



# NOVA SCOTIA CAREER DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

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NEWSLETTER | WINTER 2019



## In This Issue:

Diversity and Inclusion is Mission Critical  
Something's Been Going On: KPI Infographic  
Meet Board Member Amrita Hazra  
Why Do Employability Skills Matter?  
Featured Member

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## Contents

- 2** Diversity and Inclusion is Mission Critical
- 3** NSCDA at CANNEXUS19!
- 5** Something's Been Going On: KPI Infographic
- 7** Meet Board Member Amrita Hazra
- 8** Featured Member
- 9** Why Do Employability Skills Matter?

# Diversity and Inclusion is Mission Critical

*Workplaces that are diverse and inclusive outperform those that aren't in creativity, productivity, customer insights, decision making, product development and profitability.*

In Feb. 2019 the NSCDA Board of Directors passed a motion to undertake the organizational change necessary to create a diverse and inclusive workplace, making inclusion an embedded element of its governance, programs, systems and services.

**Why?** Across Canada and within Nova Scotia, corporations and businesses of all sizes are embracing diversity and inclusion as one of Canada's greatest strengths in a rapidly changing global economy. Workplaces that are diverse and inclusive outperform those that aren't in creativity, productivity, customer insights, decision making, product development and profitability. Inclusive workplaces are better able to attract and retain employees, particularly younger employees who value working in flexible and diverse environments.

## It is good business

Understanding diversity goes beyond considering race, culture, age, and gender to all the factors that make us different. It includes our diversity of experiences, thoughts, values and beliefs. It means understanding and valuing what makes each of us unique and having the ability to move beyond tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity within each person. Inclusion is feeling involved, respected, valued and connected. Having the sense you can bring your "authentic" selves (including your ideas, backgrounds, values and perspectives) to your work with colleagues and clients means feeling as if you are in a workplace where you can succeed, and feel as if you belong.

We are excited to take on this journey of learning. But we can't do it alone. Here are some of the early steps we are planning:

- Change starts at the top. Amrita Hazra will support the Board in building inclusive policies, programs, and hiring procedures to strengthen diversity and support inclusion.
- We will embed diversity and inclusion as a cross-cutting element within all our educational training, conferences, certification, and workshops to share best practices and tools.
- We will draw on expertise within our network, build collaborative partnerships with service providers, community and advocacy groups, and by including "experiential expertise" in our diversity planning. This will include exploring ways to leverage the Mental Health Champions, an early NSCDA-led inclusion initiative, to support building grassroots inclusion practices.
- We will work with government to improve the Welcoming Workplaces toolkit, enhancing its usability by including best practices, first person voices, and in supporting training and education to create effective inclusion practices.

Most important, we commit to take action and draw on the talent, experience, and resources within the NSCDA membership. Stay tuned!





## For the First Time, the NSCDA Had a Booth at CANNEXUS!

Ten members of our team travelled to CANNEXUS19 in Ottawa to share news about our online training programs going national. Approximately 600 people dropped by our booth to chat, giving us the opportunity to create connections and build networks that will enable the NSCDA to remain a leader in the field of career development in Canada.



NSCDA CANNEXUS19 booth, before (left) and after (above).

At right, a few members of our team who attended Cannexus19. From left, back row: Financial Manager Chantelle Marshall; Training Consultant Rachel Hermiston; Executive Director Kathy McKee; Communications and Media Coordinator Cathi Stevenson; Administrative Assistant Ashley Halverson. Seated: Training Administrator Caitlin Parkinson. Missing are Registrar Phil Ward; Training Manager Connie Corse; Career Development Specialist Cathy Casey; and Training Consultant Teresa Francis.



NSCDA team members take a moment to pose for a picture at CANNEXUS19. From left: Training Manager Connie Corse; Administrative Assistant Ashley Halverson; and Training Administrator Caitlin Parkinson.

Connie, along with Training Consultant Teresa Francis, gave a talk at the conference called An Essential Specialization in Employment Services, discussing the NSCDA's online learning system that provides comprehensive, content suitable for new and experienced career practitioners. Teresa also hosted a session along with Jessica Isenor and Rebecca Hudson-Breen, called Practitioner-Based Research: How to Get It Done!



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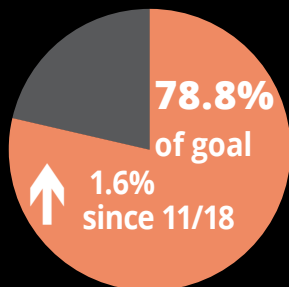


# SOMETHING'S BEEN GOING ON ...

The NSCDA is working on more than 70 projects. We're constantly brainstorming and taking full advantage of the inspiration all around us!

## Certification

Designated  
CCDPs



**Projected goal: 250**  
(197 have earned CCDP designation. 81 in process).

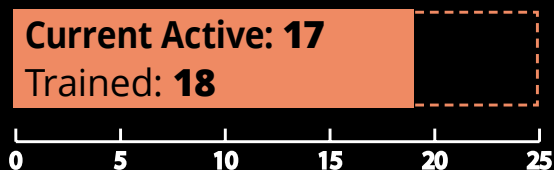
Career Pathways  
to Certification



**Projected Pathways candidates goal: 50**  
Currently have 48 candidates in process.

## Assessors

Target number of assessors: 25



## COMMUNICATIONS

- PowerPoints for online training
- Promotion of events
- Materials for AGM
- Materials for conference
- Updated infographics for programs
- Updating guides and documents
- Social media
- Exploring use of animated whiteboards and explainer videos

## Membership

**ORGANIZATIONS GOAL EXCEEDED**

**463 Members (↑28)**  
114 non NSW staff (↑15)  
155 CCDP members

**(23)**  
organizations represented.  
April 2019  
goal: 15)

**GOAL EXCEEDED**  
for April 2019 target of 450

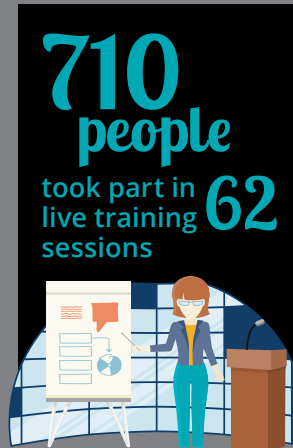
**April 2021 target: 600**

0 100 200 300 400 500 600

# A FEW OF OUR MAJOR PROJECTS

- Mental Health Champions
- Case Management Training
- Case Management Supervisory Training
- Implementation of certification review recommendations
- Employability Skills Summer Student Project
- Employer Engagement Training and forum
- Older Worker Training for Career Professionals
- Executive Leadership Training
- Training Evaluation Project
- State of the profession research
- Transferable Skills Portfolio Pilot
- Intellectual property acquisition
- Labour market information guides and training
- Canada wide online training
- Conference, June 2019

## Training Goal Exceeded



**Original Training Goals for April 2019:**

**500** live participants | **750** webinar participants

## GOVERNANCE

- Appoint Diversity Champion
- Adoption of D&I framework as priority
- New board committees
- Strategic Plan review
- Development of risk framework
- New foundational policies in place
- Accountability framework in place
- Succession planning



## ONLINE LEARNING

# 518 People Registered

342 NSW | 142 Members | 37 Non-Members

**351** Active learning plans

**225** Registered for Case Management

**35** Mental Health Learning Plan registrants



## BOARD MEMBER

**Amrita Hazra**  
HR Generalist,  
Aqualitas Inc.



In 2018 the NSCDA welcomed several new members to its Board of Directors, including Human Resources Specialist Amrita Hazra. Amrita is invested in career development in Nova Scotia, offers 15 years of experience that spans two countries, and speaks three languages. These qualities make her a valuable asset to the NSCDA's board.

Amrita has been living in Canada since 2011, after arriving for her husband's convocation at Dalhousie University. "We planned to return to India, but he was offered a job in Nova Scotia, and here we are."

She received her MBA in Human Resources Management and Services at APJ Abdul Kalam Technological University, in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. In India, she worked in HR, and taught at a management college for six years. Her popularity and success as a teacher is evident on her social media accounts, where hundreds of students still keep in contact with her. Amrita's love of teaching is also evident in her dedication to the Charlie Help Universe Trust, a charity in India that assists orphaned children. She taught English as a volunteer with Charlie Help for three years, and continues to support the organization.

After moving to Nova Scotia, Amrita quickly became involved in the local community. "We realized that there wasn't anything happening to celebrate different cultures, so five years ago we started the South Shore Multicultural Association." She continues to work with the Association and serves on its board.

Human Resources was a natural fit for Amrita not only because she enjoys people, but she enjoys creating policies and procedures. It's not an attraction to paperwork that appeals to her, but rather the "fairness and consistency the right policies can bring to an organization."

Amrita especially likes her role as a board member with the NSCDA because it's clear to her — and to those she speaks with, that the NSCDA has a very good system in place, with programs and policies that empower members. "Both Executive Director Kathy McKee and Training Manager Connie Corse are developing programs that are moving the NSCDA forward. It's a growing organization, and their vision to make it grow in the right direction is amazing. People I've spoken with and worked with in the NSW Centres are confident about the training they're receiving through the NSCDA, and recognize the value of the programs being offered," says Amrita. She is particularly impressed with the Mental Health Champions initiative and work surrounding compassion fatigue.

"The NSCDA has really good training that's not focused just on dealing with clients, but is teaching those working in the field to take care of themselves as well."

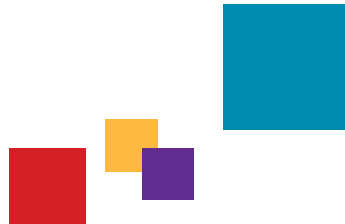
During her "down time" Amrita studies Uechi Ryu, an Okinawan martial art, Tai Chi, and Bharatanatyam, a form of Indian classical dance practiced in South India.





## MEMBER PROFILE

**Dawn Howe-Power, CCDP**  
Case Manager,  
NSW, Sheet Harbour



There's very little down time in Dawn Howe-Power's life. The Certified Career Development Practitioner is constantly in motion between work, community projects, volunteering, hobbies and home life, but she wouldn't have it any other way.

Dawn works as a Case Manager with the Nova Scotia Works Centre in Sheet Harbour (formerly Job Search Services), where she has been employed in one capacity or another since 2007. It's a good fit for the former teacher, who has also worked as a Child Care Information and Support Program Director for the LEA Place Women's Resource Centre.

Since 2008, Dawn has volunteered her time as a director with the Sheet Harbour and Area Chamber of Commerce and Civic Affairs, and is currently on her third term as the organizations' secretary. She's also part of the chamber's Banquet Committee, Marina Committee, Membership Committee, and the Nominating Committee.

Between her career and work with the chamber of commerce, she also makes time to volunteer with the Sheet Harbour & Area Ground Search and Rescue, where she has been an active member for eight years, and secretary for four years. "I really enjoy my work with Search and Rescue. We learn a lot of valuable skills that can be applied to everyday life, such as training in first aid and assisting people with dementia."

Staying true to her Mi'kmaq heritage, Dawn also attends as many cultural events as possible with the Millbrook First Nation, in Truro, taking advantage of any courses and training they offer. "At Millbrook I've taken Mental Health First Aid courses, and have been taught to administer Naloxone (an opioid overdose anecdote)."

But, her focus is on her career with Nova Scotia Works, and she is currently working on her Case Management Specialization, available through the NSCDA's online training programs. "It's a good program. Even if it's something you've been doing for a while, it's a good skills' refresher," she says. She also takes training offered by the Department of Labour and Advanced through her local chamber of commerce, whenever it's available. "I try to take advantage of relevant training wherever I can find it," she says.

From about April to November of each year Dawn spends most of her time with her "summer family" in Enfield, where she has a trailer at a private campground. "I like it there. It's peaceful. It's a good time to work on some of my courses."



# Why Do Employability Skills Matter?

*While employers value education and training, teaching soft skills will be every bit as important in preparing the next generation for future success in the real world of work.*

The NSCDA recently partnered with LAE, Futureworx, and the CEI to develop, implement, and evaluate a pilot project in response to employer feedback from the SKILLS (Summer Student Skill Incentive) program. Employers involved in the program reported that students often lacked important employability skills and, as a result, the employment experience was not satisfactory. It was assumed that students hired through the program would have most of these skills, and while many did, an increasing number of students required orientation to workplace expectations in addition to support during their employment as issues arose.

Employability skills are sometimes referred to as soft skills, foundational skills, work-readiness skills, or job-readiness skills, and they are key to workplace success. Soft skills include things such as behaviour, attitude, personal characteristics, motivation, adaptability, and confidence and are necessary to perform well in the workplace. The feedback from employers exposed the need for youth to be educated on the relationship between these soft skills and future workplace performance, employment and career success.

Futureworx is a recognized leader in developing employability skills through the Employability Skills Development System (ESDS) and its associated Employability Skills Assessment Tool (ESAT).

The ESDS and ESAT approach will promote learner self-awareness about employability skills, helping youth entering the workforce alter behaviours that are problematic on the job, resulting in improved future employment success and career development. It is also intended to provide employers with the tools and resources necessary to coach students appropriately to approve their employability skills. Nova Scotia Works Centres involved in the pilot project delivery will gain training, knowledge enhancement, and competency around service delivery involving employability skills.

**So, why do soft skills matter?** While employers value education and training, teaching soft skills will be every bit as important in preparing the next generation for future success in the real world of work.

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