



**GAME CHANGERS**  
YOUTH RETENTION ACTION PLAN

**HIRE. EXPERIENCE. CONNECT.**  
GAME CHANGERS GUIDE  
TO HIRING YOUTH

2018 EDITION



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# WELCOME

## TO THE GAME CHANGERS GUIDE TO HIRING YOUTH

### **Ron Hanlon, President & CEO Halifax Partnership**

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The Halifax Partnership is pleased to present the Game Changers Guide to Hiring Youth. This guide is a resource for you, the business community, to provide the information and connections you need to hire and retain youth in our city.



Halifax has a wealth of young talent – local and international graduates and young professionals with drive and enthusiasm who can make an incredible impact on your business. We need to help our young talent thrive and succeed so they can put down roots here. Many Canadian cities are undergoing aging populations. The cities that become more attractive, interesting and available for youth to live, work and play will prosper. Halifax has many wonderful features. We need to take the lead on being recognized as a place for young people to start a business or find a job. It is key to a successful future.

Halifax's five-year Economic Growth Plan for 2016-21 has set an ambitious vision for long-term economic growth. By 2031, we aim to grow Halifax's population to 550,000 and GDP to \$30 billion. One of the key factors in achieving these goals is attracting and retaining talent. Our target is to grow Halifax's labour force to 271,000 by 2021 (a growth rate of 1.7% a year). We need to do this by attracting and retaining more immigrants, international students and recent graduates, and making the best use of our available workforce.

Our post-secondary institutions provide a steady stream of skilled and educated grad-

uates, attracting young people from around the world. They foster innovation, and support numerous knowledge-based industries including financial services, ICT, life sciences, and ocean technology.

The Game Changers Action Plan was inspired by a call to action from the One Nova Scotia Report to tackle Nova Scotia's population growth challenge by changing long-held beliefs that our young people must go elsewhere to gain experience, find good jobs and build quality lives. It aims to reduce the net annual average out-migration of youth (aged 20-29) in Nova Scotia from 1,300 to 0 by 2019. Through Game Changers, we are inspiring and supporting businesses to:

- Hire young professionals
- Provide experience through co-op and other experiential learning opportunities
- Connect young people to local professional networks and career opportunities in their fields

Every business has a role to play in giving youth the opportunity to succeed in Halifax. Together, we can make our city a magnet for young talent.

## A MESSAGE FROM MAYOR MIKE SAVAGE

Welcome to the Game Changers Guide to Hiring Youth, a handy tool to help you add fresh new talent to your workplace.

We are fortunate to live in a city that fills up every fall with young people from across Canada, and more than ever, from around the globe. Any city would feel blessed to have this deep well of talent and rich source of new ideas.

Talent is a precious commodity in the knowledge economy. Our universities and the Nova Scotia Community College are making great strides in attracting students and meeting their educational needs. By providing real career opportunities to our young people, through co-op placements, apprenticeships and first jobs, we are investing not only in the future of our workplaces but in the future of Halifax and Nova Scotia.

At City Hall and in municipal offices throughout the Halifax region, we know firsthand the benefit of hiring young people. Our Bridging The Gap paid internship program has introduced a steady stream of new graduates with incredible enthusiasm into our workplaces. They learn from our experienced staff and in turn our staff learns a thing or two from them. That's why I'm encouraging you to put this guide to good use, creating opportunities for young people to start a career and build a life in Halifax.

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## A MESSAGE FROM HON. LABI KOUSOULIS, MLA

To have a prosperous Nova Scotia, we need to attract, retain, and increase participation of youth in our workforce. We continue to make strides in achieving this common goal.

We know our youth bring significant advantages to the workforce, including innovation and new ways of thinking. There are many ways for employers to provide mentorship to young Nova Scotians, while infusing their organizations with fresh perspective and new talent.

Nova Scotia's business community plays an important role in connecting our youth to jobs here in the province, and we want to continue to build on this momentum.

Providing youth with opportunities to connect to the workforce early in their career is the best way to retain youth over the long term. Here are a few initiatives that continue to yield positive results for both employers and youth:

- **The Connector Program** has connected more than 2,100 new and young Nova Scotians to mentors and networking opportunities throughout the province.
- **Graduate to Opportunity** has created permanent, full-time opportunities for more than 350 new graduates here in the province. It also includes a diversity bonus for employers to encourage more businesses to hire women, people with disabilities and other diverse graduates.
- **Apprenticeship START program** has connected more than 350 young Nova Scotians from rural communities and underrepresented communities with apprenticeship opportunities.

I'd like to thank business owners and leaders who are already participating in these programs and are committed to helping youth grow their careers here in the province. By working together, we can drive our province forward and help young Nova Scotians. Visit [www.makeithere.novascotia.ca](http://www.makeithere.novascotia.ca) to learn more about the programs government offers for businesses and youth.

# THE ISSUE

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When Game Changers was launched in 2015, Nova Scotia saw a net annual average loss of 1,300 young people, taking their vision, talent, energy, income, and drive with them.

Youth retention is one of our best opportunities for long-term economic and population growth.

Over the 20 years previous to 2015, 25,000 young people left Nova Scotia to live and work elsewhere. The good news is that we are gaining momentum in closing the chasm: in 2015-16, young migration improved (learn more on page 11).





Out-of-province and international students represent a potential pool of talent for Nova Scotian businesses and, given our pressing demographic challenge, a potential source of significant population growth.

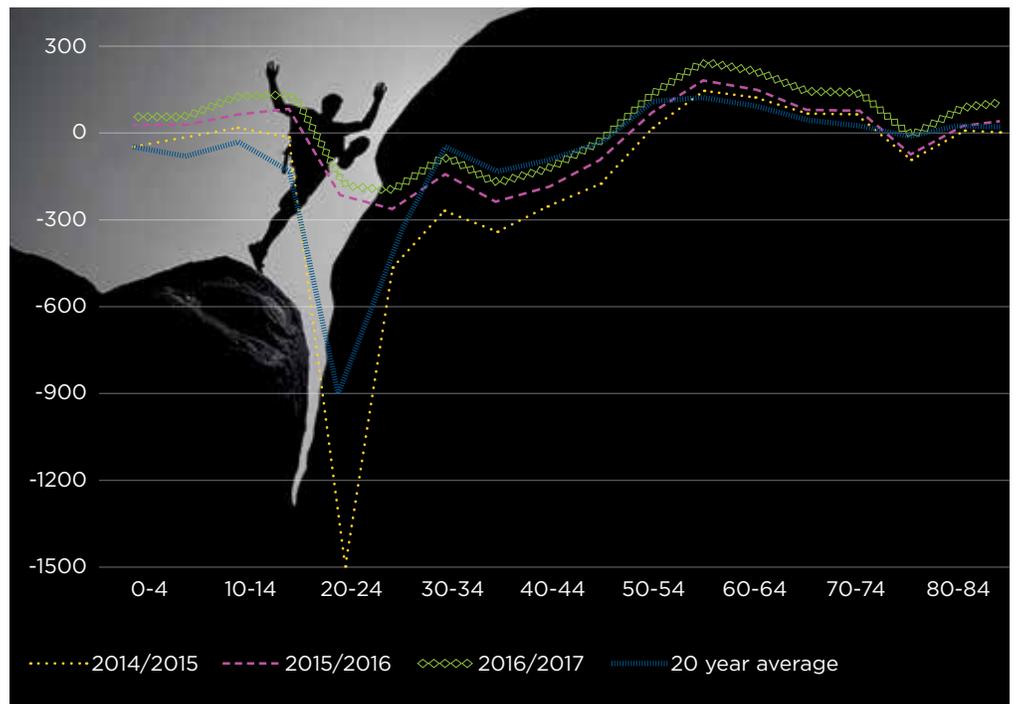


Now or Never: An Urgent Call to Action for Nova Scotians

The facts:

- More than 35,000 students study at Halifax’s post-secondary institutions each year; roughly 8,800 students graduated in 2016.
- 78% of youth who have left Nova Scotia say they want to return, and 82% of recent graduates would stay if an attractive offer was available. Youth want to stay if there are job opportunities.
- Migration drops at ages 30-39, with only 120 people in this age group leaving on net each year.
- Retaining 1,300 youth in the province over the course of their lifetime could provide \$1.2 billion in after-tax income and \$46.4 million in tax revenue to the province (after expenditures).

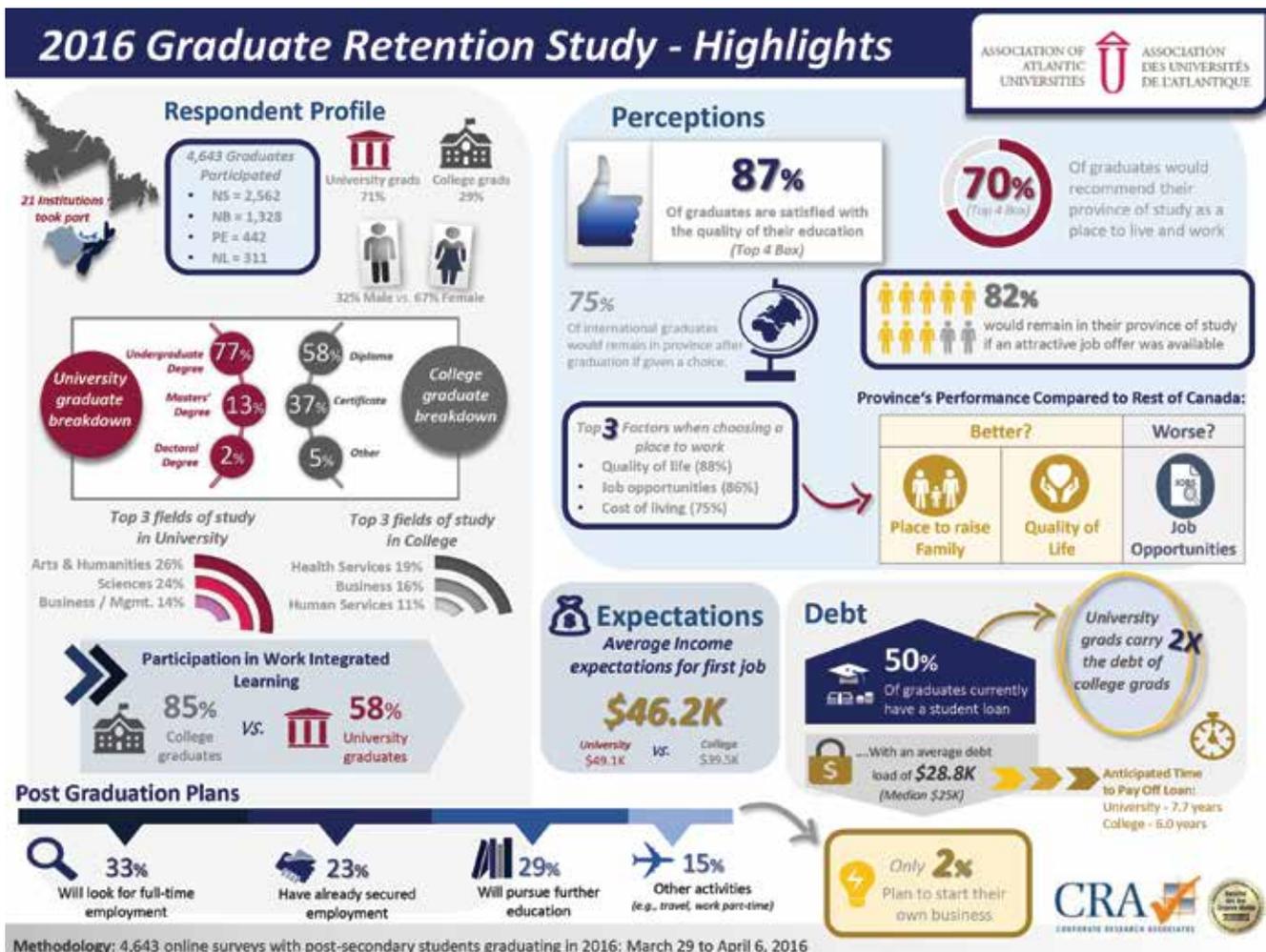
Net Outmigration by age group



## Youth want to stay in Nova Scotia

There are many qualities that make a community youth-friendly. Nova Scotia scores high on quality of life and as a place to raise a family, but low in providing quality job opportunities. Young people want to stay in Nova Scotia, but many are unable to

find meaningful, competitive employment. In fact, over 80% of post-secondary graduates surveyed for the Association of Atlantic Universities in 2016 said they would stay in Nova Scotia if attractive job opportunities were available.



The Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU) commissioned Corporate Research Associates (CRA) to conduct the 2016 Graduate Retention Study with students of Atlantic Canada's post-secondary institutions who were eligible to graduate in 2016. This study was funded in part by the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) under the Atlantic Policy Research Initiative, which provides a vehicle for the analysis of key socio-economic policy issues in Atlantic Canada. The study was also supported by the Atlantic Provinces Community College Consortium.

AAU completed a follow-up study in 2017 with questions focused on international students. Visit [atlanticuniversities.ca](http://atlanticuniversities.ca) for more.

# CAREERS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE



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[www.halifax.ca/employment](http://www.halifax.ca/employment)

# innovation

It's the secret sauce that helps businesses respond to change and challenge. It's what our **Sobey Master of Technology Entrepreneurship and Innovation (MTEI)** students bring to their internships.

The government of Nova Scotia, Acadian Seaplants and Necktronics are just a few of the organizations that have benefited from hiring our experienced innovators, with equal parts grit and business savvy.

Inquire about hiring an MTEI Intern or graduate by contacting Graduate Career Services Manager Karn Nichols, [karn.nichols@smu.ca](mailto:karn.nichols@smu.ca)



BECAUSE CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH IS GOOD NEWS.

The Chronicle Herald is a proud supporter of the Halifax Partnership's Game Changer initiative.

For more good news about initiatives like this one, follow us in print and online every day.



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# GAME CHANGERS ACTION PLAN

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The Halifax Partnership's Game Changers Action Plan is a three-year private-sector driven initiative to retain young talent in Halifax and Nova Scotia.

Its ambitious goal is to reduce Nova Scotia's net annual average youth out-migration to zero by 2019.

Through Game Changers, we encourage and support business to:

1. Hire youth
2. Provide experiential learning opportunities to help youth gain experience
3. Become a Connector to help young people build their professional network and careers

Every business has a role to play in making Halifax and Nova Scotia a great place for young talent. By investing in youth, you will benefit your business, our city and our province for generations to come.



## Goal

The goal is to close the 1,300 gap so more youth stay in Nova Scotia than leave each year.

- **Year 1:** 800 net loss
- **Year 2:** 400 net loss
- **Year 3:** 0 net loss

This is a big goal, and it requires strong leadership from the business community.

## Closing the gap

We are already seeing progress towards our Game Changers goals. For the first time in five years, net youth out-migration has decreased.

In 2014-15, net youth out-migration was -1,500. In 2015-16, this number improved by nearly 1,300 to -222. This is an unprecedented improvement for our region.

The out-migration estimate for 2016-17 is currently -231, showing the start of a trend toward youth retention. Within this number, the population of 20-29 year olds increased by over 2,000. In 2016-17, the Halifax Partnership's Connector Program added 104 new Connectors and 444 new young and emerging professional Connectees; 151 Connectees also found jobs in Halifax. We are close to reaching our goal and filling the gap, but we can't stop there. We need to keep working to exceed it, and to reach and sustain a net positive number for youth migration each year.

Although businesses are realizing the benefits and importance of hiring young talent, the youth unemployment rate for 20-29 year olds in Nova Scotia increased last year to 11.1%, up from 9.7% in 2016, showing that we still have work to do in helping our youth find jobs in our province, and in turn stay here.

Ten private and post-secondary sponsors have signed on to support the Game Changers Action Plan. These companies and institutions understand the importance of retaining youth and are actively working to make Halifax and Nova Scotia a magnet for young talent.

Businesses also now have access to more provincial government youth employment programs and resources, like the Graduate to Opportunity Program.

## Why should my company get involved?

Young professionals are the key to helping businesses think outside of the box and grow. They are high energy, pick up skills quickly, and can bring new ideas and a fresh perspective to your company.

You will be amazed at how quickly young professionals can get up to speed and make a long-term, positive impact on your business.

When you hire young talent, you are helping your company, now and in the future. Here's how:

### **Young hires give speedy returns on investment with increased productivity.**

Their skills and ideas can make a difference on your bottom line. They learn fast, multitask well and are willing to put in the long hours. This means increased productivity and a better bottom line.

### **Young hires have solid business and technology skills.**

Recent graduates grew up with technology and social media. They understand metrics and rapidly adopt the latest technology. Graduates also have core transferable skills and are eager to develop them in your



Youth today focus on being creative and challenged. They believe they can do anything, and I believe they can. I think it's up to us to get out of the way and allow them the space to be innovative. That's where the magic comes to life.



Katrina Beach, Grant Thornton LLP

workplace: written and oral communication, problem solving, organization and data analysis.

**Young hires help with succession planning and meeting your long-term labour needs.**

Top companies like TD, NTT Data, Verizon, Neocon International, GoSecure and EY are leaders in youth employment. These companies promote from within their business and provide a career path for graduates. By retaining the best talent, you can ensure your labour needs are filled with the best and brightest.

**Young hires are innovative and generate new solutions.**

Research shows that many great innovators do their best and most groundbreaking work in their youth. Thinking differently and generating new ideas could be just what your business needs to tackle an old challenge with a new approach. Additionally, new graduates bring academic contacts and a pulse on the latest research and trends.

**Young hires want experience and will take on a variety of tasks.**

Eager for experience, young hires are willing to take on any task or problem. This is a great opportunity to expand the skill set and job descriptions of your current labour force.

**Young hires can help you target and reach younger markets.**

There is a generation of young professionals entering the market as major consumers.

Having a larger number of young staff can help inform campaigns and products to increase sales and reach younger markets.

**Young hires have grown up in a global, connected world.**

Young hires are connected to the world 24/7 through technology. Many have studied or worked abroad, giving them a global perspective. The thousands of international graduates studying at our universities and colleges have business connections in their home countries and cultural insights that can be leveraged for your business to grow globally.

**Young hires are resourceful and take initiative.**

Although training is required up front, younger employees are used to multitasking and know how to find the resources they need to complete a task on their own.

**Young hires are flexible.**

Young professionals usually have more freedom and flexibility in their hours and availability. This is an advantage for roles that require travel and more non-traditional schedules.

Sign up for the Halifax Partnership's newsletter to keep up to date on Game Changers:  
**HALIFAXPARTNERSHIP.COM**

“

We have to keep young people in Nova Scotia to maintain a sustainable economy. To do this, companies like ours need to meet the challenge of creating these opportunities. It's enticing for young people to want to move on, but Nova Scotia is a really great place to live and work.

”

Robert MacPherson,  
Scotian Materials Ltd.

TD PRESENTS



GAME CHANGERS  
YOUTH RETENTION ACTION PLAN

# BE A GAME CHANGER.

Invest in my future. Your future. Our future.  
I'm young. You're smart. **#HireMeHalifax**

**BECOME A  
GAME CHANGER.**

[HALIFAXGAMECHANGERS.COM](http://HALIFAXGAMECHANGERS.COM)



# TD INVESTS IN HALIFAX'S FUTURE



Youth retention is one of Halifax's greatest challenges – and best opportunities for long-term growth. TD knows this first-hand through its own commitment to offer youth career opportunities that exceed their expectations and why it is honoured to take a lead role as Presenting Sponsor for the Game Changers Action Plan.

It is the private sector's responsibility to support youth employment to strengthen our workforce and grow our economy. That is why youth recruitment, hiring and mentoring are foundational to TD's business plan as it builds for the future of its business and our communities.

To support youth, TD offers internships, co-op work terms and summer opportunities to all students pursuing a diploma, undergraduate or post-graduate degrees.

For over 20 years, TD has offered Scholarships for Community Leadership, offering up to \$70,000 annually – four years of tuition and four full years of co-op employment – for 20 youth in their final year of high school who are making a difference in their communities.

As of May 2016, 54% of the employee population at TD Canada Trust in the Atlantic Region are millennials and of those, 15% are in a management role demonstrating that when youth are mentored and invested in, loyalty and commitment are given in return.

TD chose to be the presenting sponsor for the Game Changers Action Plan because it wanted to showcase how its best-in-

class youth employment opportunities, experiences, training programs and community investments are helping to keep young talent in our city and province.

TD recognizes that many businesses may not be able to offer scholarships or hire many youth for co-ops, but every business can start small and begin with intention. How could your business hire just one youth within the next six months?

Here are five TD youth strategies any business can put in their playbook to become – and hire – a Game Changer.

#### **Make hiring youth a priority**

Hiring youth requires intention and planning. TD challenges businesses to realize that the young minds of today are an essential part of a company's business strategy.

#### **Invite youth to refresh your view**

Every business needs diversity of thought whether they are big or small. TD celebrates youth's innate curiosity with the question: "Why do we do it that way?" They believe hiring youth provides fresh perspective and improves customer demographics.

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**Take time to mentor and coach**

For TD, coaching and mentoring is key. They believe everyone is a leader and no one is successful without the help and guidance from the people they work with – especially senior leaders who take the time to mentor, teach and explain things. TD executives give young leaders opportunities to be part of projects and to see how they are tackling issues head-on.

**Constantly recruit**

Cultural fit is critical. TD’s managers keep a constant eye on people they meet in their everyday encounters – whether it is at work

or in the grocery store. When managers and executives encounter youth that demonstrate customer service skills that exemplify TD’s brand, they invite them to apply for a job.

**Engage with the Halifax Partnership**

Every business in Halifax can access the Game Changers program. With Halifax’s well-educated, international and diverse pool of youth – it is a compelling story. TD is proud to support and to inspire other businesses to help make Halifax a destination and welcoming place for young talent.



# HIRE

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## Does your entry-level position really need 3-5 years' experience?

Reconsider your experience requirement when recruiting new employees. Keeping the position open to those with 1-3 years' experience, or even omitting the work experience requirement altogether increases the chances of youth applying, especially new graduates who may not have years of work experience.

Initiatives such as the Workplace Education Initiative and the Canada Job Grant and Skills Link (Service Canada) assist businesses with funding for training and employment services.

Employers who participate in experiential learning programs (see page 20) have the added benefit of accessing young talent while helping them gain on-the-job-experience.



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ATTRACTING AND RETAINING YOUTH

- Recognize and nurture new ideas and creative thinking
- Understand that the boundaries of the office have shifted
- Maintain a real open door policy
- Show young employees how they can grow
- Shift the focus from the bottom line to the people
- When thinking about benefits, put yourself in their shoes
- Stimulate intergenerational conversations
- Be good corporate citizens
- Offer coaching and mentoring on a regular basis
- Eliminate gender and cultural-related inequities

*Based on results from the 2016 Deloitte Millennials Survey*

## 10 Tips for Hiring and Retaining Young Professionals

*By Chantal Brine, VP, Youth Employment, Venor*



### Create and foster a compelling employer brand

Sharing your “why” is one of the most lucrative things you can do for hiring at all levels. However, this is even more important for hiring young professionals as they want to work for a company aligned to their values and interests. Young professionals want to feel a connection to their employer beyond a paycheck. According to a study by CEB Inc., employers who invested in employer branding reported a 54% increase in the quality of their candidate pool.

### Identify your needs

Be clear about position requirements: what do you “need to have” vs what would be “nice to have.” Consider what kinds of educational programs would best prepare someone for that role in your company. Translate requirements into a clear job description (that also communicates your brand).

### Focus on retention from the start

You don't need to have a comprehensive 10-day orientation plan, however establishing internal support will help set up a new hire for success. Who will the new hire report to? Who else can they go to for support internally? Is there someone or a group of people the new hire can shadow for a few days? What information can you provide in the first week to make the transition as easy as possible?

### Determine if you need funding

There are several provincial and federal funding programs designed to support employers in hiring young professionals.

Be mindful that each has different eligibility requirements and that most require you to apply before extending an offer. You can find information about funding programs on the following websites (to name a few): Halifax Chamber of Commerce, Canada Business Network and Venor.

### Build relationships before you need to hire

Identify educational programs relevant to your hiring needs and build relationships with those post-secondary institutions. Participate in campus events that work for your business, such as career fairs, mock interviews and employer/student mixers. The more institutions that know about your business, the easier it is for them to help you identify the right talent. Typically, career services teams are the best place to start. The Canadian Association of Employers and Educators, Halifax Partnership and our youth team can also help connect you to the right people.

### Set up your hiring to succeed

Be open about your process with anyone you hire, but particularly with young professionals who could be going through an interview process for the first time and/or interviewing in Nova Scotia or Canada for the first time. Be ready to talk about your company's culture, values, and leadership style. Increasingly, young professionals want to know what “kind of” company they are meeting with - not just what you do, but how you do it and why. Sharing your screening process can help remove unintended challenges for an applicant, ensuring they put their best foot forward and that you get to meet the “real” applicant.

### Follow-up

Let applicants know where their application stands as quickly as possible and provide feedback. Constructive feedback about what someone did well and what they can do better is helpful for any applicant but

particularly for young professionals trying to get their start. This is also an opportunity to demonstrate your employer brand in how you communicate with someone who is not moving forward in your hiring process.

**Look beyond the resume and hire for attitude**

We often say to our executive search clients to be open to “non-traditional backgrounds” or an “unexpected fit” and this sentiment is even more true for hiring young professionals. Given the ease of teaching oneself new skills or learning “on the job” through volunteering or class projects, young professionals bring more to a role than just their degrees. Consider what they have taught themselves, how they spend their time, and how quickly they are able to learn when making hiring decisions.

**Once hired, keep them engaged**

Recognize areas where development is needed and support areas where they are excelling. This is especially important in the first 3-6 months given young professionals are used to consistent feedback as part of their academic programs. Be mindful that mentorship and opportunities for professional development rank higher than salary for most young professionals in deciding to stay with a company. They want to be challenged and have the opportunity to contribute, so find a way to make this part of your company’s professional development planning.

**Repeat**

We’ve found that once a company has been successful in hiring, training and retaining a young professional, it becomes easier and more efficient each time. Young professionals are also a great source for referrals so if you’re growing rapidly, consider creating a referral program that rewards employees for doing some of your advertising and pre-screening for you.

Not only is this great for increasing awareness of your employer brand, but if set up correctly, it also minimizes your time to hire and fosters a shared sense of ownership for the company’s continued success.

**Common Myths About Youth**

**Myth #1: Young employees don’t want your advice — they’ve got it all figured out.**

**Reality:** Young employees crave coaching. Provide face-to-face consultation and mentoring programs focused on career and personal development.

**Myth #2: Young employees are all about the money.**

**Reality:** Benefits and work-life balance are usually more important than salary. Promote your benefits package when recruiting youth. Help younger employees navigate their benefits, especially at milestone moments like getting married or having a first child.

**Myth #3: Young employees aren’t willing to put in the hours to get ahead.**

**Reality:** They want a career, but they also want a life. When recruiting, position your company’s benefits, culture and work environment in terms of work-life balance. Engage youth in meaningful work that meets their personal goals and provides them with flexible work options.

**Myth #4: Youth have unrealistic job expectations.**

**Reality:** They’re looking for purpose and the chance to give back. Develop an employee brand that maps back to your company’s higher purpose. Recruitment materials and internal communications should recognize employee volunteer efforts.

*According to the Calgary & Area Labour Market Report “Youth Recruitment and Retention Practices”*



At Green Power Labs, 47% of our team is under 30 and 41% of our team have international work and educational credentials. This works really well for us. It brings different viewpoints, broader insight, better problem solving and creates an energetic and thoughtful work environment. Because Nova Scotia has ambitious plans to become world leaders in energy, we believe we must bring global knowledge and diversity into our workplace.



Marlene Moore,  
Green Power Labs

## Incentives for Hiring Youth

The **Apprentice Job Creation Tax Credit** offers a 10% tax credit (up to \$2,000 per year per apprentice) with the salary of a Red Seal apprentice when they begin their apprenticeship.

The **R&D Youth Employment Program** offers financial assistance for small and medium-sized enterprises looking to hire highly skilled post-secondary graduates undertaking research and development of new technology.

The **Graduate to Opportunity Program** provides small to medium-sized enterprises up to 25% salary contributions in the first year and 12.5% in the second year to offset the cost of hiring a recent graduate, as well as a 10% bonus if the graduate is an immigrant or member of a designated diversity group.

The **START Program** offers financial incentives to hire unemployed job seekers, apprentices, or international graduates on a case-by-case basis.

The **Energy Training Program** offers up to a 50% wage subsidy (up to \$7.50/hour) for small to medium-sized enterprises in the Energy industry who hire new graduates and students.

**Skills Link (Service Canada)** offers non-profit organizations (or businesses engaged in not-for-profit activities) up to \$25,000 to hire and train youth facing systemic barriers to entering the workforce.

**Innovate to Opportunity** offers small to medium-sized employers up to 50% salary contributions to hire recent Masters and PhD graduates for jobs that are focused on research and innovation that will contribute to export growth.

**Workplace Innovation and Productivity Skills Incentive (WIPSI)** provides funding to help companies invest in employee skills development, including certification and productivity improvements.

**SkillsonlineNS** offers free learning for Nova Scotia businesses and valuable skills training to employees and managers.

**Welcoming Workplaces** offers information and tools to support employers as they tap into the unique and beneficial blend of skills, abilities, and perspectives that diverse employees bring to the workplace.

**One Journey Work and Learn** (an initiative of the Canada - Nova Scotia Job Fund) supports skill development and employment opportunities for unemployed or underemployed Nova Scotians in industries where a shortage of labour has been identified.

## Hiring?

Use the hashtag **#HireMeHalifax** when posting a job description to help youth find your organization!



# EXPERIENCE

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## Connect with Students Through Experiential Learning

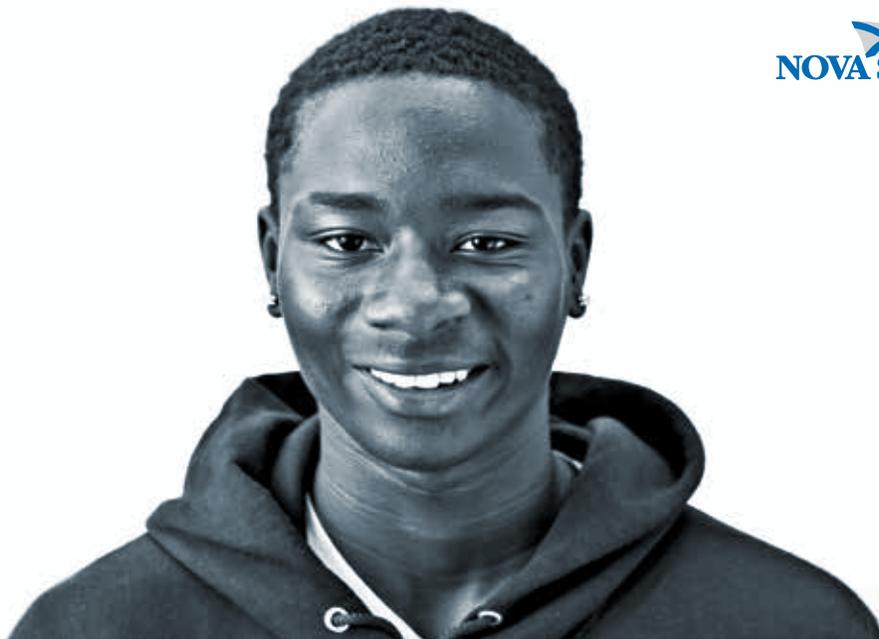
Do you have a hiring demand you need to fill? Are you interested in bringing new young talent onto your team on a short-term basis? Looking for a low-risk way to assess the local talent pool? The Halifax Partnership's Experiential Learning Initiative can assist you.

Experiential learning is the application of classroom learning in a professional workplace. Students gain hands-on experience by working in their field of study with local employers. You get to experience and assess local talent, while improving students' quality of education and their ability to find meaningful employment in Nova Scotia after graduation.

The Halifax Partnership's Experiential Learning Initiative is a simple and effective program that connects local businesses and organizations with university and college students who are studying in Nova Scotia and looking for work experience.

**For more information, contact Julie Weir, Program Coordinator, Experiential Learning Initiative at 902-490-6191 or [jweir@halifaxpartnership.com](mailto:jweir@halifaxpartnership.com).**

Thank You to Our Funder





Students are engaged in creating next generation products or advancements to our current generation products. Their innovative ideas are valuable to our organization.



Mike Morris, Ultra Electronics Maritime Systems

### The Experiential Learning Initiative: How it Works

The Halifax Partnership works one-on-one with businesses like yours to inform and educate on experiential learning. We connect you with post-secondary institutions to find a student that best fits your experiential learning opportunity and your organization's needs. The Experiential Learning Initiative is part of the Game Changers Youth Retention Action Plan.

By offering experiential learning opportunities, you are helping youth gain invaluable work experience while connecting yourself to a talent pool of engaged young professionals that can support your company's growth. You are helping create a culture in Nova Scotia that supports entrepreneurship, applied research, discovery and innovation.

We partner with all Nova Scotia universities and colleges and can connect you to the right opportunity for your business.

- Fill labour gaps during busy or vacation times without long-term commitment
- Gain year-round access to the student talent pool, making you aware of the best upcoming talent and reduce future recruitment costs
- Groom the best talent for positions in your company
- Access provincial and federal youth hiring incentive programs
- Increase your profile as a leader in youth employment and retention through the Game Changers Action Plan

### Incentives for Offering Experiential Learning Opportunities

**Student Work-Integrated Learning Program (SWILP)** uses industry-based employer consortia to create and deliver work-learning opportunities for students in high demand industries such as science and technology, engineering, mathematics, and business.

The **Student Summer Skills Incentive (SKILL)** provides wage assistance to non-profit organizations that provide summer jobs to post-secondary students in Nova Scotia.

The **Clean Leadership Program** provides support, mentoring and funding (60% subsidy) for employers to host full-time students (interns) aged 15-30. The program is designed to promote Nova Scotia's clean growth economy by providing opportunities in a variety of sectors.

**Skills Link**, part of the Government of Canada's Youth Employment Strategy, provides funding for employers and organizations to help youth facing barriers to employment develop the broad range of skills and knowledge needed to participate in the current and future labour market.

### 10 Ways Experiential Learning Can Benefit Your Business

*By Julie Weir,  
Program Coordinator,  
Experiential Learning Initiative,  
Halifax Partnership*



- Assess students as potential employees
- Bring new energy, enthusiasm and creative ideas to your business
- Mentor and learn from students
- Provide post-secondary institutions with feedback on relevancy of training programs to the needs of industry
- Help students gain experience and grow the local talent pool for your industry

**Career Focus**, part of the Government of Canada's Youth Employment Strategy, provides funding for employers and organizations to design and deliver a range of activities that enable youth to make more informed career decisions, develop their skills, and benefit from work experiences.

Receive 50% salary savings (up to \$7.50/hour) for hiring university and community college co-op students through the **Nova Scotia Co-op Education Incentive Program**.

Employers using research and development incentives such as IRAP and ER&ED can receive up to \$10/hour.



Local  
partner.  
*Global  
collaborator.*



# YOUNG COMPANY DEDICATED TO HIRING YOUTH

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The average age of employees at Beaumont & Co., a Dartmouth-based custom exhibit company, is just 22 years old. This may be one of the reasons the company is so passionate about hiring young people and keeping youth in Nova Scotia.

“The talent that’s here and the large pool of young people that are naturally attracted to our universities and colleges makes Halifax a great place to work. There are so many great young people here for companies to hire,” says Sean Court, co-founder of Beaumont & Co.

In spring 2017, Sean was connected to NSCC through the Experiential Learning Initiative, a connection which led him to hire marketing student Kurt MacNeil for a five-week internship.

“Experiential learning brings a fresh perspective to your business, and a new take on things. You can hire students who are skilled in an area your company may not currently have. You can hire an international student who has connections in other places around the world where you want to grow your business,” says Sean.

Kurt graduated from NSCC in June after completing his internship with Beaumont & Co. “What I really enjoyed about working there was that they let me expand my experience and try everything until I found what I really liked doing. I didn’t know what I wanted to do in my internship at first, just that I wanted to do marketing, which is one of the reasons I wanted to work for a smaller and newer business like this one.” Kurt says that Beaumont & Co.’s size and the nature of their business made it easy to experience all parts of the company.

“There’s no such thing as right or wrong when it comes to a student: it’s all learning,” adds Sean. “We’re a new company, and still new to certain products. Even though we’re all young, any additional young voice is still a new perspective.”



Kurt MacNeil (left) with Sean Court of Beaumont & Co.

# FROM NORTH EAST INDIA TO NOVA SCOTIA

SAINT MARY'S MTEI PROGRAM BRINGS  
GLOBAL TALENT TO LOCAL BUSINESSES



Anu Gupta is doing something she never dreamed she'd do, in a city she'd never heard of... and she couldn't be happier.

Originally from North East India, Anu is a 2018 graduate of the Saint Mary's Master of Technology Entrepreneurship and Innovation (MTEI) program. The degree focuses on graduating leaders who can create innovative products and launch, grow, and sustain businesses. Students gain real world experience in the local community by completing an 8-month internship or starting their own business venture.

Today, thanks to the success of her internship, Anu calls Halifax home. She works remotely as Marketing Director for Neck Tronics Inc., a startup based in Bridgewater that has developed a cutting-edge device for assessing and rehabilitating neck injuries.

"It's definitely safe to say that I owe this opportunity to the MTEI program," says Anu. "Coming from a science background with zero knowledge of business, I have learned so much: how to run a new business, what goes into developing a product, and market success... and now I get to apply that knowledge in a startup environment."

## Making Connections

Part planned and part serendipitous, Anu's experience is typical of what makes the program special, says Karn Nichols, Manager of Career Services, at SMU's Sobey School of Business. "We had done some outreach to startups in the South Shore, and we heard about Dr. Bill Smith, the creator of Neck Tronics," she says. "He was eager to bring his

product to the global market and looking for someone with a specific science background. We immediately thought of Anu."

With a previous Master's degree in biological sciences and six years of experience working with leading pharmaceutical companies, Anu's expertise, and entrepreneurial and strategic business development skills, were just what the doctor ordered.

The company is now developing a prototype and preparing to do clinical trials. Anu is excited to help the team build success from the ground up. "My role is to develop strategic partnerships in the industry, locally and across North America, help to identify manufacturers and distributors, establish relationships with elite sports teams, and help navigate intellectual property and patent applications," she says. "I've worked for huge corporations where you feel kind of lost. Here, there is so much more impact in whatever I do."

With a mandate to graduate students with innovative and entrepreneurial mindsets and help create opportunities for them to remain in Nova Scotia, the MTEI program is playing a key role in securing Halifax's economic growth in producing graduates like Anu.

"I love the environment in Halifax. People are so kind and helpful," says Anu. "The startup culture is so great, and there are lots of opportunities."



“

It's definitely safe to say that I owe this opportunity to the MTEI program. Coming from a science background with zero knowledge of business, I have learned so much.

”

Anu Gupta,  
Neck Tronics Inc.

# CONNECT

The Halifax Partnership's Connector Program, presented by RBC, is a simple yet highly effective networking program that helps businesses (Connectors) meet immigrants and recent local and international graduates (Connectees) who are looking to build their professional network and careers in our community.

## Who are Connectors?

Connectors are people in our community who introduce and connect people into their professional network.

## Connector's Role

- Meet with Connectees.
- Listen, ask questions, and share knowledge of current industry and labour market demands and the skills required in your field.
- Provide the Connectee with three industry contacts. Each of these contacts will be asked for three more. It's up to the Connectee to follow-up with Connectors and begin to develop their business network. From these referrals, a Connectee's professional network quickly builds and expands.
- Be honest; provide feedback to the Connectee.

## Become a Connector Today

Join the Connector Program and benefit from:

- Connections to pre-screened young professionals in your industry
- Increased awareness about your organizations and industry
- Knowing you are opening doors for young people and helping them succeed in Halifax
- Making Halifax a more welcoming and diverse community

## Success to Date (since 2009)

- 2,494 Connectees
- 1,072 Connectors
- 1,029 Jobs Found



Presenting sponsor of the  
Connector Program:



## HOW TO BE A GREAT CONNECTOR

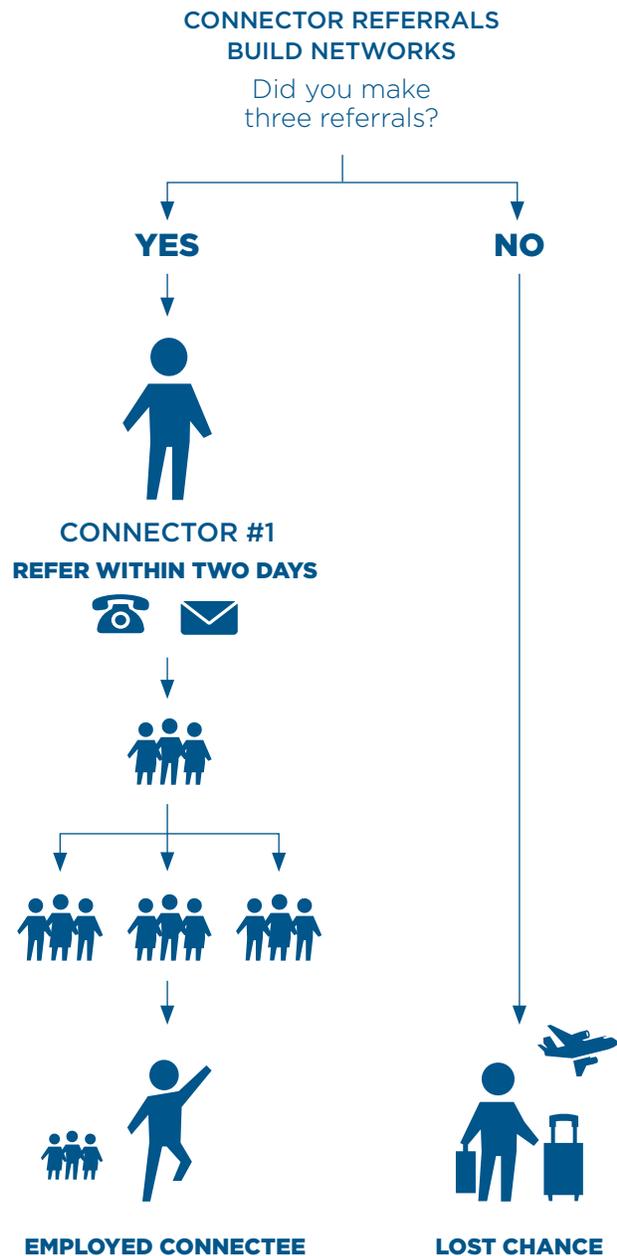
By *Nathan Laird*,  
 Program Manager,  
 Halifax Connector Program,  
 Halifax Partnership



We are all Connectors, and we all have a role to play in helping new immigrants and local and international graduates find work and stay in Nova Scotia. It's a win-win scenario that helps Halifax retain the talent we need to keep our city vibrant and growing.

Here are some tips to help you be a great Connector, help Connectees build their professional networks and, in turn, find meaningful employment here.

- Define your network: Give the Partnership's Connector Team an idea of where your network lies, both professionally and socially, so your matches will really benefit from who you know.
- Say "Yes". You may be matched with several Connectees a year. Say "yes" when you can. Promptly set a date in your calendar for your 30-minute meeting.
- Create a peer exchange. Let the conversation with your Connectee inspire you to think about who you would like them to meet.
- Connect. Immediately following your meeting, reach out to THREE of your contacts. Introduce them to the Connectee and suggest they meet soon.
- Engage. Attend the Partnership's and other organization's networking events. Lead by example. Engage in conversations and introduce young professionals to others whenever possible.
- Refer. Ask a colleague, friend or family member to become a Connector!



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## Networking Events and Organizations

The **Halifax Partnership** hosts Game Changers networking events and speed interviewing events throughout the year: [halifaxpartnership.com/en/home/about-us/events](http://halifaxpartnership.com/en/home/about-us/events)

The **Halifax Chamber of Commerce** hosts a number of networking and professional development events each year: [business.halifaxchamber.com/events](http://business.halifaxchamber.com/events)

**Volta** hosts various pitch it events, lunch and learns, and networking events: [voltaeffect.com/events](http://voltaeffect.com/events)

**Fusion Halifax**, a young professionals network, hosts networking events, panel discussions, and leadership conferences: [fusionhalifax.ca/events](http://fusionhalifax.ca/events)

**Leading Ladies Networking** hosts frequent professional networking events available to all women in the city: [facebook.com/LeadingLadiesNetworking](https://facebook.com/LeadingLadiesNetworking)

**Konnektnow** hosts Third Wednesday, a Halifax tech/media/marketing meetup, on the third Wednesday of each month. [konnektnow.com/thirdwednesday](http://konnektnow.com/thirdwednesday)

“

Youth are the future of so much – our cities and communities, our economy, and creating new industries. So, it's important to do our part to help them find meaningful employment right here at home.

”

Peter Crowe, Stantec





WE ARE **ALL** CONNECTORS.

**HALIFAX  
PARTNERSHIP**

CONNECTOR  
PROGRAM

The Connector Program matches new residents, as well as local and international graduates in Halifax, with established business people and community leaders. This informal networking session is as simple as having a cup of coffee and a chat, and then offering three names from your network that Connectees can also get in touch with.

Connectors are you and me. They're the person you share an office with or sit next to at lunch. Whether you only have a few years of experience or are a C-level executive, we all have the potential to be Connectors.

**This is your chance to grow our city - and your network - to help somebody and their career. Interested?**



MATCH



CONNECT



REFER

To learn more about this award winning program, contact **Nathan Laird** at [nlaird@halifaxpartnership.com](mailto:nlaird@halifaxpartnership.com) or **902.490.6460** or visit: [www.HalifaxPartnership.com/ConnectorProgram](http://www.HalifaxPartnership.com/ConnectorProgram)

Presenting  
Sponsor of  
the Connector  
Program



With support from

**NOVA SCOTIA**

**HALIFAX  
PARTNERSHIP**  
CONNECT. COLLABORATE. PROSPER.

# 2017 GAME CHANGERS AWARDS

## Award Winners:

TD presents Best Youth Employer Awards

**Small Business** - AGADA Biosciences

**Medium Business** - Spring Loaded Technology

**Large Business** - Citco (Canada) Inc.

NSCC presents Experiential Learning Awards

**Small Business** - Halifax Refugee Clinic

**Medium Business** - Kinduct Technologies

**Large Business** - Stantec

Halifax Partnership presents Connector Program Awards

**Best Super Connector Awards** -

Chris O'Shea, BDC

Shelagh McCorry, HSBC Canada

**Best Connector Organization** -

NATIONAL Public Relations

Visit [HalifaxGameChangers.com](http://HalifaxGameChangers.com) for winner profiles



## PHOTOS

**Top:** Emcees of the 2017 Game Changers Awards Gala were Anika Riopel and Sean Myatt, two finalists from the 2017 #HireMeHalifax competition.

**Middle:** Scott Belton, Senior Vice President - Atlantic Region for TD, presents the Best Youth Employer Award - Medium Business to Kristen Fortune from Spring Loaded Technology.

**Bottom:** Mary Louise Bradford accepting the Experiential Learning Award - Large Business on behalf of Stantec.

# 2017 BEST YOUTH EMPLOYER (SMALL BUSINESS)

## AGADA BIOSCIENCES

AGADA is a privately-owned company that aims to meet the rapidly growing need for services to accelerate drug development for rare diseases. Its founders have made a conscious effort to invest in Nova Scotia's youth - 80% of AGADA's employees are aged 19-29, and 85% of recent hires are young professionals.

Amanda Mullen, Director of Operations at AGADA, shares how hiring youth has benefitted the company.

### **What has been the greatest benefit of hiring young professionals for your business?**

In our experience, young professionals are extremely appreciative of opportunities within Nova Scotia because many of them have strong ties to the province. Their gratitude seems to trigger a motivation to work hard and become long-term valued staff members. The young professionals we've hired over the past three years have been eager to work, enthusiastic, highly flexible, and each come with unique interests and expertise that empower them to make continuous improvements within different areas of our company.

We made use of the Strategic Cooperative Education Program (SCEI) and the NSERC program immediately upon starting operations in 2014. The students we hired through these programs helped us develop many of the services we offer today. This synergistic relationship of creating quality internships for students and having them make significant contributions to our operations was very encouraging. We have continued to hire students whenever possible and always find it greatly enriches our work environment.

### **Our goal is to reach net zero loss of youth aged 20-29 (retaining all youth), what would that mean for Halifax? What does that mean to you?**

Retaining youth within Nova Scotia, especially in the life sciences sector, would help us achieve our long-term goals of making Halifax an internationally recognized city for drug development at the pre-clinical and clinical stages. To do this, we need to ensure there are jobs for the bright young science graduates from Nova Scotia universities and that they are encouraged to continue entering these programs. AGADA has the potential to expand rapidly in terms of the

research services we offer and the disease models we work with, and we look forward to being able to offer employment to many more students and graduates.

We were lucky enough to discover charming Nova Scotia, but other companies may need help seeing the value and opportunity Nova Scotia has to offer. We believe the Halifax Partnership's efforts in leveraging the highly educated youth in Nova Scotia to attract new businesses will significantly impact Halifax's private-sector growth.

### **What advice do you have for businesses who are considering hiring youth?**

Recognize the value of having youth grow with your company. Young professionals have the flexibility and willingness to learn and work in a way that is complementary to your company's practices. At AGADA, our employees are continuously learning and their first year of employment is extremely training intensive. Hiring youth does not have to be a high-risk endeavor. After making the investment in training youth, we encourage long-term commitment from our employees. We like to ensure our staff can visualize their career ladder within our company, and we help steer their careers in a direction that will fulfill their ambitions.

Secondly, we encourage other companies to provide their young professionals with the job security, benefits and rewards they deserve. Short-term employment contracts can be discouraging to youth, and can keep employees with one foot out the door. When considering compensation and benefits, offer something above the minimum required for job offer acceptance. Consider the cost of living in Halifax, the proportion of your employees with student debt, the location of your business, and transportation costs. Evaluate staff regularly to offer performance-based raises and promotions. The benefits of this encouragement will by far outweigh the costs!

# 2017 BEST CONNECTOR ORGANIZATION AWARD

## NATIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS

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NATIONAL is a Canada-wide and international public relations firm that brings together research, strategy and creativity from across its diverse network to generate powerful ideas and content. The 11 active Connectors at NATIONAL's Halifax location met with 17 Connectees last year.

Sarah Young, Managing Partner, shares her thoughts on the Connector Program and how being involved has benefitted the company.

### **What is the biggest benefit of being involved in the Connector Program for your business?**

Being involved in the Connector Program is so valuable to NATIONAL for a number of reasons, but three stand out:

- The program helps our team identify local talent with the right skills and experience we look to add to our team. It provides a casual setting to get to know recent graduates and immigrants without the pressure of a formal interview, and helps us keep our finger on the pulse of the city's talent pool.
- It gives our team members, regardless of tenure, an opportunity to build their own network and networking skills. They have the opportunity to share insights, think critically about the role they play in our organization, and above all serve as a resource to Connectees. It also encourages our team members to stay in touch with contacts throughout the city as they direct their Connectees to others.
- It's rewarding. It is a great feeling to direct a Connectee to three additional contacts and see them build their profile in a proactive, self-guided way with a bit of support. We love hearing from those we've referred a Connectee to, and we like thinking strategically about who we can best pair together following our meeting.

### **What would you say to an employer or organization that is considering getting involved in the Connector Program?**

Get involved. The Connector Program is an opportunity to meet the brightest new faces of the Halifax business world. But it's also a really great chance for your employees to grow their business networks, build their networking skills,

and meet smart, local talent. There is no down side—it is a rewarding program to be a part of and we look forward to continued involvement.

Be the type of employer you want for your own kids.



[clotheslinemedia.ca](http://clotheslinemedia.ca)

# 2017 GAME CHANGERS AWARD NOMINEES

## Best Youth Employers:

A.C. Dispensing  
Equipment Inc.  
ADDvocacy ADHD  
& Life Skills Coaching Ltd.  
AGADA Biosciences Inc.  
Agenda Managers  
AMEC Foster Wheeler  
Atlantic Wealth  
Management Ltd.  
BBB Serving the  
Atlantic Provinces  
Beaumont & Co.  
Black & McDonald  
Building Futures  
Employment Centre  
Butterfield Group  
Canada Games Centre  
CarShare  
CarteNav Solutions Inc.  
Casino Nova Scotia  
CBCL Limited  
Citco (Canada) Inc.  
Clean Foundation  
ClearPicture  
Clearwater Seafoods  
Clinical Logistics  
CNIB (Canadian National Institute  
for the Blind)  
Code & Mortar  
Common Good Solutions  
Cossette Communications Inc.  
Cushman & Wakefield Atlantic  
Dash Hudson  
Davis Pier Consulting Ltd.  
Dexter Construction  
Digital Nova Scotia  
EfficiencyOne  
Emera Inc.  
Enginuity Inc.  
EY  
FCV Interactive  
Gerald Walsh Associates Inc.

GoSecure  
Grant Thornton LLP  
Green Power Labs  
Halifax Refugee Clinic  
Halifax Water  
IBM Client Innovation Centre  
immediaC  
iNova Credit Union  
Irving Shipbuilding Inc.  
JASCO Applied Sciences  
Killiam Properties  
Kinduct Technologies  
Lixar I.T. Inc.  
Lockheed Martin  
M&R Engineering  
MacKay's Truck &  
Trailer Center Ltd.  
Master Merchant Systems  
Software Canada  
MEOPAR  
MindSea  
Modest Tree  
NATIONAL Public Relations  
North End Business Association  
Northwood Group of Companies  
Nova Scotia Association of REALTORS®  
Oceanstone Seaside Resort  
Outshine  
Partner International Inc.  
Pinchin LeBlanc  
Environmental Ltd.  
Proposify  
QRA Corp  
RBC Royal Bank  
REDspace  
Revolve  
Scotian Materials  
Shannex  
SimplyCast  
Southwest Properties Ltd.  
Spring Loaded Technology  
Stantec Consulting Ltd.  
Symphony Nova Scotia

T4G  
The Ultimate Party  
& Event Store  
Theatre Nova Scotia  
Time + Space Media  
TruLeaf Sustainable Agriculture Ltd.  
Turner Drake & Partners Ltd.  
Ultra Electronics  
Maritime Systems  
VERB Interactive Inc.  
Volta Labs  
XL Electric Ltd.

## Super Connectors:

Donick Abad, Mitsubishi UFJ Fund  
Services  
Mike Christie, Halifax International  
Airport Authority  
Pat d'Entremont, Nicom IT Solutions  
Natalie Irwin, EfficiencyOne  
Kent Lane, CBCL Limited  
Kenda MacKenzie, Halifax Water  
Shelagh McCorry, HSBC Bank Canada  
Nick Misener, David Aplin Group  
Sara Napier, United Way  
Chris O'Shea, Business Development  
Bank of Canada  
Paul Pickering, ISANS  
Laura Rodgers, Lixar I.T. Inc  
Lauren Sears, Common Good Solutions  
Len Shuttleworth, Rogers  
Dylan Smibert, Consultant  
Jennifer Wesman, EduNova

## Connector Organizations:

CBCL Limited  
NATIONAL Public Relations

# SHARED LEADERSHIP GROWS ECONOMIES



“When I look at the potential within our students and graduates and the opportunities within our province, I’m optimistic we can change the narrative in Nova Scotia,” says Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) President Don Bureaux. “There is hope, there is a future for our youth here, close to home.”

NSCC prides itself on working closely with industry partners to help meet the needs of Nova Scotia’s economy. Working in tandem with industry and government and with the guidance of the expertise within our faculty, NSCC shapes its curriculum to educate our province’s workforce of tomorrow. From there, industry plays a key role in building those future leaders for the opportunities within their sector or to prepare the landscape for their own initiative.

“We give our graduates the skills and tools to prepare for the workforce and that includes instilling in our community an entrepreneurial spirit,” says Bureaux. “Collectively, our work involves fostering the skills and passion within each student that helps to empower them to lead, to build and contribute to a vital entrepreneurial culture.”

Bureaux believes in a model of shared leadership, one where all employees are encouraged to take the lead in building their skills and growing as a person and as a professional. “It’s important for a leader to mentor others so they too can become leaders,” he says.

“To help make this happen, we all need to continue to hire and celebrate new employees who bring with them different skills and perspectives. It is this infusion of talent that will both complement the knowledge and skills already present in the workplace and grow our economic potential. This is how we build a culture of



Don Bureaux, President, Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC)

entrepreneurship. In supporting the success of our youth and new graduates, we’ll create leaders ready for the challenges of tomorrow.”

“Once again, it’s an honour to acknowledge those private sector organizations that have seen the benefits of providing what are invaluable experiential learning opportunities to our youth,” says Bureaux. “These Game Changers and Connectors are doing their part to support our future leaders and our province’s potential. In doing so, they are part of changing the narrative.”



# MY FUTURE IS THE ONE I CREATE.

Emmanuel wasn't born into money. But he was filled with passion and ambition. Now he's making money to make a difference.

Empowering young, passionate people like Emmanuel with hands-on, experiential learning is our promise. We get students workforce ready with a skillset organizations need. Our province depends on it.

Watch Emmanuel's STRIVE film at [nsc.ca/emmanuel](https://nsc.ca/emmanuel)

**STRIVE.** *nsc*

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