and Steve Snider, General Manager and CEO of Halifax Harbour Bridges, hosting. "This event has not been able to come back here for 20 years," says Cussons. "So Steve was excited for his team to show off what they've done around the Big Lift. A lot of delegates are saying they can't believe the difference from 20 years ago. Halifax shows up as such an interesting and cosmopolitan city."

Other key events for 2019 include the Canadian Association of Black Lawyers (CABL) Annual Conference, the Canadian Society of Internal Medicine (CSIM) Annual Meeting, the 69th Canadian Chemical Engineering Conference, the Sable Island Conference and the Festival of Trees. There are more than 50 events scheduled for this fall alone.

"When this facility was created, we wanted to host the best and largest local events," says Cussons. "Hal-Con, Halifax Chamber events including the Fall Dinner and Efficiency Nova Scotia's Bright Business Conference and Awards — but also to bring those national events and visitors."

Cussons and her team take a one-to-five year outlook when planning the Halifax Convention Centre calendar and are always looking at business trends and growth sectors to maximize benefits and opportunities.

"We've been focused on three big 'buckets,'" she explains, "sectors of comparative advantage for Halifax and Nova Scotia."

One area is the oceans and life sciences sectors, driven primarily by our universities, hospitals and businesses. "We're emerging as a destination for events focused on these kinds of topics. This year alone, we have over 25 health-related events. We just hosted the Society of Rural Physicians of Canada, the Operating Room Nurses Association of Canada and the Canadian Association of Critical Care Nurses." In each case, the group has not been in Halifax for a long time or it was their first time here.

"There's also a convergence of research events wanting to come here and businesses wanting to commercialize that research. We're going to keep working with local experts to bring in these events and collaborating with COVE, the Creative Destruction Lab, Ocean Supercluster members and others. We want to own the ocean sector event arena and we're already getting a lot of great feedback



"We love to host people here and it's a real differentiator from our competitors."

— Carrie Cussons,
President & CEO,
Events East Group

about wanting to come to Halifax."

The second area is social or community issues. "The government, our mayor and the Chamber continue to focus on inclusive and welcoming environments for new Canadians. We hosted the 21st

Metropolis Canada Conference on Immigration. Strategies for attracting and retaining new Canadians are being developed and these events become the backdrop for important conversations and policies across the country."



Meghan Tansey-Whitton

“We’ll continue to work with local business champions to attract events like that. We’ve proven that there’s more than just a good time in Halifax — there’s corporate, national business. These events create a real buzz, delegates spend a lot of money and it shows we’re emerging as a hub for business activity and growth.”

“It’s about more than having a productive conference,” adds Cussons. “We go after events where we have an advantage and where we can become the international platform for showcasing what’s going on in that sector.” This leads to national and international media coverage and helps Halifax get exposure on the world stage.

Businesses in the downtown core have already rallied behind the Convention Centre and become an integral part of the amazing experience Halifax is offering visitors. “They’ve all gotten on board and are showing up in their very best way, demonstrating our Halifax and Nova Scotia hospitality. Some of our other business partners have really stepped up as well, including the airport and hotels.”

How can you get your business or organization involved? The Halifax Convention Centre publishes a schedule so you can find out well in advance which events are coming.

Plus, Cussons wants to hear from you. “We are always looking for great local business suppliers to partner with on our events. If you’re not engaged with us right now, come have a conversation about it. We need partners who are willing to show up with great products and services.”

There are also important opportunities for the private sector to help attract regional, national and international events that showcase their sector or industry. “Local champions who are motivated and take the time to talk to us about attracting events can then leverage those events for connections and investment opportunities.”

Cussons takes a moment to reflect on what makes Halifax and Nova Scotia special. “I think that as Nova Scotians, we take that modest Canadian outlook even farther than most. We’ve proven to ourselves now that we’re worth it as a

city and province. It’s starting to instill a sense of confidence and swagger in our people. Our city is becoming much more optimistic.”

The 18 months since the Convention Centre opened have been a whirlwind and Cussons is deeply grateful for the “true Maritime hospitality” that visitors enjoy. “We love to host people here and it’s a real differentiator from our competitors. There’s something special we have to offer in welcoming people.”

“I feel such pride in Halifax and I love how the Centre can be a backdrop and showcase for the wonderful things going on here in this new, inclusive, diverse, vibrant Halifax. I’m absolutely thrilled that the Halifax Convention Centre is part of Halifax’s evolving story.” ■

Learn more and find out what’s happening at the Halifax Convention Centre here: www.halifaxconventioncentre.com

“The African Nova Scotian community is really important to us,” adds Cussons. A thousand delegates will come to Halifax Convention Centre for the National Black Canadian Summit during African Heritage Month in February. “The Summit is led by the Michaëlle Jean Foundation and they are excited to be in Halifax.”

“In July of 2020, we will be the proud host of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Annual General Assembly,” says Cussons. Six hundred chiefs and 1,600 delegates from across Canada will attend and the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) will take place right after at the Scotiabank Centre. “This is the first time the AFN and the NAIG have been hosted in the same city. Chiefs often have to make a choice about which event to go to and now they can go to both! We’re excited to be part of inspiring Indigenous youth through sport,” adds Cussons, who also serves as secretary

“We’ve proven that there’s more than just a good time in Halifax — there’s corporate, national business. These events create a real buzz, delegates spend a lot of money and it shows we’re emerging as a hub for business activity and growth.”

— **Carrie Cussons,**
President & CEO,
Events East Group

of the NAIG 2020. “There will also be a celebratory festival attached to these events.”

In December, the Convention Centre will also host the ArcticNet Annual Scientific Meeting, the largest Arctic and Northern research gathering in Canada. Up to 1,300 delegates will gather to discuss climate change and modernization in the North and the protection of important ecological and cultural spaces.

The third area is national corporate events and meetings, proving that Halifax and Atlantic Canada can compete on a national scale. “Halifax is emerging as a global business destination,” says Cussons. “We’re now getting national corporate sector events, including the RBC and CIBC national AGMs. We hosted the Emera AGM in May and the national event for Honda. They were absolutely amazed by the business vibrancy in Halifax.”



Data and privacy breaches continue to make headlines, impacting businesses large and small. Are you prepared?

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ACHIEVING SUCCESS

Photos contributed

Meant to achieve

NSCC transition year program builds on success **By Joey Fitzpatrick**

The transition from high school graduation to “the rest of your life” is never a simple and easy process. New graduates face an often bewildering range of educational and career options in a rapidly changing economy. For graduates also facing challenges with academic skills, independent living or personal wellness, this transition can be difficult indeed.

Nova Scotia Community College’s Achieve program helps prepare these graduates for life after high school by focussing on employability, independent living, personal wellness and participation in the community. Through interactive classroom-based groups and real-life work settings, this one-academic-year program is designed to provide students with essential self-awareness, confidence and social skills.

“There’s a certain rhythm and process to attending a post-secondary institution and with that comes a level of academic

independence and self-reliance,” says NSCC President, Don Bureaux.

Kiera Sparks Lucas graduated from the Achieve program in June and she says the most valuable lesson she took from the experience was the importance of following her dreams. And as an experienced world traveller, she knows what she wants to do. Sparks Lucas wants to work in the travel and tourism sector, specifically assisting people with disabilities with their travel needs. She especially wants to help young people travel independently, without the accompaniment of parents.

In her travels to Hawaii, Mexico and Portugal, Sparks Lucas has experienced first-hand some of the issues and barriers that can arise at airports, hotels, etc. She has cerebral palsy which limits her mobility, as well as a visual learning challenge.

“Travelling in a wheelchair is not easy,” she says. “They’re starting to have

people with disabilities work at airports, which I think is great.”

She understands the concern that many parents have about letting their special needs child travel the world without their accompaniment.

“I can see why parents worry,” she says. “It’s not that they don’t want their kids to travel and see the world. But they’re worried that it may not be safe.”

The origins of the Achieve program can be traced to the Strait Area campus of NSCC in 2007.

“Our principal there, Tom Gunn, could see a looming shortage of human capital across the province, which meant a shortage of people who would be able to participate in the emerging economy,” Bureaux recalls. “He realized that it was incumbent upon to the college to live and breathe our value of accessibility.”

NSCC reached out to industry partners to help design an educational

ACHIEVING SUCCESS

program for young people who face barriers. Achieve was designed to equip students with a base set of both professional and interpersonal skills. This would form the foundation that would allow them to then participate in an economy being transformed by automation, big data, robotics and artificial intelligence.

“Because we’re in this transition it is so critical that people have a set of base skills and the ability to live a full and independent life,” Bureaux says. “We have to be careful that nobody is left behind and that we don’t marginalize people or make them feel that they’re not included.”

In 2016 the Nova Scotia government took note of the success of Achieve and together with NSCC and partners in the public and private sector began to expand the program across the province. Achieve is now available on eight of 13 NSCC campuses.

“Every Regional Centre of Education now has access to the Achieve program,” notes Nova Scotia Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, Zach Churchill.

NSCC’s proven model of connecting students with industry is applied to Achieve. The program is supported by a number of industry partners that provide both work placements for participants and employment opportunities for Achieve graduates. Students are encouraged to articulate their interests, passion, strengths and weaknesses, to ensure the most appropriate work placement.

“The program has a work-integrated learning component that allows students to explore many different options in community and employment engagement,”



“Travelling in a wheelchair is not easy, they’re starting to have people with disabilities work at airports, which I think is great.”

— Kiera Sparks Lucas, Achieve Program Graduate, NSCC



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Bureaux says. “We get rave reviews from our partners about the quality and commitment of our students and their desire to do great work.”

The work placement partners with Achieve include companies both large and small and from the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors, Churchill points out.

“That’s important because we want students to see the wide breadth of employment opportunities that are out there.”

Achieve students begin the autumn session in the classroom and the work experience is introduced gradually, at a few days per week. The students come back to spend time in the classroom — in the peer group/support group environment, where they can review and reflect on what they’re learning on the job site. In the winter/spring term the students will spend four to five days per week in their work placement.

“It’s a building process, to make sure they’re comfortable and that they’re going to be successful in their work experience,” Bureaux points out.

Achieve is open to high school graduates between the ages of 18 and 21 with a diploma that indicates Individual Program Plan designated credits. Applicants may have or have had challenges demonstrating competency in areas such as the development of academic, social or independent living skills. Participants have to be able to manage or be responsible for their own transportation to and from the program. Participants face a range of barriers, including physical challenges, autism, cognitive impairment or a learning “difference.”

“I don’t like the word ‘disability’ because people have many different learning styles,” Bureaux says. “As a college we need to provide an approach to education that works universally, for all different learning patterns and learning styles.”

While Achieve provides students with vocational and technical education, there is also an emphasis on interpersonal and communication skills. Developing skills and attributes around issues like teamwork, acceptance of differences and conflict resolution can help to prepare students for success in the wider world.

“Many Achieve students become involved in student council at NSCC,” Churchill points out. “They’re expanding their social network. When you start doing better in your learning environment it gives you the confidence to start doing better socially as well.”



Life is full of opportunities and joy, as well as challenges and risks. We want to provide all our students with the resilience to deal with all kinds of life experiences.”

— Don Bureaux, President, NSCC

Since the program’s expansion across the province between 75 and 85 per cent of Achieve graduates have been able to find employment, Churchill adds.

“It’s because of the connections they make, the mentoring that happens and the internships that we’ve achieved the level of success we’ve had with this program.”

Some 120 students across the province are currently participating in the Achieve program and approximately 10 per cent of Achieve graduates go on to re-enrol in another NSCC program.

“They’ve been able to build

confidence and a set of skills that are foundational to success in other programs,” Bureaux adds.

An accessible post-secondary education system is a prerequisite for a having a socially and economically vibrant province, he points out.

“When we can help students overcome barriers they can be immensely productive and a wonderful resource for industry. Life is full of opportunities and joy, as well as challenges and risks. We want to provide all our students with the resilience to deal with all kinds of life experiences.”



English was Sparks Lucas’s favourite subject when she attended Auburn Drive High School and she loves creative writing. She is also very much at ease in the public eye. For the last five years she has been an Easter Seals Ambassador, speaking and doing cheque presentations at special events and fundraisers, including the Halifax Chamber’s 2019 Spring Dinner.

“I was really nervous at first,” she recalls. “But over time I’ve had more practice with it.”

The Achieve program has helped her with the kind of life skills necessary for independent living. She has her own en suite apartment, does her own cooking and participates with Girl Guides, choir and cheerleading. She is currently participating in the Next Step program which helps people with disabilities find jobs in the community. She understands that achieving your dreams is not something that happens overnight.

“You need to break it down into small steps,” she says. “And no matter how long it takes you, just keep at it until you get there.” ■

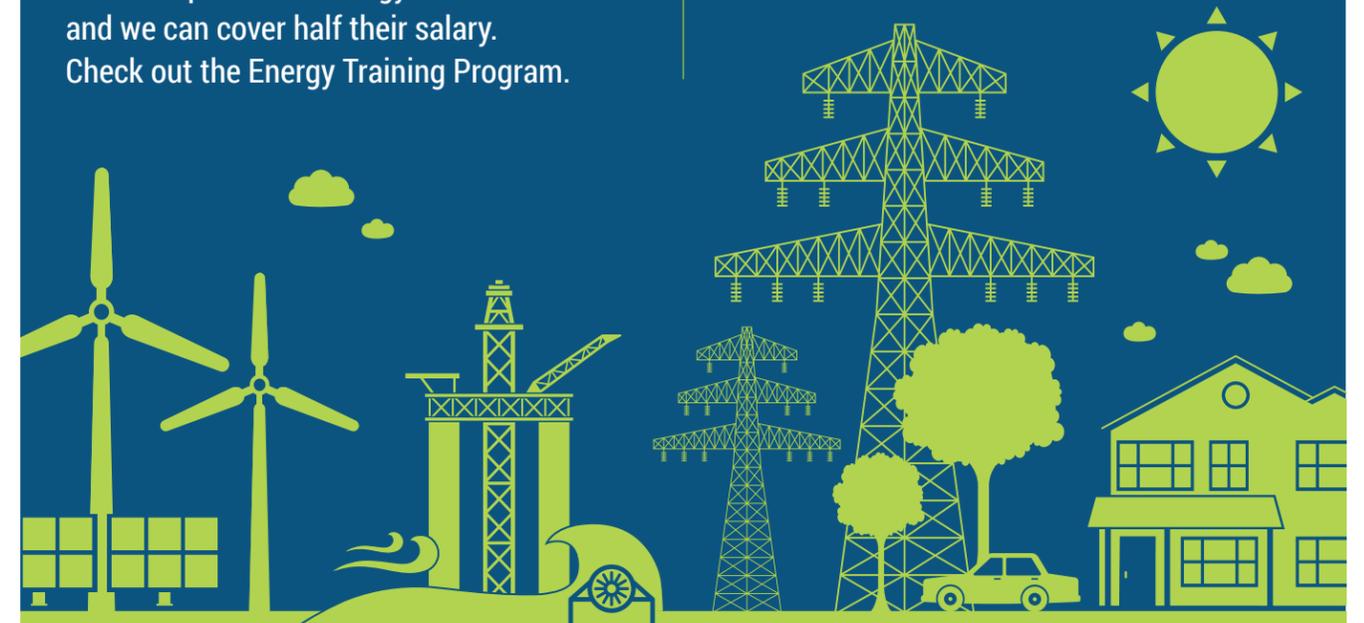
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NOVA SCOTIA





Photos Riley Smith

The human element

Tech know-how, automation and human elements help clients capitalize on campaigns **By Sara Ericsson**

Growing a business in today's complex, noisy marketing landscape is not easy, but Outshine helps their clients do just that.

Combining advertising technology, data and the human element to create long-term, efficient growth is where Outshine Head of Marketing Eleanor Bramah says her company comes into play. She says this last fact — the human element — is why technology cannot by itself result in the same success rate as campaigns optimized by humans, whose insight and understanding of what to do and when in highly-competitive environments mean companies will see next-level results.

Bramah says it is rather the combination of all of these elements that Outshine uses alongside technical experience to create an approach that elevates the results of each ad campaign it spearheads.

"A lot of organizations can run digital advertising campaigns, but to understand the technology well enough to optimize them to drive revenue growth — that makes us special," says Bramah.



“A lot of organizations can run digital advertising campaigns, but to understand the technology well enough to optimize them to drive revenue growth — that makes us special.”

— Eleanor Bramah, Head of Marketing, Outshine

PROFILE

DATA ANALYSIS KEY

Outshine's team of marketing and analytics experts work with Business-to-Business (B2B) Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) clients to manage and optimize their digital advertising campaigns and to accurately measure the return on investment (ROI) of that advertising to steadily improve it over time.

"Our typical clients are in the technology space, creating and marketing software to other businesses," says Bramah.

The company's approach is to build and execute multi-platform advertising campaigns that integrate search marketing, remarketing and social media advertising that focus on demand generation, then connect marketing and sales data using Google Analytics and custom integrations to tie marketing efforts directly to revenue.

"We help our clients make faster, better business decisions by connecting marketing data between first-party sources like from a customer relationship management system and data from ad platforms like LinkedIn or Google Ads. We can tell what marketing works and understand where a company's growth is coming from," says Bramah.

HUMAN ELEMENT ESSENTIAL

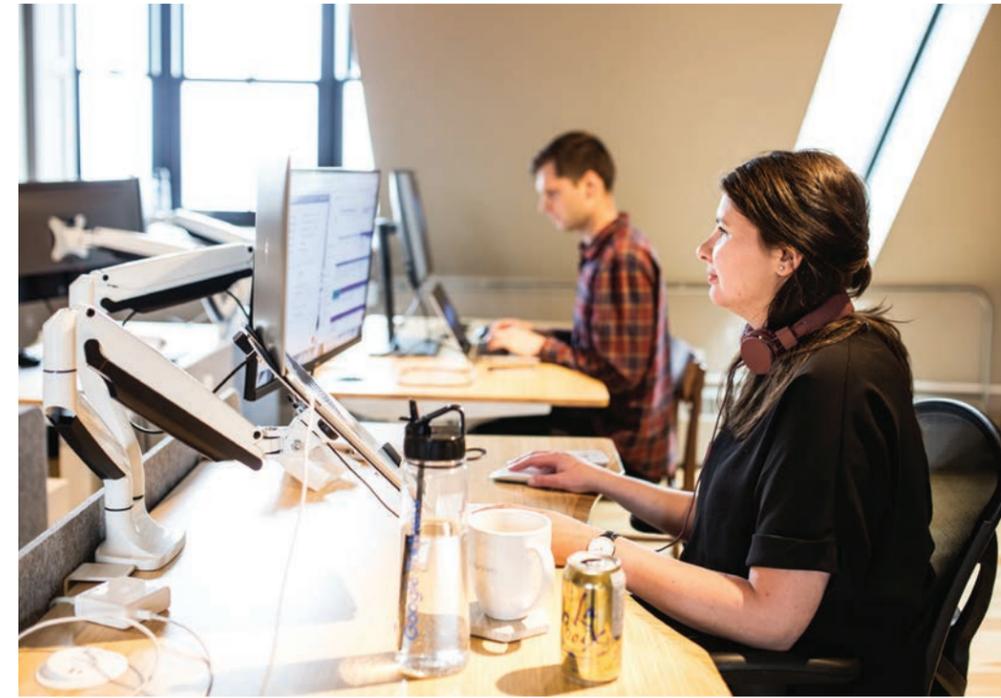
The company's work shines brightest in highly-competitive environments, where Bramah says the slightest change to an ad campaign can mean a huge spike in its success. She says Outshine President, Andrew Breen, who started running digital advertising and search marketing campaigns early on in the field's emergence, has mastered the platforms along with the technical expertise required to effectively manipulate them.

"It's his ability to add creativity and imagination to technical platforms and advertising challenges that has built Outshine into the growing company it is today," says Bramah.

And it is specifically these highly-competitive environments that need the combined approach of technology and the human element most, according to Bramah.

"We can identify when data doesn't make sense and, more importantly, build a foundation for marketing based on insights," she says.

The company is now working with significant technology players in the United States and Europe from its Halifax home base and is showing that the talent exists in Nova Scotia to work with such



high-calibre clientele. It's also doing what Bramah says the marketing technology industry has been promising for years — giving people real insights into the results of their paid digital marketing and how to improve on that in the future.

"Marketing technology has long promised that we can understand the ROI of marketing spends. Outshine works to fulfill the promises that tech has made to marketers — to prove and improve the impact of marketing," says Bramah. ■

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The power of higher learning

Metro Care and Share Society helps eradicate poverty through educational advancement **By Joey Fitzpatrick**



Current MCSS participant, Nisha Adhikari

Photos contributed

In his more than three decades of philanthropy Mel Boutilier has met many people and heard many stories. But some memories stand out above the rest. He remembers meeting one client at the Parker Street Food Bank, a young lady who had lost faith in her own potential. She was a high school dropout and her own mother had told her to forget about getting an education because she was unlikely to amount to anything.

"We told her she could become something — she could take courses and start right now. This went on for months," Boutilier recalls. "Then one day she came in and told us she had signed up to study for her GED."

It was some time later that Boutilier and his wife were special guests at a graduation ceremony where the same young woman was the valedictorian as she received her GED.

"So many young people just need someone to have faith in them," Boutilier says. "They just need the encouragement."

Boutilier has always been an advocate for expanding access to education. He started the Parker Street Food Bank in

1983, which was later moved to Maynard Street, while retaining its original name.

"We expanded it to include a classroom with 12 computer stations for people on social assistance," he recalls. "We had a full-time instructor."

Through his work at the food bank Boutilier met many families who had school-aged children, but who lacked the resources to support their higher education once they finished high school.

"The families wanted so badly for their children to continue their education," he recalls. "But so many of them were dropping out and doing odd jobs or not doing anything."

It was a little more than four years ago that Boutilier put a committee together to see what could be done. At the time he had a registered charity with the name Metro Care and Share already in place, bringing trailers of Florida citrus to Nova Scotia, but that program had ceased activity a few years previously when the high exchange rate made it untenable.

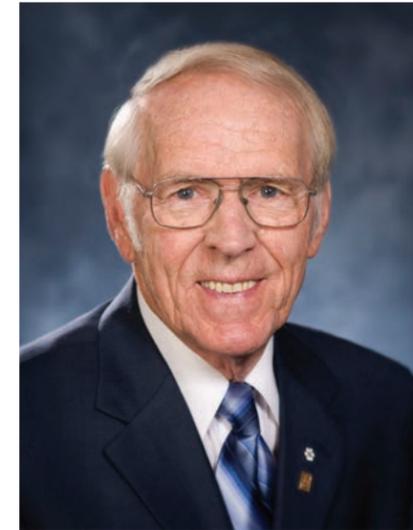
"I checked with the Registry of Joint Stock Companies to see if that name had been taken by somebody and when

we learned it hadn't we took it back," he recalls. "We put together a board, did all the paperwork and applied to Canada Revenue Agency for a tax number."

Metro Care and Share Society (MCSS) was established in 2015 as a charity to help youth from low income families attend university and college in Nova Scotia. Its signature program, the Halifax Scholars Program, provides financial assistance for application fees, tuition, textbooks, living and transportation expenses. Students accepted into the program also receive a range of interactive services, including mentoring, to ensure their academic and vocational success. A committee assesses the applications and students must meet certain academic criteria to be eligible.

MCSS currently has 10 students participating in the Halifax Scholars Program. Five are enrolled at Saint Mary's University, two are enrolled at Dalhousie University, one at Saint Anne and two at St.FX.

All MCSS scholars have their own compelling stories to tell. Nisha Adhikari spent the first years of her life in a refugee



"So many young people just need someone to have faith in them, they just need the encouragement."

— Mel Boutilier, Philanthropist

camp in Nepal and came to Canada when she was eight years old. She remembers losing many of her friends and out of that experience grew a strong desire to help others in need. Along with a full course load in her Bachelor of Science in Nursing at St.FX, Adhikari now volunteers where her schedule permits. She helps raise funds for MCSS to pay for her and her fellow scholars' tuition and living costs for the school year.

MSCC is continuously fundraising to support its current and future scholars. The entrance to its property on Agricola Street is like a small general store, with a range of non-perishable items for sale. The merchandise is courtesy of one of MCSS's corporate partners.

"They give us a steady supply of both new products and damaged cartons," Boutilier explains. That operation helps pay for MCSS's overhead, so that any money donated goes directly to the students.

"It costs an average of \$13,000 to put one of our scholars through university each year. A gift of any amount goes a long way to make this possible." ■

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HALIFAX PARTNERSHIP

Halifax has a compelling value proposition to attract businesses here: a strategic location in North America that is also close to Europe, cost competitiveness, an emerging innovation district, excellent quality of life and on top of all this, a talent pipeline that is skilled, diverse and deep.

We have seen record-breaking population growth over the past few years. One of the main reasons for this growth is the increased number of immigrants and international students who are choosing to call Halifax home, bringing even more skilled talent to our city. While reading the 2019 Halifax Index, released

by the Partnership earlier this year, one of the things that struck me about the data is that we welcomed 8,544 new residents to Halifax last year and almost 65 per cent of these individuals join us from outside of Canada. This population growth is impressive, but what is truly remarkable is that at the same time, our unemployment rate is 5.9 per cent — the lowest it has been since 2008.

To quote our partners at the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration, we have “room to grow,” in Nova Scotia and in Halifax. We need all of the people who moved to Halifax last year, plus just as many to join us this year, next year and every year between now and 2031 to achieve our Economic Growth Plan goals of a population of 550,000 and GDP of \$30 billion by 2031.

As a business leader, there are a number of programs that can help you tap into this incoming stream of talent and potentially find your next hire.

Employers in Nova Scotia can use the Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program (AIP) to hire international workers and graduates to fill immediate labour needs. AIP speeds up processing at the federal level and gives candidates a work permit while waiting for permanent residency, allowing you to skip the Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) process if

your efforts to hire locally have been unsuccessful.

The Connector Program matches new immigrants and recent graduates (Connectees) in Halifax with established business leaders (Connectors) like you. This networking program is as simple as having a cup of coffee and a chat and then sharing three contacts from your network that your Connectee can also get in touch with, helping to build their professional network and increasing their chances of finding meaningful employment in Halifax.

I am a Halifax resident by choice and I am grateful to the people who helped me feel welcome and connected in this city. The thousands of newcomers each year who make the same choice I did want to build their careers and lives here. They want their talent and expertise to help you grow your business or to become an entrepreneur that will develop an innovative product or service to benefit us all.

Let's continue to work together to welcome newcomers, connect them to opportunities and help them become part of our community — because we need them to be. Together we can drive inclusive growth and success across our great city. We all benefit from being a welcoming city.

3 ergonomic hazards found in every office

And the solutions to cure these common problems



CORY PORTEOUS
DIRECTOR OF MARKETING
& INBOUND BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT,
OFFICE INTERIORS

Many people assume that working in an office is a safe and cushy job. While there are certainly many perks (such as air conditioning in the summer!), the truth is that there are a number of hazards that office workers face every day and in most cases, these hazards are easily fixed.

Where an ergonomic hazard differs from these more traditional hazards is that an ergonomic hazard in the office may not be noticed immediately. In fact, a lot of ergonomic issues will build over time before causing pain.

Carpal tunnel syndrome, chronic neck and back pain, frequent headaches and more can all be symptoms of poor ergonomics in your office. If you spend much of the day working at your desk then you should ensure that your work space not only has the tools to get the job done, but to protect your body at the same time.

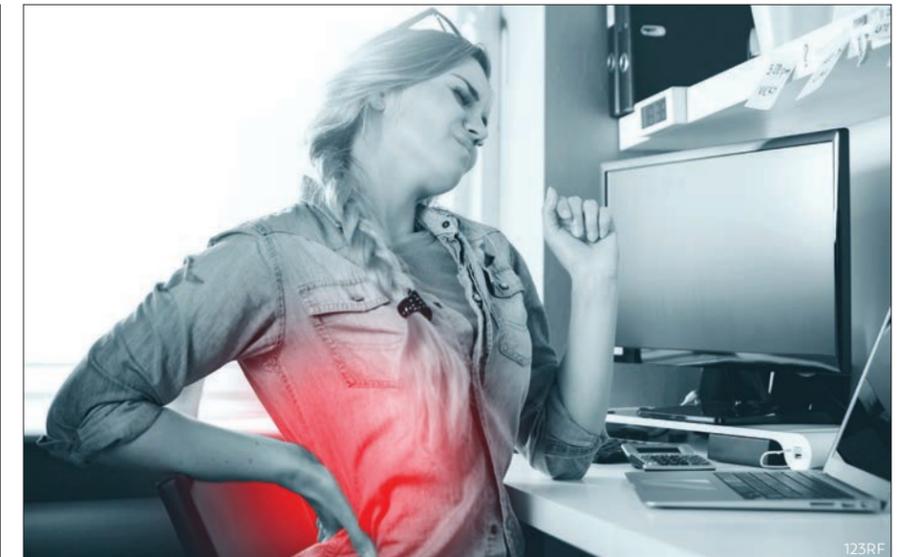
WHAT IS AN ERGONOMIC HAZARD?

Simply put, an ergonomic hazard is a situation or behavior that can lead to any number of musculoskeletal disorders. Ergonomic hazards are usually repetitive actions or postures.

Here are three simple improvements that you can make to help improve your office's ergonomics and avoid ergonomic injury.

1. Inadequate or worn out chairs

People who work in offices spend upwards of seven hours per day sitting at



their desk. Having a great chair is essential to avoiding ergonomic injuries.

An ergonomic office chair provides crucial support in three areas. First to consider is back support.

The back of the chair should curve with your back to support the back and shoulders. Without proper support, the lower back muscles often work overtime to make up for all of the sitting that happens throughout the day.

Next, the cushioning on the seat of the chair plays a major role. This cushioning supports the spine as you sit. Over time, cushioning can compress or spread out and require replacing. No chair will last forever.

Lastly, the position of your armrests can dictate your posture. When your arms are gently supported with your hands near your lap and your elbows at approximately a 90-degree angle, the stress on your neck, shoulders and wrist is minimized.

2. Poor posture due to device placement

A good office chair is only helpful if you actually make the most of the features built into the ergonomic chair.

Leaning forward or slouching can render even the best office chairs useless.

One of the main reasons people lean and slouch at their desk is because the devices they use are not placed correctly.

When setting up your monitor you want the text to be in line with your eyes. Sit down in your chair with your feet flat on the ground and assess if your monitor needs to be raised or lowered.

Next, look at your keyboard and mouse. If needed, raise or lower your keyboard tray or even move your keyboard and mouse to accommodate your height. Incorrect laptop height leads to additional pressure on the wrist and shoulders.

3. Prolonged periods of sitting

Find opportunities to do something other than sit. Set timers to go for a walk or do some stationary stretches. Sitting is one of the principal ergonomic hazards in the office.

You may also want to consider a height adjustable desk that can alternate from standing to sitting and back. This allows you to change your position throughout the day and doesn't require you to either sit all day or stand all day.

6 tips for a spectacular event

What to think of when planning your next event



LINA RIETH
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR,
SCOUT CAMP ARTS & MEDIA

Have you ever had to plan an event? Were you asked to organize the next office party or even help with a wedding? Putting an event together from start to finish can be a challenging task. Here are six tips that you should absolutely follow to throw the perfect party.

1. Plan it right

Start early and use your time efficiently. Have a designated person who oversees the whole planning from start to finish. Make sure this person is not only organized but also skilled in tying everything together and connecting the right people in order to create a truly smooth and fun event.

2. Get the right DJ

Even if that means paying more than you expected. Music sets the tone of the

entire event, so don't skimp on your DJ. You want to have someone who can interact with the crowd and feel what tunes they want to hear. A good DJ reads the crowd, senses the atmosphere and keeps the party going until the early morning hours.

3. Lights

Never underestimate the power of light. First, it is important to light the stages properly so that your performers, presenters and anyone up there will shine. Second, think about the mood you want to create. Is it an intimate and classic dinner or are you planning a glistening, sparkly party? How do you want your guests feel when they enter the venue? They are dressed for the occasion so make sure they are seen in their best light. There are incredible light technicians out there who can place and set up the right lights creating a cohesive atmosphere throughout the entire venue.

4. Great shots

Take a photographer on board! Since you are pouring so much thought and energy into this event, you want to create lasting memories. Who can do that better than a photographer? Capturing everything from the beautiful decorations, the opening ceremony to people meeting and dancing until late at night. The right photographer knows how to take the perfect shots of all these big and little moments.

5. The twist

How is your party different than any

other party? What is the special twist of your event? The twist is what draws people in and what makes them talk about your event for years. It can be the outstanding food, the unique juggling bartenders who serve new and delicious drink creations or you can surprise your guests with spectacular highlights such as an aerial circus performance, a breathtaking fire show or funny and charming characters who will engage with your guests and make them laugh.

6. Talk it over!

A key factor in a successful event is communication. Nothing will work as planned if not every single person involved is on the same page and fully instructed on their role and tasks as well as on who they can turn to if they require help, have questions or need any kind of support. Don't assume they know what you envision, fill them in and encourage questions and clarifications.

Who is it most important to talk with? Everyone. Pursue open communication with your top client, your technicians as well as with the caterer. Putting the right people in the right places will guarantee an extraordinary event. Even if things go differently than expected your team will feel confident and prepared to deal with problems and to come up with solutions on the spot. Honestly, something always changes and it is creativity and team effort that will save the day.

Enforcing zero-tolerance policies in the workplace

How the one-size-fits-all solution may not work for everyone



JENNIFER WESTON
ASSOCIATE LAWYER,
BARTEAUX DURNFORD

Eager to implement measures to prevent harassment toward employees and to project a positive, progressive image, many employers have implemented zero-tolerance policies in the workplace.

But not so fast! Even when a behaviour falls squarely within your policy, it is important to take time to investigate or you might find yourself faced with legal challenges to your disciplinary decisions.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH ZERO-TOLERANCE POLICIES?

Zero-tolerance policies themselves are not discriminatory or unacceptable, however employers risk applying them inappropriately when they are not fully informed of the law.

Courts and tribunals often find the enforcement of these policies at odds with the principle of proportionality. To properly observe the principle of proportionality, you must balance the severity of the conduct with the severity of the penalty. The decision to dismiss an employee must not be unjust. Legally, zero tolerance cannot mean automatic dismissal.

Decisions that affect a person's career are also held to a standard of procedural fairness. The kind of protections an employee is owed depend on the type of decision being made. Courts have

“Zero-tolerance policies themselves are not discriminatory or unacceptable, however employers risk applying them inappropriately when they are not fully informed of the law.”

acknowledged the importance of work to a person's life and identity. Having a fair and fulsome process in place to investigate complaints is essential, especially when the conduct is severe.

GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE ZERO-TOLERANCE POLICIES

1. Your policy should clearly define what “zero tolerance” means.

Be clear your company has taken a firm stance against a particular behaviour and that every reported incident of that behaviour will be carefully investigated and addressed by management. A well-known zero-tolerance policy can be a great tool to both encourage reporting and to demonstrate an offending employee was aware their problematic behaviour was unacceptable.

2. Treat each incident as unique.

In deciding whether disciplinary action is warranted, consider relevant circumstances both internal and external to the workplace. Mitigating circumstances could be the employee's health struggles, past work record and relationship with the complainant. Aggravating circumstances could include the employee's actual knowledge of the broken rule, the effect on the complainant and damage to the company's reputation.

3. Make sure your process is procedurally fair. When investigating a complaint, treat employees as individuals. Be respectful. Inform the person of the alleged misconduct and listen to their side of the story before making any decisions. Keep private details as confidential as possible.

4. Get outside help. A well-done workplace investigation indicates to a court or tribunal the company did its due diligence. There are plenty of situations where the best option is to hire an external investigator, which can avoid the appearance of bias and ensure a prompt, neutral and thorough investigation.

5. Be mindful of your company culture. Actively cultivate a culture of respect and promote positive relationships among employees and management. Ensure employees are aware of prohibited conduct and venues of support if they are struggling. Always take complaints about harassment seriously. Zero-tolerance policies should be readily accessible and uniformly applied.

Be bold when setting expectations, but judicious when meting out discipline. When someone crosses the line, take time to consider all the facts before showing them the door.

QUESTIONS ABOUT ZERO-TOLERANCE POLICIES?

Jennifer Weston is an Associate Lawyer with Barteaux Durnford. She is available for independent external investigations and mediations. Her practice includes advising on workplace issues and representing employers before Nova Scotia courts and tribunals.

Barteaux Durnford is Atlantic Canada's only management-side employment and labour law boutique and is recognized by Canadian Lawyer as one of the Top 10 Labour/Employment Boutiques of 2018-19. We help employers solve workplace issues so they can get on with business.



Photos Contributed

Totally Raw Pet Food President and Co-Owner Karen Campbell says her company was not expecting to be named Small Business of the Year at the 2019 Halifax Business Awards. The company has three operational locations, including this Burnside location and will open a new storefront this winter in downtown Halifax.

Food for thought

Raw feeding an option for Maritime pet owners at Totally Raw Pet Food **By Sara Ericsson**

You may not like raw food, but Karen Campbell says your dog does.

Campbell is the President and Co-Owner at Totally Raw Pet Food, which was named the 2019 Small Business of the Year at the Halifax Business Awards.

The business is a small one that's scaling up with a new state-of-the-art raw food facility in Burnside.

Canadian Tire has recently partnered with Totally Raw and their treats can be found in over 400 Canadian Tire stores across Canada. Totally Raw is also distributed throughout the Maritimes, Quebec, Ontario and are now developing a foothold in Western Canada.

Raw feeding provides dogs and cats their natural, evolutionary diet. People understand the importance of fresh, unprocessed food in their own diet. It is no different for our pets."

— **Karen Campbell**,
President & Co-Owner,
Totally Raw Pet Food

Totally Raw is an important employer with over 20 employees.

Campbell says she's never understood those who question whether raw food is the best nutrition for cats and dogs. Raw food is what cat and dogs evolved eating. Processed food/kibble is a relatively recent invention and raw is what our companion animals have thrived on for thousands of years.

"Raw feeding provides dogs and cats their natural, evolutionary diet. People understand the importance of fresh, unprocessed food in their own diet. It is no different for our pets. Just like people, our pets thrive eating a natural, unprocessed diet," she said.

LIKE HANDLING RAW MEAT

Campbell says the company takes the guesswork out of raw feeding for pet owners. "You pop it out of the package, thaw it and feed it — patties are about 80 per cent of our business."

Totally Raw patties are a balance of meat, bone and organs. "A rabbit, for example, makes up a percentage of meat, bone and organ and we try and recreate that as much as possible. We turn that ratio into a meat patty that looks just like one from the grocery store," she says.

No one food is perfect. Just like in human nutrition, Campbell says dogs thrive on a variety of foods. Campbell recommends at least three proteins rotated throughout the week.

Campbell says while some owners are initially uncomfortable feeding raw, it is actually quite simple. Handle raw pet food in the same way as raw proteins brought into the household for human consumption. Use common sense cleaning procedures and don't cross contaminate.



Campbell was inspired to open the store because she wanted to feed her nine-month-old German Shepherd, Daisy, a different diet after she was diagnosed with an illness.

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Campbell also says kibble should be handled with the same precautions. Kibble recalls are not uncommon and the same common sense hygiene practices should be used regardless of the type of pet food being fed.

EXPANSIONS PLANNED

“The nomination for Small Business of the Year was not expected. Winning was tremendously thrilling. A very special moment. Our whole team was present,” she says.

Totally Raw began in 2003 and currently there are three retail locations, one in Halifax, Dartmouth and another in Moncton. The company is also opening a new store in downtown Halifax, set to open before Dec. 1.

Campbell says by far the biggest development for the company is the

“*We are going above and beyond and voluntarily regulating ourselves to ensure we’re providing the best and safest food possible though HACCP certification.*”

— **Karen Campbell,**
President & Co-Owner,
Totally Raw Pet Food

new state-of-the-art raw pet food plant located in Burnside. The new facility opening October 2019, will allow for separation of product production. The new wet plant for food production and the Akerley dry plant for dehydration and supplement production.

Campbell says this expansion is a big move for the business and is working with a consultant to achieve Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) status. Once this is achieved, Totally Raw will be the only raw certified pet food facility in the Maritimes.

“One of the problems with the pet food industry as a whole is that it’s self-regulating. We are going above and beyond and voluntarily regulating ourselves to ensure we’re providing the best and safest food possible though HACCP certification,” she says. ■



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The gift of shelter

Gift card purchase funds shelter stays for people without homes at Shelter Nova Scotia **By Sara Ericsson**

Shelter Nova Scotia will be selling gift cards of \$35.50 this holiday season — the cost of a nightly stay at its emergency shelters.

Colleen Ritchie is the organization's Communications and Fund Development Specialist and says the Holiday Gift Card initiative will raise money for the organization and awareness about the organization's needs, but most importantly makes for a thoughtful gift as donations are made in the name of the gift's recipient.

"It's a gift that gives twice — once to the person you're giving it to and again when it helps pay for a night in the shelter," she says.

The organization provides housing and transitional support to around 1,300 people each year and runs six facilities across the Halifax Regional Municipality 24 hours, 365 days per year. These include two emergency shelters that

accommodate all gender-expressions, two facilities for people transitioning from prison to community, two supported housing facilities and a trustee program that helps people stabilize their housing.

Although the organization receives some government funding they look to raise \$35.50 to help support a night of rest that includes a bed with fresh sheets, a blanket and pillow, personal care items, access to a shower and a phone and the ability to speak with a counsellor.

"Everybody's story is different. Most people we serve have experienced some form of crisis or trauma in their life, so it's important that we listen to what their specific needs are. Sometimes it is just a bed and sometimes it is much more complex than that," says Ritchie.

Money raised from the gift cards will contribute to the \$300,000 sum the

organization needs to raise annually on top of support it already receives. This large figure is why Ritchie says any donation is one they are very grateful for.

The gift card can be purchased online or directly from the office. Ritchie says other smaller donations like grocery cards and personal care items — deodorants, shampoo, soap and hygiene products — also make for great gifts as they make each day a bit better and a bit more dignified for the 134 people who stay over the holidays.

"Holidays can be a traumatic time for people in crisis, who are away from families and may reflect on memories that aren't easy for them. So we try to make holidays a bit brighter. We are grateful to the community — without your support we wouldn't be able to do this work or keep our doors open all year round," says Ritchie.



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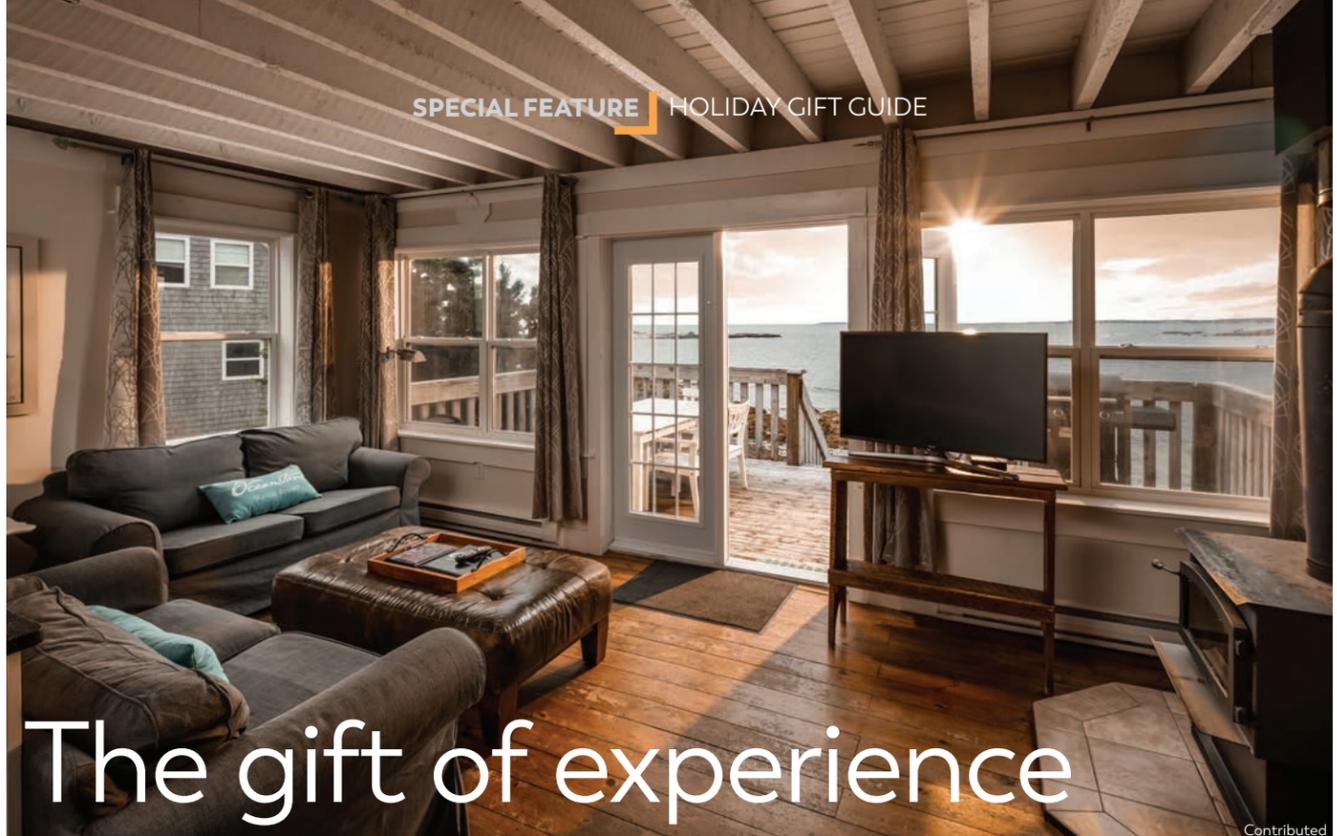
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The gift of experience

Contributed

Give a unique gift this Christmas with a stay at picturesque Oceanstone Seaside Resort **By Sara Ericsson**

Giving the gift of a weekend getaway may be the best way to take someone by surprise this Christmas and there is a special getaway just outside Halifax that is looking to help make that happen.

Dean Leland is the CEO and Managing Partner at Oceanstone Seaside Resort in Indian Harbour — a picturesque inn and cottage resort that sits just minutes away from Peggy's Cove and one hour from Halifax, the Annapolis Valley and the South Shore.

Leland describes the resort as a very relaxed and authentic place, where nature is largely left to its own devices as it shapes the land and rugged beach that surround the property. It's a place that is popular as a retreat for friends, family and workplaces and one that also often hosts weddings oceanside.

It is where Leland says people can lose themselves whether the break is a stay-cation or full vacation.

"It starts with that first breath of ocean air. When people get out of car, they breathe in and their shoulders drop — they are relaxed straightaway," he says.

A SPECIAL PLACE

Leland says he has read countless times that people are moving away from material possessions and looking to downsize in larger numbers than ever.

"People are moving away from buying things and seem to really be looking

for an experience that takes them out of the day-to-day rigour of work," he says.

Leland says gifting an experience rather than a specific item will also give someone the opportunity to kick back and kick up some sand and dirt if that experience is at Oceanstone, where guests are treated to a view of the picturesque coastline that surrounds the resort as they wind their way down Highway 103.

"We want our guests to put their feet up and relax here as soon as they arrive. And if those feet have sand on them, all the better — that's what it's all about here," says Leland.

The resort includes five oceanfront cottages and a main inn building with 10 rooms, along with more cottages with water views. It also has a full catering kitchen used for corporate events and weddings, along with its onsite Rhubarb Restaurant for regular restaurant dining.

Leland says it also has communal spots where guests wishing to can gather, sit and chat by the main lodge fireplace. He says these areas create an escape-like environment with a warm, intimate feeling without feeling smothering.

"We have a lot packed in on the property, but it's still spacious. You can wander around open and enclosed areas and can also find our most magical spot — where people can get married right next to the ocean," he says.

AN AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCE

Getting people outside to explore the landscape surrounding Oceanstone is a priority at the resort, according to Leland, who says Peggy's Cove is but one of many scenic stops nearby.

"People often say they know where we are, but ask about hidden gems that are close by. We've uncovered those and show our guests hidden areas and hiking trails that don't get much attention. You can go and be the only one hiking there and have that trail to yourself," he says.

He says the resort hosts many who, whether on a work or personal trip, are looking to leave their urban lives and get immersed in a bit of peace and quiet to reflect and reset. Leland says the resort is the perfect spot for just that, as it is a little unvarnished and very authentic — it's a place that he says doesn't take itself too seriously.

"We do have Wi-Fi, but it's amazing the number of people that put away their devices and enjoy the moment," he says.

Anyone looking to purchase a gift certificate can contact the resort by email at info@oceanstoneresort.com or phone at 902 823-2160. People can also drop by in person, when Leland says they will be greeted with an in-person tour of the grounds.

"We would love to show you around," he says.



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