

Truro & Colchester
CHAMBER
of Commerce

Finding Qualified Labour is #1 Challenge

By Sherry Martell

Filling job vacancies with qualified labour remains the number one challenge for businesses in this region to grow and thrive.

Following closely is the ongoing challenge of supply chain cost and delivery schedules; rising costs just to do business such as bank interest, electricity, minimum wage hikes, etc.; better service for internet and cell service; access to housing; government tape at all levels; physician recruitment; continued marketing to encourage a rebound in post-COVID-19 consumer confidence, among a list of other pressing issues.

The Truro and Colchester Chamber of Commerce recently surveyed its membership to get a pulse on key issues impacting the business community. This information is key to assisting the board in renewing its strategic plan for the next three years and beyond.

Addressing the labour shortage will take a multi-pronged approach from education about labour needs and

opportunities considering career paths to more support for trade training, job readiness skills training and immigration.

Nova Scotia welcomed more than 12,000 immigrants last year, a record-breaking number that surpassed the previous year by 38 per cent.

The benefits of immigration extend into communities as many new Nova Scotians and their families become volunteers, civic leaders and entrepreneurs.

Nova Scotia is aiming to double its population to two million by 2060, with a goal to attract 25,000 newcomers every year.

There is no question that immigration enriches communities, grows jobs adds to cultural diversity and assists in building our economic prosperity.

We also know that a progressive and ambitious plan for growing immigration needs additional supports from both the public and private sector.

The Chamber recent wrote a letter to Immigration Minis-



Sherry Martell

ter Jill Balsler, sharing results of the member's survey to inform government decision making as it works toward a goal of increasing immigration. We joined with other Chambers across the country advocating for a reform of the system to reduce wait times and red tape redundancies, as well as adding more flexibility on a case-by-case basis to address applications, particularly for those trained in skilled trades.

With Nova Scotia's aging population immigration is necessary to assist with filling these job voids to ensure employers have the employees they require to stay in business and thrive.

We also know from our Chamber's work supporting newcomers in the community, that a strong support system is needed when they arrive to assist with settlement in an area. Often this is achieved by family members who have arrived previously, friends and organized community group efforts.

We recognize there is a backlog of applications immigration staff are working through, along with complex policies and protocols that must be navigated to protect the integrity of the immigration system with respect to safety. However, as a business community we have witnessed times when the regulated, antiquated immigration system has prevented newcomers from settling in this region.

Demographic trends suggest that over the next 25 years, immigration will be a main source of future labour market growth (Kustec, 2012). It is critical that Nova Scotia continues to attract and retain skilled immigrants to meet our labour market needs. Clearly, there is an opportunity for the government at all levels and employers to work together to address these challenges and, in the process, develop an immigration system that is more responsive to labour market demand.

The Chamber recently undertook a project, supported by our stakeholders, to showcase the stories of immigrants who have settled in this region and are thriving as entrepreneurs.

We will continue to press government for system reform to enable us to welcome more newcomers to our community, as well as improvements to housing, healthcare and education impacting quality of life for all residents.

Sherry Martell ACE (She/Her) is Executive Director, Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce, 105B Walker Street, Truro, NS, B2N 4B1 and can be reached at: ed@tcchamber.ca or 902-895-6328

TURNERS' EXCAVATING AND TRUCKING

41 Onslow Mt. Road, Belmont



All Gravels, Backhoe, Dozer, Roller, Septic Plans And Installation, New Land Development, Driveways, and Culverts.

Cells (902) 890 5409, (902) 890-7348, (902) 897-7688



NEW SHIPMENT OF WINDOWS ARRIVING MARCH 3

Ask about CUSTOM ORDERS

MONEYS WORTH

Renovation Centre

28 Jennifer Drive (Just across from the Bowlcade) 902-893-2477



Sherry Martell, Executive Director and Eric Tanton, in-coming President of the Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce listen as Matthew Mossman, President speaks during chamber's networking event. (Contributed)



Pictured (L-R) during a recent networking evening for the Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce are Eric Jackson of Water N Wine, Emily MacRae of Hampton Inn & Suites, Colin Stephenson of Air Show Atlantic, and Shayne Campbell of The Tanton Group (Contributed)



All twenty-eight students of the Chiganois Grade 5 Classes had their artwork on display for the month of February at the NSCC Art Gallery. Posing with their individual works here are (L-R): Kingsley Hatt, "Always Here For You"; Kaycee Manning, "No Way Home"; Easton Wells, "The Sunny Sunset" and Finn Connolly, "Waterfall". (Harrington Photo)

The Shoreline Journal
Deadline for the April issue is March 21

Colchester
be centred here.

Presentation Meeting
Tuesday, March 7 @ 6pm
(call ahead to confirm)

Council Committee Meeting
Thursday, March 16 @ 6pm

Council Meeting
Thursday, March 30 @ 6pm

Municipality of Colchester, 1 Church Street, Truro
902-897-3184 | Colchester.ca

WE ARE OPEN FOR BUSINESS

AVG. CloudCare™

Is a virus driving you crazy?
Bring it to us for CPR - \$83 + HST

Need antivirus Software?
AVG Antivirus - \$50 + HST for two years

www.fail-safe-computer.com

10 Dominion Street
893-2171
askus@fail-safe-computer.com
Proudly Educating our Customers in Plain English

- COMPUTER & LAPTOP SALES
- WIRELESS/ROUTER SECURITY
- VIRUS & SPYWARE REMOVAL
- CABLES & ACCESSORIES
- OPEN: Mon.-Fri. 8:30-5:30
Saturday 9:00-1:00

Scotia Metal Products Ltd

Metal Roofing & Siding

Made in Nova Scotia
Many Colours to choose from
Visit our showroom at
188 Joseph Zatzman Drive Dartmouth

902-468-7217

www.scotiametal.ca