



WINTER 2020 EDITION

# THE TOP 100 CANADIAN PROFESSIONALS

FEATURING FERAS MARISH, CEO, HI-RISE WATER ENGINEERING INC.

**LEARN HOW THIS  
PIONEERING  
ENGINEER  
SOLVED  
HOT WATER  
PROBLEMS  
IN HIGH-RISE  
BUILDINGS.**

-Story on Page 4





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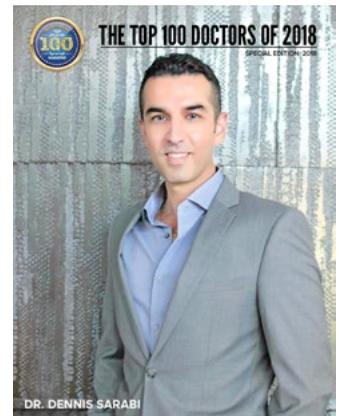
Graphic Design:  
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[www.TheTop100Magazine.com](http://www.TheTop100Magazine.com)

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The staff of *The Top 100 Magazine* would like to express their gratitude for having the privilege of working with the brightest, most accomplished and esteemed professionals in Canada.

Through the combined efforts of our account directors, writers, production staff, and artists, as well as the cooperation of everyone who is featured in this extraordinary edition, I believe we are presenting one of our finest publications to date.

I know that our readers will be equally impressed by these stories and appreciate the tremendous fortitude, dedication, and perseverance of these individuals, along with the many sacrifices they have made in the pursuit of their dreams.

It is my sincere wish that each and every one of these amazing professionals continue to experience success and my pleasure to present *The Top 100 Canadian Professionals Magazine*.

*Joseph Nunziato*  
CEO, Redwood Media

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# THE TOP 100 CANADIAN PROFESSIONALS

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# Feras Marish, Co-Founder & CEO

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Feras Marish is the co-founder and CEO of Hi-Rise Water Engineering Inc. Based in Oakville, Ontario, Canada. HRWE is a specialized engineering company focused on domestic hot water solutions for all types of buildings, with a specific focus in multi-residential properties. He is the top expert in domestic water pressure-boosting systems in Canada and the U.S. and the pioneering engineer who solved hot water problems in high-rise buildings with the introduction of the ground breaking Flowmix Domestic Hot Water Temperature Control System. Flowmix has an unprecedented ability to deliver, with extreme accuracy, properly maintained hot water long distances and across multiple pressure zones while reducing water waste and lowering natural gas consumption and electricity expenses.

“

A client once said to me, We’re able to put a man on the moon, but we can’t deliver hot water to people’s doors. For the first time ever, we have a reliable device that delivers hot water consistently and safely.

”

Feras proudly leads Hi-Rise Water Engineering as the exclusive engineering and consulting firm for the patented Flowmix system, finally putting an end to the historical problems that have plagued residents across North America for generations. He leads a team of engineers and experts with 50 years of combined experience in domestic water solutions for high-rise properties who work with buildings to implement the system—all of whom have seen staggering savings upwards of 30 percent in water and 15 percent in natural gas and electricity.

The domestic hot water industry in North America has historically experienced neglect in all buildings, even more so in multi-residential buildings and high-rise properties, with fluctuating temperatures, inconsistent pressure, and delayed delivery of hot water. The challenge has become especially problematic as high-rise buildings have increased in height, thereby presenting significant distance and pressure requirements. Flowmix is the first product that solves all these problems.

“With its integration, we are able to provide solutions and results that were previously and otherwise impossible to achieve,” Feras explains. “Residents happily testify that they now enjoy the comfort of simple daily pleasures, such as a hot shower, and management benefits from significant cost savings.”

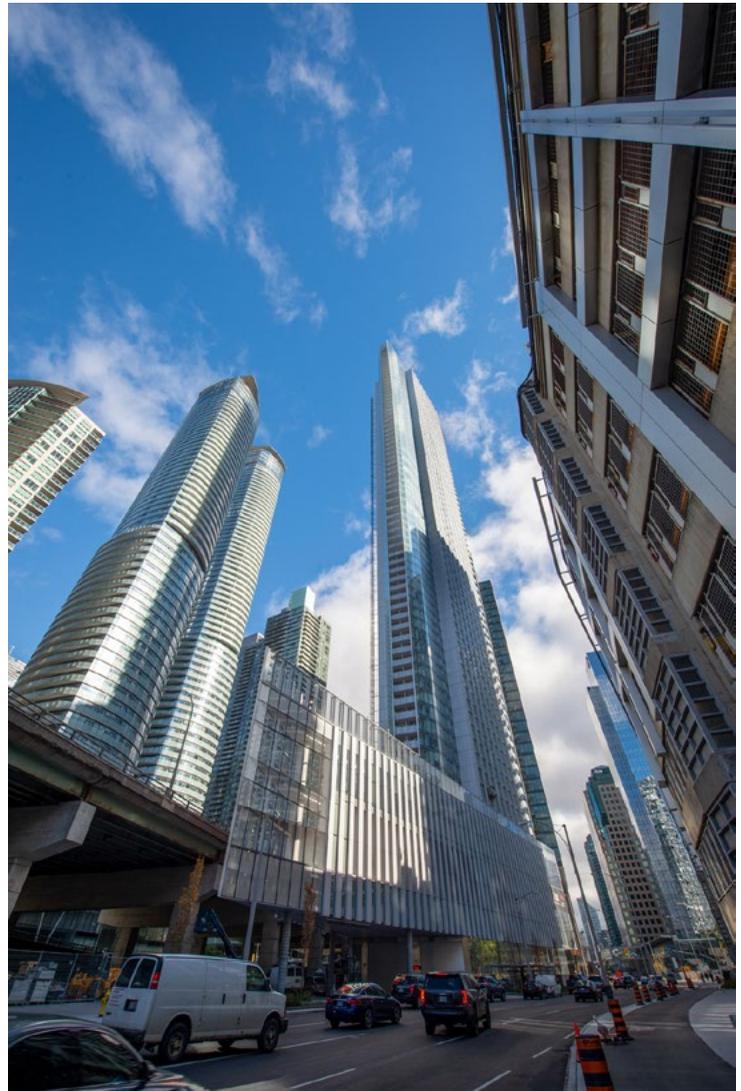
A towering 600-unit building in the heart of Toronto stands as a shining example of just one of many properties reaping the rewards of Flowmix—reducing its water bill by \$140,000, from about half a million dollars to about \$360,000. “All that water was going down the drain while waiting for it to heat up. It’s not just about comfort, it’s about a great financial decision, and one that supports water conservation,” Feras says.

An engineer with 20 years of expertise in and a lifelong passion for water engineering, Feras proudly consulted in the development of Flowmix as it incorporates into the entire domestic water system design for high-rise buildings. He founded Hi-Rise Water Engineering Inc. in 2018 specifically to deploy the Flowmix Domestic Hot Water Temperature Control System, sparking quick adoption of the product by 150-plus buildings and growing demand as word spread across Ontario.



Feras has dedicated nearly his entire career to the specific field of multi-residential water engineering, and his innovative designs have an impeccable history of success. With Feras having conducted over 1,000 water audits across North America and authored several scientific papers on domestic hot water system optimization, the Flowmix developers called upon him to design the entire domestic

water implementation of the system. Driven by the same passion that compelled him to specialize in this rare field with a career that includes roles as regional energy optimization sales manager at Grundfos Pumps and business development manager at Xylem Water Solutions (ITT), Feras delivered.



Residents happily testify that they now enjoy the comfort of simple daily pleasures, such as a hot shower, and management benefits from significant cost savings.

For Feras, his work is personal, driven by the determination to use his expertise to help people, triggered by an event early in his career. “I was living in a building with hot water fluctuation problems. One of my neighbors who was ill with an extremely sensitive skin condition got terribly scalded, the burns on her hands so bad that she couldn’t brush her teeth,” he shares. “That’s the kind of thing that sparked my interest in this field. I see how my work affects people’s lives, and knowing I had a direct impact on improving their quality of life is immensely rewarding.”

Hi-Rise Water Engineering Inc. has proudly worked with the University of Toronto and Ontario Centres



of Excellence to revolutionize how they design domestic hot water systems within the multi-residential building environment. Its solutions have focused on incorporating the Flowmix Hot Water Control System.

Among his many innovative contributions to the water engineering field, Feras pioneered the conversion of Canadian retrofit market of domestic cold-water booster systems from constant speed to variable speed pumps. Feras holds a Bachelor of Engineering from Ryerson University, where as a member of the Dean’s List and a Gold Key Honor Society Member (top 15 percent).

#### CONTACT

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## Warren Dale Cudney

President & CEO

### About

Warren Dale Cudney is president and CEO of Wahupta Ventures Inc., a privately held corporation based in Vancouver, Canada, specializing in the genetics, farming, production, and processing of hemp. Additionally, Wahupta, under Cudney's direction, recently acquired Curran Technologies Inc., further growing the company's portfolio to also include hemp oil extraction for medicinal and recreational products.

With an extensive background in medical device technology and as a past owner of a medical clinic, Warren now leads an amazing team dedicated to helping improve the lives and health of people with alternatives to traditional pharmaceutical drugs.

## Q&A

**The idea for Wahupta Ventures came from your experiences with patients in your medical clinics. Tell us about this.**

I was drawn into the hemp and cannabis industry five years ago, but I came in begrudgingly. My background is in medical devices and tech, and I was always educating myself on the wellness factor. I was working in my medical clinic at the time, and I wasn't aware of the medicinal values, but I started seeing people, and especially the older population, who were looking at CBD and THC supplements to find alternatives to pharmaceutical drugs for pain management and inflammatory diseases, especially those using opioids. I did a tremendous amount of research on it, saw its value, and combined my tech and medical background to team up with strong industry experts to form Wahupta to help people use the hemp plant in a beneficial way. I believe our company and our team can leave a legacy of helping people and bringing about a significant change to the industry.

We have this opportunity to take this incredible plant, hemp, and use the extracted oils to arrest the symptoms of many diseases, and I want to say one day we could find a cure.

**What does Wahupta Ventures do specifically in the hemp space?**

We're focused on more so the medicinal side of hemp and the science and innovation side. THC has benefits as well, but we focus on the hemp plant, which has a low THC percentage, so people don't get the effect of being high. I love the science side, and what the industry was lacking five years ago was knowledge in two critical areas: dosing and deliveries. People were very unaware of dosages and what they should be, and then also how to administer it. A huge responsibility comes with being a part of this industry, and dosing is a key component. We're now able to get involved with key scientists who are working on these two key areas. We recently acquired a technology company, Curran Technologies, which manufactures extraction equipment that takes the plants' primary constituents and extracts them as an oil. Through Health Canada-compliant producers, we help them formulate medicinal and recreational products with those oils.

**Tell us more about how hemp, CBD, and cannabinoids are helping people with chronic health issues, and how it is being considered for the treatment of COVID-19.**

Right now, we're connected to and watching a brilliant doctor and friend Dr. Robert Pastore who is working on projects to advance researching in areas such as a current health concern we all know, COVID 19 and CBD as well as many other ailments. Regulatory bodies are beginning to recognize CBD as a solution to arrest symptoms of a cytokine storm or an inflammatory response in specific receptors in the body caused by this virus and in so many other diseases. A root cause of disease is inflammation, and we now know with some degree of certainty that CBD, or a combination of cannabinoids (potentially in conjunction with traditional western medicine) can arrest inflammatory responses. We have this opportunity to take this incredible plant, hemp, and use the extracted oils to arrest the symptoms of many diseases, and I want to say one day we could find a cure.

Warren now leads an amazing team dedicated to helping improve the lives and health of people with alternatives to traditional pharmaceutical drugs.

**You work closely with First Nations partners to help bring CBD to their communities. Can you tell us about this?**

We do. In fact, we have First Nations partners on our board of directors in Canada. In the infancy of the cannabis space, including the hemp side, the Canadian First Nations and Tribal Nations had not been part of the conversation, so from very early on, we worked with them and found that they were nervous about introducing something that could be viewed as a drug into their community. We went out with Tribal Nations leaders, became educated on their communities, and in turn tried to help educate them on the opportunity of CBD as a solution; not another drug but a solution to the problem. We continue to provide education and an outlet for First Nations people.

**What makes Wahupta Ventures unique from others in the hemp and cannabis industry?**

Certainly, Canada has been a tremendous leader in this market. There has been a lot of capital raised to build these mega-companies in the industry, and they're doing it at a quick pace. I've tried to work with our team of experts to lead a smaller more focused approach to the supply of oils and the focus on science specifically. We recognized how quickly the plant became commoditized and that the need to really pivot and focus on specific niches was needed. We're unique



because we're a group of people with a small, tight shareholder base that recognizes that if we look at it from a scientific basis and work with a full-spectrum oil, not just CBD in its isolated form only, but the purest oil with the richness of the plants constituents, we can find potentially much better solutions. While others may focus on being broad, we stay focused on aligning ourselves with companies who work on that dosing and delivery piece. We've grown slowly, survived the shift in capital markets and the global shutdowns due to COVID and picked partners carefully. We are trying to grow on science, tech, and the medicinal markets. We're very particular about who we work with and what we go to market with. Our idea is not only revenue-focused, but rather doing things the right way, and focused on the partners and teams internally that really are value based and understand what we do matters. Not unlike the hemp plant, we have stayed true to our word and we are overcoming many obstacles, and as a team we have so much to offer the industry and ultimately the consumers that will benefit from this healing plant.



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# Wade Meyer

## President

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With nearly 30 years of construction experience, Wade Meyer is a seasoned insurance property loss specialist, with extensive expertise in repairing commercial and institutional structures. As president and founder of Damage Inc., a disaster restoration company specializing in large and complex insurance property losses, Wade recently talked with us about his background and explained how his company utilizes professional construction experience and a technical approach to effectively restore buildings to pre-loss condition with unrivaled speed, and minimize the usage of invasive restorative methods.

### Let's begin with your background. Tell us a bit about your prior work experience.

Before I founded Damage Inc., I had already led a successful career in the insurance restoration industry for over 10 years. I served as senior project manager, handling the largest of insurance claims for the largest of clients including educational, healthcare, commercial, and multi-family. I have completed mitigation and restoration of hundreds of property losses exceeding \$150 million, consistently meeting schedule. Prior to insurance related matters, my construction experience includes management of hundreds of commercial and industrial projects around Edmonton, including involvement in dozens of multi-level concrete structures. I've also directly managed as a sub-contractor to all the largest general contractors for numerous industrial projects with both union and non-union crews.

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We do leasehold improvements for clients, new construction, mold and asbestos abatement, renovation, and consulting. I have been called as a professional witness and have reported on processes in legal matters.

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### What inspired you to establish Damage Inc.?

I've always had a vision to offer an effective delivery with value. It happens more often than not in this industry that insurance claims flow to managers by default, who may not have the expertise to effectively complete the project, so I have established more of a presence in the industry as a construction professional who specializes in insurance disasters. I wanted to make a positive change by quickly and effectively helping clients overcome any damage to their property, so we emphasize timelines, safety, partnership with professional and competent sub-contractors, and communication. I founded Damage Inc., a company made up of construction professionals who know how to handle special restoration projects and who are determined to mitigate, stabilize, reconstruct, or repair every client's property

By understanding building science and the intricate assemblies, we know how to mitigate claim values with restorative methods, and effectively deliver a product that satisfies the insurers with value, and the clients with timelines and quality.

promptly and professionally. We want both our clients and their insurers to know that we will be there to not only provide the highest quality property restoration possible, but that we will also be empathetic to the disruption along the way.

Lastly, but most importantly, I am inspired to work extra hard for the sake of my children. I have overcome tremendous barriers in the creation of this company, and what keeps me focused is a desire to do good by them.

### **What sets Damage Inc. apart from other restoration companies?**

A bonded company, our team of technicians and managers are extensively trained in disaster mitigation techniques and have been with me for years handling some of the most complex situations. We utilize a technical approach with a firm understanding of building assemblies, with the most up to date equipment and processes available in the market. By understanding building science and the intricate assemblies, we know how to mitigate claim values with restorative methods, and effectively deliver a product that satisfies the insurers with value, and the clients with timelines and quality.

Our team also specializes in both healthcare and educational work. I have personally completed several significant projects in the education field including two Alberta school divisions that were decimated by floods in 2013 and two complete divisions decimated by wildfires in 2016. I have handled a significant value in healthcare facilities as well, and my staff and I are trained in the CSA standard of infectious controls. This allows us to prevent construction contaminants from cross contamination into vulnerable areas of the facilities. We are also well versed on COVID-19 disinfection processes for our clients' job sites using electrostatic application equipment and hand processing to ensure an effective result.

### **Do you focus only on disasters that occurs within established buildings?**

No, as general contractors, we take on anything. We do leasehold improvements for clients, new construction, mold and asbestos abatement, renovation, and consulting. I have been called as a professional witness and have reported on processes in legal matters.

### **Describe the Damage Inc. facility.**

Our work facility consists of over 20,000 square feet, which includes office space, storage, process facilities, and manufacturing facilities. One unique feature is our

in-house automated millwork plant, where we construct factory made cabinets and commercial millwork for projects needing any required specification. This utility enables us to produce these items in a fraction of the time, versus our competitors using long-lead-time stand-alone plants. Damage Inc. can complete some multi-family projects in 10% of the time it would take our competitors, due to all the reasons mentioned.

### **Tell us about your ability to mobilize abroad.**

A lot of our competitors are franchises, or members of various branded groups. They must follow constrictive territory restrictions and can find themselves in litigation or penalty if not honored. Damage Inc. is solely owned by me, and we have an uncanny ability to mobilize fast, large, and cost effectively. I utilize a network of sub-contractors out of major city centers, minimizing travel related costs. We have files open all over western Canada and will be pushing east soon in our pursuit for national status.

### **Have you done any work for the government?**

Yes, we have done several government jobs. One recent project was for a municipal government, which involved a transit facility that suffered fire damage. We responded promptly and restored it while they remained under operation as a source of public transportation. It was an intense project that kept hundreds of our technicians working 24/7. I received a letter of recommendation from the manager in this case, and this is a prime example of the robust type of work our company handles.

### **What are some of your other areas of specialty?**

We do a lot of work with multifamily clients in both apartments and condominiums. When a property loss occurs in a multifamily unit, the expertise level required is higher than a typical residential claim, in that additional safety codes must be met. These complexities are our specialty.



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# Kenneth Bond

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## ABOUT

As CEO of ROOK Connect, Kenneth Bond is one of the few enterprise software solution architects and the founder of an innovative, operationally driven technology company based in Alberta, Canada. As a serial entrepreneur with a passion for technology, he leads an extremely diverse team on a mission to reshape and re-engineer the way businesses utilize digital strategies to drive efficiencies, streamline business practices, increase reporting and deliver results to customer's bottom lines. Kenneth credits his successes to the amazing customer relationships he has built with his global customers, and the result-driven success ROOK Connect guarantees.

## Q & A

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### What drives you?

"I want to make a difference. I became an entrepreneur with the intention of doing great things. I continue as an entrepreneur so I can create a positive impact." With a sharp eye for detail, it's obvious that anyone who discusses business with Kenneth understands his passion and drive to push his company forward. It's important to him that his team be credited for the work that they do. Kenneth believes that a company is only as strong as the team that drives it.

### Why the name ROOK Connect?

The game of chess has always been significant and symbolic to Kenneth. He believes that strategy and planning ahead are essential elements to any business. Ensuring that all working components of a business are properly connected is Kenneth's expertise, which is how ROOK Connect software was developed. Keeping with that theme, rooks are chess pieces - the king's castles. The rook also participates with the king, in a special move called castling. They build the foundation of the company; at ROOK Connect those are our engineers and developers. Knights - also chess pieces - are the individual team members that work directly with

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“ Our implementation and configuration options instantly provide businesses with the tools they need to be successful. We remove all guesswork, and literally help businesses get exactly what they're after from working with software. It's rewarding for everyone. ”

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customers, business analysts, etc. They stand on guard for the company, help us improve the product and work with customers to help them get the most out of utilizing ROOK Connect for their business.

### How did ROOK Connect come to be?

ROOK Connect was founded as a custom software solution. Working with businesses of all sizes that were operating from excel spreadsheets and paper, wasting valuable time, efforts and resources. Looking into and working with a variety of digital solutions, ROOK Connect began developing processes that would automate business workflows and streamline business practices. With detailed administrative and procedural processes, redundancy is reduced, accuracy is improved, and efficiency and organizational objectives can be achieved. Through customer referrals and consistently evolving the capabilities of our software, ROOK Connect grew to become a configuration-based platform that empowers businesses to utilize business practices that work and configure them to match their exact needs.

With one of the largest product offerings on the market today, ROOK Connect revenues and customer success stories are nothing short of amazing.

### What does ROOK Connect do?

*“Business Process & Workflow Automation Software, CRM, ERP & BI, Designed To Maximize Efficiency.”*

The story of ROOK Connect is one of continual growth and constant evolution. With a wide range of business tools (far too many to mention) and an extensive user base, ROOK Connect focuses on quality programming and simple, easy to use interfaces. Working in and with a wide variety of industries and markets, ROOK Connect founder, Kenneth Bond, credits the success of the company to the solid base of customers the software has. “Our customers wouldn’t settle for a product that couldn’t outperform current products that solve individual business problems. They demanded increases in performance, productivity and

reporting, on one platform that could give them all the tools they need to increase efficiency. That’s what ROOK Connect does for our customers and your entire business and customer process, from start to finish, on one platform.” With one of the largest product offerings on the market today, ROOK Connect revenues and customer success stories are nothing short of amazing.

### What separates your company from others in your field?

Along with having an amazing product and one of the best teams to support businesses in their digital growth, Kenneth believes that ROOK Connect’s hands-on approach focuses companies on developing the most optimal digital processes for their organization. “Our implementation and configuration options instantly provide businesses with the tools they need to be successful. We remove all guesswork, and literally help businesses get exactly what they’re after from working with software. It’s rewarding for everyone.”

### ROOK Connect has experienced astounding success, what future plans can you share with us?

With customers currently throughout Canada and the United States, 2020 marks ROOK Connect’s global mobilization. Kenneth has taken ROOK Connect national with little to no marketing and credits its growth to the amazing customers who refer the product time and time again.

### Tell us about Fresh Focus Media.

Fresh Focus Media is a digital marketing agency that not only helps businesses tell their story; but also supports businesses to engage, convert, and maintain customer relationships. With a dedicated team of creative thinkers, Fresh Focus Media provides businesses with the competitive edge needed to negotiate both inbound and outbound marketing strategies.

### What’s your favorite quote and why?

“If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail.” - Benjamin Franklin

My entrepreneurial knowledge comes from purposeful acts. Taking the guesswork out of business practices has reinforced the importance of having planned strategies in business and in everyday life.

### We’ll end with a personal question. What is your superpower?

“My wife. She supports everything that I do. She keeps me grounded and ensures that I enjoy life and don’t just work. Without her, I wouldn’t have any sense of work/life balance. She’s my partner in life and in business, and the entire company’s success is because she plays such a big role in everything that I do.”



## CONTACT

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# Dirk Maritz, CEO & President



I spent a lot of time in my early career on turnarounds and distressed situations and what I learned is that it's people who are the key success drivers in any genuinely special company, not assets or fancy financial structures. I build exceptionally strong and collaborative teams and it has resulted in spectacular results.

Dirk Maritz is CEO and president of Atlas Engineered Products, a leading supplier of trusses, engineered wood products, and pre-manufactured wall panels for residential and commercial builders and construction companies. He is a visionary leader, determined to challenge the status quo, and he's on a mission to grow AEP into a world-class engineered product and building component solutions provider. An energetic change agent with a reputation for developing inventive business and operational strategies that grow profitability, he has delivered a 354% revenue increase in his first year at the helm and turned a tiny startup into a profitable and dominant enterprise. "I spent a lot of time in my early career on turnarounds and distressed situations and what I learned is that it's people who are the key success drivers in any genuinely special company, not assets or fancy financial structures. I build exceptionally strong and collaborative teams and it has resulted in spectacular results," he shares.

Dirk joined the newly listed Atlas Engineered Products in 2017, leaving a successful 24-year career of leading companies internationally. South Africa and Canada in particular, led this budding little business that had just entered a fiercely competitive industry. Dirk brought with him exactly what the company needed to soar; excellent analytical abilities, superior customer and supplier relationships, sound business instinct, and the ability to inspire excellence.

From South Africa originally, Dirk began his career with an accounting internship for a Big Six firm before entering the realm where he found his passion as an effective change agent and turnaround expert. "I hated every single second of that internship. The moment that I could get out, I did," he shares. "One of my clients offered me a position with them, initially in the finance department, and very quickly I got involved in distressed companies that had to be turned around, sold, or whatever the situation required.



It was a large international conglomerate with scores of companies in the group scattered across the globe.”

Dirk eventually resigned from that company to take up an equity stake in a business and grew it from a tiny South African regional operator to a national business that did some international projects. He moved to Canada in 2012 to assume the role of vice president with a large equipment dealer, which had over 40 branches and more than 2,000 people. In his 7 year tenure, they grew revenues and market shares exponentially and profits soared before Dirk left to join Atlas Engineered Products. “We did a few spectacular things in that company, especially on the technology side,” he shares.

We sat down with Dirk to learn more about Atlas Engineered Products, its people, its culture, and the ways in which this new upstart is changing a \$2 billion industry.

### **Tell us about Atlas Engineered Products.**

We are a multifaceted, engineered products manufacturer with six manufacturing facilities across Canada, serving the residential, commercial, and industrial building and construction industry. We are also acquiring and operating profitable, well-established companies in Canada’s truss and engineered wood products industry.

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He is a visionary leader, determined to challenge the status quo, and he’s on a mission to grow AEP into a world-class engineered product and building component solutions provider.

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### **You’re the new player in a highly competitive field with hundreds companies, yet you’re changing the industry. What are you doing that is different from the status quo?**

This is a massive industry. In Canada alone, it’s a \$2 billion industry with over 300 companies competing. But there is significant fragmentation, not only divided by ownership, but also by product. Some guys are manufacturing roof trusses, others do windows and doors, others engineer wood. Nobody is consolidating this industry, neither by ownership nor by product offering, so we’re stepping in to do that. We are on a mission to consolidate this market and to offer our clients the benefits of this consolidation. As the first group to do this, we have a first-mover advantage. We’re building a national brand in this industry. We offer everything required to frame up a complete house or commercial space, etc. So, when talking about advantage, we have that in terms of both ownership and product consolidation.

### **AEP is unique in that it provides solutions well beyond just manufacturing. Can you tell us about this?**

People look at our business and think we’re manufacturers, but, no, we’re not. We’re excellent engineers and designers. We design solutions for our customers in the building industry. To build your dream home, you go to an architect; he gives you a vision and an outline of what it will look like but then will sit down and think about what it needs to bring that vision to life. We fall into that gap; designing and engineering the structural components to bring that vision to life. Then we bring that to the manufacturing floor, and precision manufacture these components. Whether it is roof trusses, engineered floors, or pre-manufactured wall panels or systems.

### **Describe the company’s culture.**

What makes this company unique is that caring for our people and excellent leadership at AEP is not just something we tell investors; we practice it every day. We were working as an essential service during the pandemic. My leadership team has stepped up to the table, working 20-hour days to first keep our people safe, but also to make sure the company gets through this journey relatively unscathed. Everyone is making sacrifices for the communities they live in and places they work in. We’re a family company and run our business as an extended family; if one hurts, we all hurt, if one does well, we all do well. This has become abundantly clear, especially in the COVID-19 scenario. This is a very important aspect of the philosophy by which we run our business.

### **Tell us about some of the charitable and community organizations you and the company are involved with.**

The family and I, as well as the company, are heavily involved in our communities and various charities, from child healthcare to the United Way, and various church and athletic organizations. We are seeing amazing results from our support of youth sporting clubs, such as a football club in Nanaimo, where we work with youngsters that maybe wouldn’t have had the opportunities to do so. Some are now playing at the highest national level. One was even named *Canadian Player of the Year* and is going to work with us during his off-season and possibly when he retires from football. The company’s founder was one of the bearers of the Olympic torch in 2012. It is things like that, that are very inspiring to be a part of.



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# Q & A

## Michael Leopold

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Convertus Group aims to be the most advanced organic waste operator in North America. We want to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, protect our environment, and focus on partnerships that support local communities and green initiatives.

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**Q: Tells us a little bit about your background with Convertus Group.**

A: I first joined the organization as the Canadian general manager in June of 2017, when we were still known as Renewi Canada. In 2019, we were acquired by Convent Capital, a long-term Dutch investor whose investment strategy focuses on organizations with a sustainable business model. Following the sale, we merged with two other businesses; Circular Waste British Columbia and Waste Treatment Technologies to become Convertus Group. Today, I am the proud CEO of the business and it has been quite an adventure to grow with the company!

**Q: Tell us about Convertus Group.**

A: Our tagline is “Closing the loop for a better future” and that is what all of our efforts aim to do. We empower communities to give resources new life, by turning them into reusable products such as biomethane gas or compost. Convertus Group’s focus is on long-term end-to-end organic waste solutions; we have contracts with some of North America’s largest municipalities and commercial businesses that have green bin programs. The organic food waste that is collected is sent to our treatment facilities, where we convert the waste into RNG, compost or fertilizer.

Convertus is a full-service provider for the treatment and recycling of organic waste. We boast modern operating facilities, dedicated professionals, and technological expertise to craft tailor-made plans. In fact, we are one of North America’s only companies able to design, build, operate and service organic

waste processing facilities. Unlike our competitors, Convertus Group is a one-stop solution for the organic waste management process from beginning to end!

As a group, we process approximately 300,000 tons of organic waste and have built over 110 waste treatment facilities worldwide. We produce approximately 85,000 tons of compost and yield a 40,000 ton reduction of CO2 emissions per year! This is equivalent of taking 8,600 cars off the road or avoiding 4.5 million gallons of gasoline being consumed! We recycle and recover approximately 90% of the waste we receive, which translates to a significant positive impact on our environment!

**Q: What makes you unique in this industry?**

A: Convertus Group is unique in the biotech industry, largely because we utilize multiple technologies when treating organic waste. There are three technologies that can be used to process organic waste. While many of our competitors utilize only one technology, we know how to build and operate plants that utilize all three, so that we can provide robust solutions to our clients. Secondly, we are the only company in North America that has the ability to handle every aspect of organic waste management from the design and build to operation and servicing! Third, we are unique in our breadth of experience operating four facilities in Canada, two in Ontario, and two in British Columbia. Between these four facilities, we process 300,000 tons of organic waste a year. This

## Our tagline is “Closing the loop for a better future” and that is what all of our efforts aim to do.

year, we anticipate having our best year yet, by processing around 325,000-350,000 tons of organic waste!

Another differentiating feature of Convertus Group is our state-of-the-art odor abatement system. It starts with a powerful ventilation system that draws in air ensuring our facilities are fully enclosed under negative air pressure. All air is passed through an odor abatement system including an ammonia scrubber, biofilter and bio-scrubber, after which the clean air and water vapor are evaporated from the stack. Because of how we treat odor, our facilities can be built anywhere! Most companies have to truck their waste to far away facilities, which is counterproductive to environmental efforts around reducing carbon emissions. Our technology is advanced, so we can build facilities in the same municipalities creating the organic waste. We provide our clients a local solution, with the smallest carbon impact!

### **Q: What is Convertus Group’s vision?**

A: Convertus Group aims to be the most advanced organic waste operator in North America. We want to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, protect our environment, and focus on partnerships that support local communities and green initiatives. Our goal is to hit a million tons of organics processing in North America per year, and we want to triple the size of our business in the next five years!

### **Q: Tell us about your work with universities and colleges.**

A: Partnerships with universities and colleges that promote the environment are essential for the future. With talent shortages around the world, Convertus has taken the initiative to collaborate with local schools including University of British Columbia (“UBC”), Western University, Fanshawe College and Kwatlen Polytechnic to hire and train new graduates in their field of study (especially around green energy). I’m proud to say we’ve hired many of the students we’ve employed through co-op programs - six so far!

We’ve also partnered with UBC and Western University for research projects that focus on sustainability initiatives on topics such as biogas production and odor characterization.

### **Q: You’ve won a number of awards for your work. Can you share some of them with us?**

A: Thank you, we are very proud of the recognition we’ve received! Our Surrey facility received *Gold Certification* under *Canada’s Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)* rating system. Surrey was also the first waste sector infrastructure project in North America and third Canadian project to be awarded the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure’s *Envision Platinum Award for Sustainability*. We’ve won the *Willis Award for Innovation*, the *Canadian Biogas Industry Award for Project of the Year* for the Surrey Biofuel Facility, and the *2019 Circular Economy Award* from the Surrey Board of Trade.

### **Q: How does your business give back to the community?**

A: We have been delighted to work with a growing number of community groups and municipalities who share our commitment to creating a sustainable future. Since opening we’ve had the opportunity



While many of our competitors utilize only one technology, we know how to build and operate plants that utilize all three, so that we can provide robust solutions to our clients.

to participate in Doors Open in Surrey, an event where community members visit our facility to learn about the loop, participate in plant tours and play games. For International Compost Awareness Week, we sold compost for charity to support the under-13 soccer teams, and we’ve hosted seed-planting booths for municipalities and events. Each year, we participate in events for Earth Day and Waste Reduction Week, and we’ve held Neighborhood Tree Depots each year, where we’ve donated trees to encourage community members to improve sustainability by planting more trees in their garden! Most recently, we supported a First Nation’s community composting project, which will prevent 9 tons of organic waste from entering the landfill. If we can promote environmental consciousness in our communities, we’re in! We also support local community initiatives that focus on region specific initiatives that are important, such as donating to local food bank drives, Toys for Tots, Safety Weeks, etc.

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# Diane Ulman & Brandon P. Lee

## Founders and Managing Partners

Recently, *The Top 100 Magazine* had the honor of meeting with Diane Ulman and Brandon P. Lee, two high school friends who became business partners after reconnecting. Together, they founded Integris Law, headquartered in Oakville, Ontario, with locations in Mississauga, Burlington, and Waterloo. The duo talked with us about starting their own firm, their journey building it from the ground up, and their plans for the future.



### When the two of you reconnected, what inspired you to establish your own law firm?

**Diane:** After many years of not seeing each other, we reunited and discovered that we were both in real estate law and that we were both at a stage in our careers where it made sense to go out on our own. We had the same views on the profession and also how to modernize aspects of running a law practice to better serve the community. As a result, it felt natural to join forces. We became partners and started Integris Law in 2019.

### How long had you both been practicing law prior to opening Integris?

**Diane:** I have been practicing law since 2011 and have been involved in real estate for about 15 years. I first worked at a property management company as a student before becoming a lawyer. Then, once I passed the *Bar Exam* and litigated in Toronto for a few years, I was given an opportunity to move to San Francisco to work in the telecom industry. While there, I primarily negotiated land leases for cell phone companies. Today, I specialize in real estate law with a secondary focus on wills and powers of attorney.

**Brandon:** Law is my 3rd-4th career. I worked in commercial sales for several years, real estate investment, and politics before I decided to

enroll in law school. My first real estate job was during my first university degree, where I managed a rental property close to the campus. I started practicing in 2018, specializing in residential real estate law with a secondary focus on corporate law.

### What inspired you to name your firm Integris?

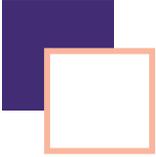
**Diane:** The name of our firm is about integrity. There are always a lot of jokes made about lawyers and their unethical nature, so Brandon and I wanted to put it at the forefront that we are trustworthy and hold ourselves to a higher standard. Our clients can talk to us and rely on us to get the job done.

We are incredibly approachable and down to earth when it comes to client relationships as well as our relationships with brokers, mortgage brokers, and agents.

### Tell us a bit about Integris Law.

**Diane:** We started our practice with a commitment to be different from other firms. For example, we have a digital foundation and can complete 99% of our work from home or on the road. This allows us to be very nimble and mobile, and our time savings is passed on to our clients. Also, when the COVID-19 pandemic started, we were well-situated to work digitally, and our productivity actually increased as most clients preferred closing deals from their homes. However, we still meet with clients face-to-face when necessary such as when we draw up wills or contracts.

**Brandon:** We also have four locations now in Oakville, Mississauga, Burlington, and Waterloo. Three are inside brokerages, which we treat like essential parties. We view them as hand in hand, and we make sure our clients are happy with their overall experience, from finding a house all the way to closing.



We view Integris as more of a business than a law firm because a business wins or dies based upon key partnerships and customer service. Our firm is service-oriented as opposed to being academic or theoretical.

**What is the edge that makes the two of you stand out from other real estate attorneys?**

**Diane:** One of my strengths is my ability to make even the newest of clients, our first-time homeowners, feel super comfortable. I am also able to break things down easily and comprehensively for people.

**Brandon:** I try to come up with practical solutions to ensure a smooth closing and also make sure to jump on problems when they arise.

**How is Integris Law unique compared to other firms?**

**Diane:** We are incredibly approachable and down to earth when it comes to client relationships as well as our relationships with brokers, mortgage brokers, and agents. Brandon and I give out our cellphone numbers, so we are always accessible, and we frequently work evenings and weekends. Agents can call us at any time because they recognize we are part of a system that only works if everyone works together harmoniously. No one at Integris has ever held a top down, ivory tower mentality, and we always take a practical, hands-on, team approach.

**Brandon:** We view Integris as more of a business than a law firm because a business wins or dies based upon key partnerships and customer service. Our firm is service-oriented as opposed to being academic or theoretical. Although all the law firms near us are great at what they do, many are lacking in the customer service department because they fail to relate to clients' personal problems. However, this is where Diane and I excel; we make sure to dive deep in order to give our clients what they need.

**What are your plans for the future?**

**Diane:** We plan on continuing to expand. If the COVID-19 pandemic had not happened, we would have already opened a fifth location. Brandon and I want to have more locations and more key partnerships with brokerages.

**Brandon:** We are planning to go into a second stage that will involve real estate investment and development since my background is in those areas. We also want to further improve the business and have a more diverse revenue stream to better serve our clients. Essentially, our goal is to evolve into a much broader practice.



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## Amy J. Satov

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Amy J. Satov serves as senior legal counsel for Nuvei Corporation, Canada's largest non-bank electric payment processor. Upon its public debut in September 2020, the Montreal-based company made history as the largest technology initial public offering ever on the Toronto Stock Exchange. Known as "a global payment technology partner of thriving brands," Nuvei works to deliver unified commerce solutions and expertise with the goal of ultimately making the world into a local marketplace.

As an entrepreneurial and driven securities lawyer, Amy brings extensive and diverse experience to Nuvei Corporation. She is skilled in negotiation, risk management, and strategic planning and has been in law since being called to the bar by the Ontario Bar Association in 1996. Amy also shows a demonstrated history of success in business development, mergers and acquisitions by utilizing a holistic approach.

Amy is also a seasoned public company independent board member — serving on a number of public boards. She serves as a board member and chair of the corporate governance committee of Osisko Mining Ltd. (OSK.TO); a board member and chair of the compensation committee of O3 Mining Inc. (OIII.V); a board member and chair of the compensation committee of Osisko Metals Inc. (OM.V); and a board member and chair of the corporate governance and compensation committee of Brunswick Exploration Inc. (BRW.V). While holding other roles on public and private boards, including the McGill Chancellor's Advisory Board, Amy has worked with various organizations to develop strategies, drive growth, and execute transformative change.

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Prior to joining Nuvei Corporation, Amy worked as executive vice president, distribution, legal and compliance and corporate secretary at DundeeWealth Inc., a Canadian wealth management company that had \$80 billion dollars of assets under management before it was acquired by the Bank of Nova Scotia in 2011. Within her role as EVP, she was in charge of all legal and compliance matters, was actively involved in DundeeWealth's expansion into Europe and the U.S. and sat on various subsidiary boards. She also advised on all M&A activities as well as securities, regulatory, and all other corporate commercial matters. Due to her exemplary work ethic and leadership skills, Amy was recognized by Strathmore's "Who's Who" for excellence and achievement in her profession.

In addition to speaking four languages (English, French, Hebrew, and Spanish), Amy earned both a Bachelor of Laws degree and a Master of Business Administration degree from Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia — Atlantic Canada's leading research-intensive university. She also received a Bachelor of Arts degree from McGill University in Montreal, Quebec — one of Canada's best-known institutions of higher learning and one of the leading universities in the world. Amy currently resides in Montreal with her two children.



# Prakhar Aditya “Adi” Dwivedi

Founder and CEO

Prakhar Aditya “Adi” Dwivedi is an entrepreneur by both profession and passion. His innovative approach, complemented by his gift for problem-solving, has driven his success for over a decade. Today, Adi is the founder and CEO of the Ontario-based firm, Prepbox, a front runner in the e-commerce fulfillment industry.

Prepbox is helping customers in Canada and in the US to scale-up their operations by acting as a custodian of their products, providing storage and warehousing, and offering cost-effective shipping with effective returns management to end-consumers around the world.

Prepbox has a fulfillment warehouse, brimming with inventory that includes packages for Amazon, Shopify, Etsy, Wayfair, and a host of other well-known marketplaces. It is essentially a paradise for e-commerce sellers with a wide array of product categories that run the gamut from electronics to apparel, arts and crafts supplies, health products, toys and games, and many other product categories. As part of a unified fulfillment network, which enables global access through strong connections across four continents and ten different fulfillment locations, Prepbox broadens their customer’s reach and exposure and facilitates access to all markets.

Adi firmly believes that the world has reached a stage where companies are no longer competing with each other. “It’s the supply chain strength of a company that differentiates it. Every business, process, transaction, or communication has only one common thread; relationships. I have developed integral relationships and nurtured them, gaining valuable experience while attaining the self-confidence necessary to move forward and create my own company,” Adi explains.

Adi is a unique leader with an approach that is focused on, and built upon, learning. He prefers logic and reasoning to a philosophy founded by inconsistent competition or comparisons.

Adi considers Prepbox a ‘growth partner’ to its clients, rather than a ‘service partner’ and strives to create success stories that give meaning to the larger goal. He is constantly motivated to achieve greatness, which is apparent in his accomplishments and reputation. Prior to starting Prepbox, Adi served in key roles for a variety of multinational companies, including IT giants like Oracle.

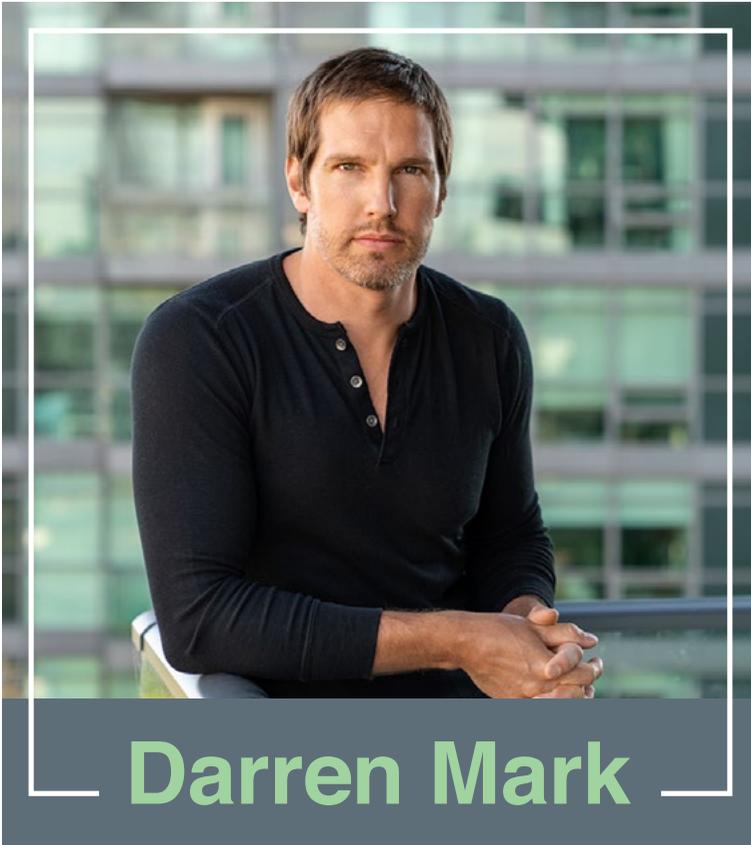


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**Darren Mark**

Darren Mark is one of the founders and executive directors of Rhyno Equity Group, an investment group that acquires manufacturing companies from retiring owners and strives to ensure the ongoing health of the organizations. He also holds additional roles within Rhyno's portfolio of companies including, chief executive officer of EuroLine Windows, and chief operating officer of Irpinia Kitchens. From product development and plant layouts, to bank relationships and new acquisitions, Darren has a broad range of ongoing responsibilities. Transitioning through different levels of organizations and working with many different groups in their 300-employee portfolio, Darren takes every opportunity to lead with integrity and have a positive impact on those organizations. He is known for his ability to connect with others and is a proponent of hard work, alignment, empathy, and fun, as the cornerstones of organizational culture.

**“ We are bringing Passive House technology to Ontario this year and are hopeful that Toronto is ready to get serious about going green.**

Darren's journey to owning a successful private equity firm was not a straight line. After completing a degree in physics and applied mathematics at The University of Western Ontario, he decided to pursue a master's degree in manufacturing engineering from the University of New South Wales in Australia. After graduation, Darren moved into a plant-turnaround role for a Canadian window and door manufacturing group. His methods proved to increase both efficiency and profitability for the organization and his

responsibilities expanded from operations to include sales and marketing. As he gathered experience across the manufacturing sector, Darren noticed systemic cultural and environmental issues that inspired him to take action. Determined to shake up the industry and prioritize building work environments that are both profitable and positively impact the environment and community, Darren and his partners founded Rhyno Equity Group in 2012.



Rhyno Equity Group is made up of an experienced and energetic four-person executive team: Darren Mark, Anu Agarwal, Andrew Mark, and Todd Burdon. With the goal of preserving the legacy of healthy companies, Rhyno Equity's unique approach is to acquire new companies and actively manage them to ensure their continued success. According to Darren, "We are not only helping to keep North American businesses in North America, but we're also getting substantial returns for investors with minimized risk."

Marbel Industries, Rhyno Equity's first acquisition, served as their pilot when the team first decided to start buying companies. The partners started out small, purchasing the woodworking business, which employed only 20 people. Today, Marbel Industries supplies high quality wood products to the surrounding communities as well as to Irpinia Kitchens. Under the leadership of Anu Agarwal, a Rhyno Equity Group partner and Irpinia's chief executive officer, Irpinia Kitchens, has become one of the largest, high-end kitchen manufacturers in Canada. Rhyno's third acquisition, EuroLine Windows, introduced European-style tilt and turn windows to North America and is still one of the largest manufacturers of its kind in North America today. "We are putting every effort into remaining at the tip of the spear for product development," says Darren. "We are bringing Passive House technology to Ontario this year and are hopeful that Toronto is ready to get serious about going green."

While Darren and his partners work diligently to ensure the financial success for their companies and investors, they are also looking to make a positive impact on the industry. Inspired by his many travels, Darren understands the benefits that bringing together people of different backgrounds and experiences can have on operations, innovation, and culture. He is a huge proponent of diversity in the workplace and strives to maintain a strong team atmosphere across all his portfolio companies. He is also passionate about sustainability and, as a fellow of Leadership for Environment and Development (LEAD) and the vice president of the LEAD Canada chapter, is continuously looking for ways to improve operations from a sustainability perspective.

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# Banain Cote

## President & CEO

Banain Cote is president and CEO of Innovative Piling Solutions, the leader in the deep foundations industry. With 18 years of experience in the industry and a diploma in civil engineering, he and his team of technical experts are spearheading the geotechnical engineering industry in Northern Canada, as the only company to bridge the gap between structural and geotechnical engineers, offering driven, drilled, helical piles, all aspects of deep foundation, from earth retention to water management. Banain is a hands-on leader with a combination of skills rarely found in the deep foundations industry—both practical and technical expertise in engineering, from both an implementation and design standpoint. Not only can he design the products going into the ground, but he can also operate the equipment required to put that into the ground. While most companies have an engineer design it and an operator install it, Banain can do both and has built his business ethos around that.

“In the construction community, there is a distinct gap between geotechnical engineering and structural engineering, where a structural engineer won’t deal with anything in the ground and the geotechnical engineer won’t deal with anything involving the structures. We deal with both of those because our product *is* that gap. We design and implement deep foundation systems that are a mix of geotechnical and structural engineering,” Banain explains. “We put our heads together and believe there is a way to do everything, you just have to figure it out. We always say nobody is as smart as all of us together.” As Banain focuses on business development and management, he leverages his technical knowledge to assist in project completion, project management, engineering design, and consultation.

Banain’s love of engineering began when he was just 12 years old, working for his father, who had a similar business. He originally pursued a biochemistry degree, but while working in the engineering area of oil fields during a break from college, his interest was reignited. He moved back home to Saskatchewan in 2012 and co-founded Innovative Piling Solutions with just three employees. For two years, he ran the business while attending classes full time at SIAST to complete his civil engineering diploma. In 2014, he took the company’s helm full time, and along with his two partners, has grown the company into a team of 35 with over 40 pieces of equipment, including an



**Banain is a hands-on leader with a combination of skills rarely found in the deep foundations industry—both practical and technical expertise in engineering, from both an implementation and design standpoint.**

estimating and project management department, mechanics, welders, a staff of accountants, HR personnel, safety, support, and field specialists.

Working together to bridge the engineering gap, Banain and his team approach every situation with what they call a “blank design” and look at every deep foundation type from a unique perspective, unbiased from product type. While there are many contractors who do just continuous flight auger or do just driven piles, and other contractors who do just helical piles, Innovative Piling Solutions does *all* pile types, from one pile for the deck all the way to thousands of piles for commercial or industrial oil and gas, or large industrial expansions. “This is really something that sets us apart, we look at things from an unbiased perspective. If you get different perspectives, people will have different opinions, so you always must be open-minded,” he shares.

Since its inception, the company has been published in several international magazines, and in 2017, it was nominated for *Project of the Year* by Pile Driving Contractors Association’s (PDCA) *PileDriver Magazine*. Based in a small town, the company has some deep connections with the high schools, hockey facilities, ball diamonds, and provides their services for free by way of donation to assist with installing upgrades or building football fields.

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# Jared Penner

Co-Founder/CEO

Under his direction, ISM Sales Group provides a complete package of solutions, from sales and marketing strategies to deal execution to branding and coaching, all designed to help businesses succeed.

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YouTube: ISM Sales Group

Jared Penner is co-founder and CEO of ISM Sales Group, a unique full-service sales and marketing firm based in British Columbia, Canada. An innovative entrepreneur with a passion for helping people, Jared leads only one of three companies in the world in this space—and the only one of its kind in Canada. Under his direction, ISM Sales Group provides a complete package of solutions, from sales and marketing strategies to deal execution to branding and coaching, all designed to help businesses succeed.

Jared launched ISM Sales Group in 2015 as the brainchild born from the culmination of nearly a decade of experience in business, B2B sales, marketing, and project management. He and his team of experts specialize in the entire suite of end-to-end services. In addition to designing sales strategies and identifying target markets, the ISM sales team approaches the clients' customers on their behalf and closes deals. They also offer a full marketing and branding package. ISM Sales Group works primarily with manufacturers, food processors, and service companies ranging from \$2 million to \$50 million in annual revenue, most often family-owned businesses, long-standing firms whose sales have plateaued, or companies that are successful in spite of themselves, having relied on customers approaching them. "The idea was to have a combined sales and marketing company to serve a variety of clients and industries, but we wanted to be the whole package," Jared says.



The idea for ISM Sales Group came as an outcropping of a benevolent endeavor. After a successful career that included roles as editorial coordinator for Disney Interactive Studios, product advisor for Toyota, and business development manager at a health and safety not-for-profit, Jared and his co-founder, Chris, launched a not-for-profit

organization of their own. After leading it to great heights, companies began to approach them asking if they could do the same for them. "We're strong Christian believers and believed God was calling us to start our own company to give back," Jared says.

ISM Sales Group has experienced tremendous growth since its inception just five years ago. In the first six months, the staff swelled to 25 employees across three offices, which Jared attributes to "a lot of hard work and hustle" and the value he places on relationships. "I used to call myself the chairman because I would go in at 4 a.m. and literally assemble chairs for new staff coming in," he says. "What I have done with the company has all been accomplished through relationships, and I surround myself with people who are smarter than I am." After four years of rapid growth, Jared scaled back the company to a 10-person team.

Though ISM Group is a for-profit business, Jared leads the company guided by his Christian values, giving employees one day a month off to participate in charities of their choice, offering support through life events, and celebrating birthdays. They welcome all faiths, have a company chaplain, and are open to prayer as part of the workday.



## Mark Groper and Dr. Ian McGowan



Orion's scientific approach is unique in the industry and it is the company's goal to deliver the next generation of GPCR targeted therapeutics for the treatment of cancer and other serious disease.



Orion Biotechnology is a clinical-stage pharma start-up founded in 2018 to focus on discovering and developing novel drugs for a large range of G Protein-Coupled Receptors (GPCRs) - promising targets for next generation therapies. Based in Ottawa, Ontario, the company has pioneered a new approach to precision engineering analogs of natural ligands in order to effectively target often 'difficult to drug' GPCRs. In the process, Orion created a proprietary drug discovery platform that dramatically reduces the cost and time required to generate new compounds for unmet medical needs in multiple disease categories. The company's lead candidate, OB-002, is a first-in-class chemokine analog, developed using the Orion discovery platform, which has shown best-in-class potency as a chemokine-chemokine receptor 5 (CCR5) antagonist. It is a promising immunotherapeutic candidate specifically designed to overcome the limitations of current treatment modalities, with the potential to provide superior potency and safety as well as a more effective treatment for patients who have exhausted currently available therapeutic options. Orion's scientific approach is unique in the industry, and it is the company's goal to deliver the next generation of GPCR targeted therapeutics for the treatment of cancer and other serious diseases.

As the president and chief executive officer of Orion Biotechnology, Mark Groper leads a team with a unique combination of skills and strengths. With over three decades in the health care and pharmaceutical industries in both the private and public sectors and a record of building successful fast-growth technology companies, Mark is the innovative leader of a biotech company driven by science. As CEO, his primary responsibility is to create, communicate, and oversee the successful implementation of the organization's vision, mission, and overall direction.

He focuses on both Orion's success as a business and the company's science that has the potential to change lives. "My hope is that in the future, 'cancer' will not be a word people are afraid of. Orion's proprietary discovery platform has enabled a new approach to drug discovery and development, involving precision engineered ligand analogs that target GPCRs and that have the potential to deliver the next generation of safe and effective therapeutics," Mark says.

As Orion Biotechnology's chief medical officer, Dr. Ian McGowan is excited about the company's lead candidate, OB-002, which promises improved results for multiple illnesses, including cancer, and its current project, supported by the Canadian National Research Council, into the potential effectiveness of OB-002 in treating COVID-19-associated ARDS, a life-threatening complication of SARS-CoV-2 infection. "Immunotherapeutic drugs have the potential to transform the treatment landscape for multiple serious conditions, including advanced cancer. It's a very exciting time to be working in this area," Ian says.

Ian is a former professor of medicine at the University of Pittsburgh and UCLA who left a long-standing career in academia to join Orion Biotechnology. A physician by training, most of his clinical work has been in infectious diseases and gastroenterology. As Orion's CMO, he provides oversight for its clinical programs and support for all other aspects of the company. He previously worked with GlaxoSmithKline in the U.K., Gilead Sciences in California, and biotech companies in the U.S. and Europe. Ian holds a medical degree from the University of Liverpool in the U.K. and a Ph.D. from the University of Oxford. He received his post-doctoral training at UCLA in Los Angeles and a second doctoral degree in drug development from the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine.

# Dr. Myint Win Bo

## President and CEO



As the firm's leader, he is responsible for managing corporate activities, including strategic planning, business development, marketing, and resource and business growth, as well as advancement in technology.

Dr. Myint Win Bo is president and CEO of Bo & Associates, Inc., a Canadian-owned engineering service provider specializing in geotechnical, environmental, and geological engineering, hydrogeology and material testing. With 40 years of experience in the engineering, geology, science, and environmental fields across four continents, more than 15 years in senior management positions, and 10 years as an adjunct professor, he is anything but the typical engineer. He is at once an academic and a researcher, an entrepreneur and engineer, a geologist and an environmentalist, a scientist and a management specialist—and a geotechnical designer for many award-winning projects around the world.

Myint Win launched Bo & Associates in 2017 in Ontario, after retiring from a medium sized engineering company he partially owned together with other five partners, to focus solely on this enterprise. The company specializes in ground

improvement, ground engineering, geo-environmental issues and expert witnessing. As the firm's leader, he is responsible for managing corporate activities, including strategic planning, business development, marketing, and resource and business growth, as well as advancement in technology. He handles the company's project and financial management, and, as a natural educator, he trains and mentors staff, and conducts technical and peer reviews of technical reports.

Originally a geologist, Myint Win chose to practice in engineering as an engineering geologist before deciding to transform himself into a civil engineer focusing on geotechnical, geo-environmental, and water resources. With multiple degrees in both geology and engineering—and a lifetime of experience in both fields—Myint Win brings a unique combination of skills and knowledge to provide advanced-level engineering services that others in the industry cannot provide.

Myint Win's contributions to the fields of science and engineering have been recognized across the industry. He has published four textbooks, five book chapters, and more than 200 international technical papers in peer-review journals and international proceedings, and his works have been cited more than 3,700 times. He has also shared his knowledge via 40 special and keynote lectures around the world. For his success, he gives much of the credit to mentors and family. "Every successful person has very good role models, and very good mentors and supporting family. I was fortunate to have respectable mentors both in academic and industry as well as supporting family members. My parents and my wife, Win, have been continuously supporting me both in my studies and career. Without their mentorships and supports, I will not be who am I today," he shares.

As an engineering expert, the leader of a successful business, and a learned academic, Myint Win dedicates his days to running Bo & Associates and serving its clients and his evenings to teaching and supervising research students as an adjunct professor for many universities, including York University in Canada and Swinburne University of Technology in Australia. "People ask how I did so many jobs, publications, serving many national and international professional organizations and many editorial boards of peer review journals. Where did you get time? My answer is everybody has the same 24 hours a day. How much work you can do is not dependent upon how much time you have; it is dependent upon how much capacity you have and how well you can manage your time."

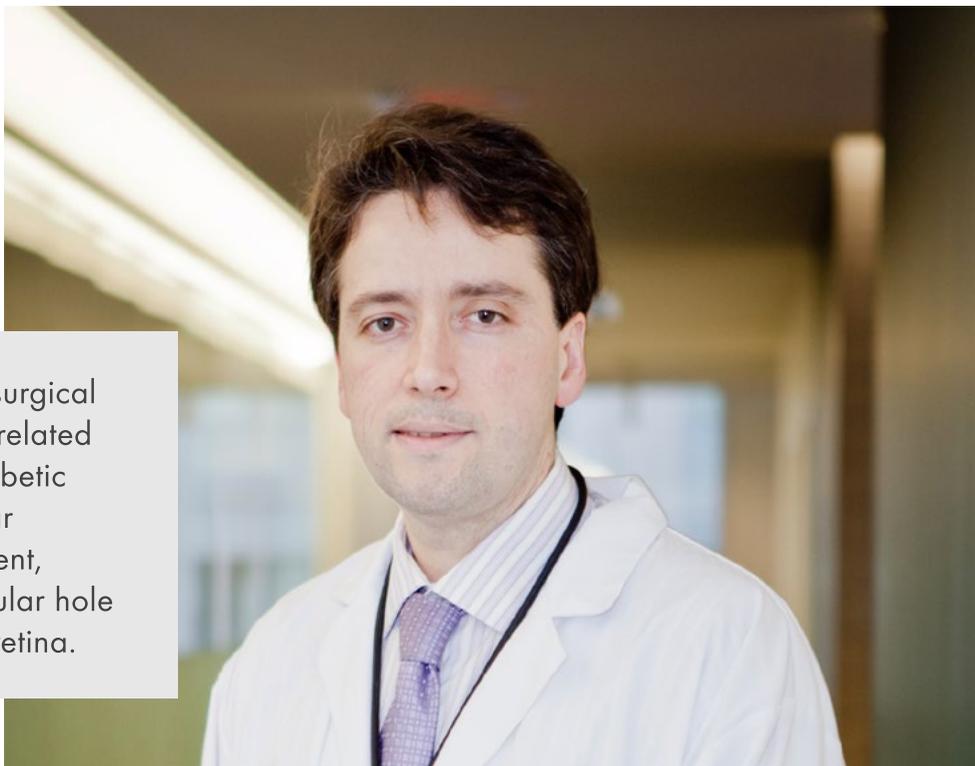
Myint Win holds a litany of science and engineering degrees and professional titles from numerous professional societies. He has a B.Sc. in geology from the University of Rangoon, a postgraduate diploma in hydrogeology from the University College London UK, and an MSc degree from the University of London, UK. He obtained his Ph.D. in civil engineering with specialization in geotechnics from Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, and he holds a Certificate of Executive Management and Leadership from Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the U.S. He is also a fellow of the Geological Society, London, and a fellow of the Institution of Civil Engineer, U.K.



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# Dr. Eduardo V. Navajas

He provides medical and surgical care for patients with age-related macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, retinal vascular occlusion, retinal detachment, epiretinal membrane, macular hole and other diseases of the retina.



Dr. Eduardo V. Navajas is a subspecialist in vitreoretinal surgery at Vancouver General Hospital (VGH) and clinical assistant professor in the Department of Ophthalmology at the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Vancouver, British Columbia. He provides medical and surgical care for patients with age-related macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, retinal vascular occlusion, retinal detachment, epiretinal membrane, macular hole and other diseases of the retina.

Dr. Navajas completed residency in ophthalmology, retina fellowship, and PhD in retinal imaging at the Federal University of Sao Paulo in Brazil. He subsequently completed a 2-year vitreoretinal surgery fellowship at St. Michael's Hospital at the University of Toronto and was awarded *Best Fellow Surgeon* by the residents in the Department of Ophthalmology in his graduating year. Dr. Navajas also completed an ocular oncology fellowship at Princess Margaret Hospital at the University of Toronto. When obtaining certification in Canada, Dr. Navajas received the International Council of Ophthalmology (ICO) *Peter Watson Award* for achieving the highest score in the ICO Basic and Clinical sciences exams worldwide. He was awarded an ICO pathology fellowship at the Keenan Research Centre in Toronto.

Dr. Navajas' research interests include biomedical imaging and new technologies in retina. He has authored over 40 peer reviewed papers and book chapters and

presented nationally and internationally. As a member of the Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute, Dr. Navajas is involved in clinical trials and is the principal investigator of the Diabetic Retinopathy Clinical Research Network (DRCR.net) at the UBC site.

In his clinical space at the Eye Care Centre, Dr. Navajas, helped establish the Advanced Retinal Imaging and Analysis Laboratory (ARIAL). ARIAL is a multidisciplinary partnership between UBC clinicians and Simon Fraser University engineers to advance the biomedical applications of optical coherence tomography (OCT), a high-resolution retinal imaging scanner. Dr. Navajas tests different novel OCT modalities, including Adaptive Optics OCT, which permit imaging of the eye on a sub-cellular level. Moreover, he was co-investigator in grants competitively awarded with a cumulative total of over 1 million CAD within the past 5 years

Dr. Navajas enjoys teaching. He recently established a clinician-scientist vitreoretinal fellowship program, where surgical fellows also have protected time to work in the multidisciplinary imaging laboratory. Dr. Navajas has an international collaboration with colleagues in Brazil and participates in training Brazilian vitreoretinal surgeons that return to serve their community.

When asked, "what distinguishes you from other people?" he replied, "I simply love what I do." Away from his medical practice, Dr. Navajas enjoys being with his wife, Dena, and 2 children – Liam and Mila.

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# Zeeshan Saeed, President & Founder



Boasting a diverse professional background himself, Zeeshan is not only a successful mechanical engineer, but he also holds vast experience in international capital markets and has helped multiple startups with the process of raising initial funding and getting listed on various stock exchanges. A native of Pakistan, he has overcome countless obstacles and is proud of the many life goals he has been able to achieve. For instance, in 1998, Zeeshan arrived in Canada with less than CAD 10,000. The first three years were difficult. He was unable to pay rent a few times, but despite the hardships, he went into business, entered the stock market, and started taking companies public. Then, in 2013, Zeeshan found the opportunity he had been waiting for when he asked for 50 percent of a project that would legally take marijuana public. That project became FSD Pharma Inc., which has now been recognized by the CSE for breaking Canadian exchange records.

Zeeshan Saeed is the founder and president of Canada's FSD Pharma Inc., a record-breaking, science-driven biotech company that first listed on the Canadian Stock Exchange (CSE) and started trading in May 2018 under the symbol HUGE.

Zeeshan Saeed is the founder and president of Canada's FSD Pharma Inc., a record-breaking, science-driven biotech company that first listed on the Canadian Stock Exchange (CSE) and started trading in May 2018 under the symbol HUGE. The company subsequently became the first CSE company that was dual listed on NASDAQ under the same symbol and started trading on NASDAQ in January 2020. FSD stands for the first initial of the last names of the three founders, which started its journey in October 2013 to become a licensed producer of hydroponic medicinal grade, cannabis, with a firm belief the real potential of medicinal grade cannabis can only be unlocked through qualified clinical trials and drug development, similar to GW Pharmaceuticals. The company initially raised \$53 million and retained Dr. Raza Bokhari, a longtime associate of Zeeshan Saeed, to become the chairman of board and CEO to execute on the vision and mission of the founders. In the initial months, the company grew at an astonishing fast pace and surpassed a market cap of over \$1B.

In the past 12 months, the company has added more than \$35M cash to the balance sheet through two private placements, selling of non-core assets and registered direct offering to US institutional investors. In response to market conditions, the company recently surrendered its Health Canada, Cannabis operator license and have filed an IND application with the US Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to initiate a phase 2 trial to treat hospitalized COVID-19 patients.

As a child, Zeeshan's dream was to grow up to be successful businessman and to buy the car of his dreams, as he was always fascinated with cars. When he started his career and went into the stock market, he added the ringing of the NASDAQ bell to his dreams. Determined to make this a reality, Zeeshan began his journey 20 years ago with a mechanical engineering degree from the University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore, in Pakistan. He then applied to Canada for immigration and received it within seven months. Most importantly, Zeeshan achieved both of his lifelong dreams before the age of 50—purchasing his dream car and ringing the NASDAQ bell on January 21, 2020.

For hobbies Zeeshan likes to play squash, swim, and goes to the gym regularly. Zeeshan's previous partner passed away in May 2020. He is presently single and lives in the GTA.

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# ■ Leon Tepper ■

Investment Specialist



I believe deeply in helping people build their own wealth through next-generation investing strategies, and I'm also an advocate of educating investors so they understand exactly how these investments work for them.

Leon Tepper is an investment specialist with Tepper's List, one of North America's largest and most popular stock advisory services. He is a finance professional with nearly two decades of experience, a lifelong fascination with the markets, and a passionate champion of individual investors. He is renowned for his extensive technical expertise, insightful chart analysis, and an astounding record of successful investments—more than 80 percent of his picks since 2008 have been profitable for his Tepper's List subscribers. This is the unique story of how a young college grad turned a day-trading hobby into a successful stock advisory firm that has helped individual investors thrive for over a decade. "I believe deeply in helping people build their own wealth through next-generation investing strategies, and I'm also an advocate of educating investors so they understand exactly how these investments work for them," he explains.

Leon's journey to the founding of Tepper's List in 2008 began seven years earlier, in 2001. Fresh out of college and armed with a master's degree in economics and a bachelor's degree in finance, he was a young man on a mission to take his financial destiny into his own hands. He gathered his savings and jumped into the world of day trading. "I was no different than most people. I was so excited I couldn't sleep at night. Just like everyone else, I wanted to make big money, and I wanted it fast!" he shares. Although he was successful, his excitement quickly waned as he realized that the risks—and the stress—outweighed the rewards. He threw himself into researching and analyzing charts and strategies, and, in 2005, abandoned day trading for investing in 2005.

When Leon's father discovered that the rate of return of son's investments was outpacing those managed by his own financial advisor, he fired his advisor and enlisted his 23-year-old son to take over the managing of his money. "I was shocked! My father wanted to hand me his life savings to manage," he recalls. Soon he was managing funds in excess of \$500,000 for other family members. His success quickly caught the attention of high-roller investors outside the family, who encouraged him to start a website of his own. "I had discovered a very unique and distinctive way of analyzing the markets. It all started off as a hobby, learning various methods of market analysis, and the only thing that seemed to really work and speak to me was finding my own set of principles."

With the motto, "It is our goal to double our members' portfolios within two to three years of signing up with us!" Tepper's List was born, where Leon shares his knowledge, expertise, and valuable insight through a biweekly newsletter packed with information that covers a spectrum of investing aspects and stock recommendations. "We want to give people the opportunity to manage their own money, without the fees of a stock broker," he explains. Tepper's List offers three services: Investment Forget Report, which focuses on trading "vehicle" stocks that are going



“ It is our goal to double our members' portfolios within two to three years of signing up with us! ”

to go much higher, but the investment time takes longer; Tepper's Turnaround Stocks, stocks that are beaten up; and Mega Hot Stock Report, higher-risk stocks, with the possibility of a faster outcome.

"We like to use a risk-versus-rewards of three to one. When buying any stock, there is a reward and also a risk. Many investors are not aware of it and are willing to risk much more than they're willing to make. This three-to-one means if you are planning to make 10k on a stock, you should not be willing to risk more than 3k. This is an important aspect for investors all over that are neglecting this aspect of investing. I am not willing to risk 10k to make 1k—a one-to-one risk and reward," he explains.

Known for his meticulous research, Leon helps people not only make money in raging bull markets, but fortify their financial futures during brutal bear markets and extraordinary economic downturns. "The fact of the matter is that it's extremely challenging to be a successful investor, but it's not impossible. I am so pleased to share my expertise, passion, and commitment with a bigger group of individual investors."



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# Devon Davidson

“We know from personal experience what it is like to want to break free from industrialized pharmaceuticals, and we’re here to offer a safe, effective alternative.”



CANALIEF

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With over a decade in sales, marketing, and business management, Devon Davidson has spent years researching the cannabis plant and has seen first-hand the benefits that cannabidiol (CBD) can bring to people’s lives. As a passionate entrepreneur in the cannabis sector, he co-founded Canalief Inc. where he serves as president and chief executive officer. Currently, Davidson is using his skills and experience to lead the company into an exciting new industry.

Based out of Bassano, Alberta, Canalief is a cannabis cultivation and processing business that grew from the desire to help people actualize the health benefits of medical cannabis.

“We know from personal experience what it is like to want to break free from industrialized pharmaceuticals, and we’re here to offer a safe, effective alternative,” says Davidson.

Canalief digs deep into cutting-edge medical cannabis technology in order to grow with their partners and to provide safe, effective medical solutions. Team members also take pride in crafting a homegrown product and in creating real one-on-one connections with their customers.

As president and CEO, Davidson develops the strategies to make Canalief’s vision a reality. His responsibilities include overseeing all business operations, such as business development, hiring staff, and executing a strategy that will move Canalief toward its goals. Despite the myriad of ups and downs in the development of legal cannabis during the first couple of years, Davidson continues to strive on, making sure the company maintains a competitive edge as well as quality and consistency in products.

Canalief specializes in cannabis-derived CBD products of the highest quality and uses green technologies such as deep-water culture and top-tiered, full-spectrum LED lighting to maintain their commitment to responsible growing.

“I have received so much support from the people in my life. I am thankful to them and to the town of Bassano for being so welcoming to us and to our business,” Davidson says.

As natives of Calgary, Canada, Davidson and co-founder, Adam Bourbonnais, were looking for the perfect local home for Canalief and were delighted to join the Bassano community.

“We hope to bring local values into our business by giving back to the community as much as possible,” Davidson says.

Canalief plans to support local school breakfast and lunch programs and offer bursary programs to post-secondary students.

“My motto has always been ‘No shortcuts,’” Davidson says.

“Those two words permeate my life—from the cooking I do, the renovations I work on at home, to the way I run my business.”



# SCHULMAN DESIGN

Margot leads Schulman Design, a full-service interior design firm that is spearheading change for Canada's most vulnerable members. The firm transforms commercial, residential, and hospitality spaces into beautiful, functional, people-centered designs.

Margot Schulman is a Calgary-based entrepreneur, interior designer, and sociologist of more than 25 years. She is also one of only two facilitators trained in Virtual Dementia Tour, VDT™, a scientifically proven, evidence-based method of building a greater understanding of dementia. With a lifelong passion for supporting the aging population and those with physical and cognitive disabilities, Margot leads Schulman Design, a full-service interior design firm that is spearheading change for Canada's most vulnerable members. The firm transforms commercial, residential, and hospitality spaces into beautiful, functional, people-centered designs. "The true measure of any society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members. I believe universal design does not simply create an option for people with disabilities and a different one for people without. It creates one solution that works for everyone," she explains.

Schulman Design works with families, caregivers, and seniors to help prepare their residences to age successfully at home and in community, and they have worked on a variety of residential and commercial projects ranging from 1,500 to 140,000 square feet. The company also works with home builders, architects and developers to create designs that foster positive health outcomes and efficiencies for operators. Margot launched the firm 25 years ago, after her brother, who suffered a serious brain injury, inspired her to challenge the design of long-term care facilities. After her family spent 20 years navigating his full-time care, she quickly realized the intricate relationship between care and design models, and the wellbeing of patients. Her family spearheaded a "home within a home" at the Sherbrooke Centre in Saskatchewan. After watching him blossom, she founded her firm with a singular mission: "Better Care. Better Life. By Design."

"I learned quickly through my brother how small changes in our environment could make a big difference in accommodating everyone. We're able to create a beautiful space that is functional, accessible, and safe without someone knowing it was designed for that purpose. Aesthetically, they're beautiful, and it feels like home" she says.

Margot also believes that the crisis in Canada's care home models is a serious human rights issue. "All stakeholders—government, private, nonprofit—need to start working together on a solution. It will take the whole community working together to overhaul our aging and caring systems," she says. Her new design model, Curatta, which means "curating the aging spirit," means



## MARGOT SCHULMAN

Owner, Principal Interior Designer

to fix this with a high-end, aging-in-community lifetime home in Alberta. It's a complete, caring neighborhood where those living with memory loss or dementia live as they would at their own homes. With eight family-style bungalow homes, the community will be designed to stimulate memory and promote independence, social connections, healthy lifestyles, growth, and fun. The company has completed the prototype and is currently seeking investors. "Curatta will transform how we care for people experiencing dementia, using a unique community design and drawing from the latest best practices in dementia care," Margot explains.

Margot is a regular guest speaker at international conferences on aging, including the *Environments for Aging Conference and Expo* in the United States, and she has served as the keynote speaker for the March of Dimes, Opening Doors, Designing for Our Aging Population at SASHA conferences, and other events.

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# Jason Wallace



Jason Wallace is an experienced business manager and alumnus of Harvard Business School. He spent the last decade as a lead consultant within the Canadian and European energy, consumer, and technology markets. Leveraging his strong business development and science background (P.Geo), he has been able to promote institutional changes in cost efficiency, organizational alignment, and company culture across the businesses he has worked within. The results of his efforts manifested in the streamlining and modernization of internal processes and the real-world outcome of increased revenue.

In May 2018, Jason co-founded Element Cannabis Group, a start-up company in Calgary, Canada, that combines technologies to efficiently produce quality cannabis products such as, oils, concentrates, distillates, and isolate for the global market. They use their own in-house laboratory to produce medical grade, “Good Manufacturing Products” (GMP) certified commodities. Element has remained a private business and has avoided the pitfalls of an emerging economy’s “boom and bust cyclicity.” As a result, growth has been organic and largely sheltered from the volatility experienced by

their publicly traded counterparts. “We’ve seen our public competitors spend money on growing into huge market capitalizations only to see their market cap fall and their revenues underperform,” explains Jason.

In addition to remaining an efficient, private company, Jason has also assisted in Element’s goal to be the lowest-cost cannabis producer in North America. They are attempting to achieve this through a significantly disruptive build strategy that shrugs off years of conventional cannabis-growing wisdom. “When Canada legalized cannabis, most growers repurposed cost-effective greenhouses and older buildings as a means of getting their products to market as soon as possible,” says Jason. However, when Element entered the industry, they chose to build a new, innovative facility from the ground up. “We chose a location where natural gas is abundant and cheap so that we could produce our own electricity on site,” explains Jason.

Most Canadian companies are buying electricity off the grid and paying their local municipalities for service. However, Element used oil and gas technologies to bring in natural gas to its facilities. Subsequently, generators produce their electricity, completely off the grid, paying only 10% of the electricity bill that their competitors pay. Waste heat is captured off the gensets to heat and cool the building, which creates further energy savings and reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 44%. Element was also able to drill their own wells and no longer pay the city or county for water usage.

Leveraging his strong business development and science background (P.Geo), he has been able to promote institutional changes in cost efficiency, organizational alignment, and company culture across the businesses he has worked within.

Element’s facility’s most unique feature is its employment of what is called “vertical growing,” which means growing crops in stacked layers. By stacking, they are utilizing the heat and maximizing cost efficiency and square footage. “Basically, anywhere Element finds an inefficiency, we pull it apart, find the best solution, and apply it to our facility,” says Jason.

Although they recognize that quality is paramount, those at Element know that cost is also important in order to become a leading cannabis producer. “The new paradigm in cannabis cultivation will have a significant effect on producers throughout Canada. As the market begins to consolidate, the companies with the lowest cost will ultimately win the market segment,” says Jason.

In addition to new-ventures and consulting, Jason volunteers at Big Brothers Big Sisters working with youth. Jason is also a member of ACTRA, the Canadian acting union, appearing in film and television such as *Mission: Impossible – Rogue Nation*, *Ghostbusters: Afterlife*, and *Fargo*. Jason worked on *Elite: High Performance Lessons and Habits from a Former Navy Seal*, a business leadership book, with HBS classmate, Nick Hays.

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# Amanda Hall

## Founder & CEO

Amanda Hall is founder and CEO of Summit Nanotech, a Calgary-based company focused on producing green lithium by using applications of nanotechnology to optimize industrial processes in the mining sector. As a professional geophysicist and former laboratory scientist with more than 15 years of experience in the oil and gas industry, she leads the company with the commitment to develop solutions for a new age of transitioning to clean energy that have profound effects on the planet. “We’re changing the way lithium is mined, using new technology to help extract it more efficiently and sustainably,” she shares.

Founded in 2018, Summit Nanotech’s specialization is as unique as its personnel, with an all-female management committee—a rarity in the mining sector. “We’re all diversely educated and credible, with decades of experience in the resource extraction space. My team leads with passion, agility and humility; you don’t often see this caliber of female leadership in one company,” Amanda explains. She and her team of experts are working to provide economically viable solutions for the lithium extraction process to help meet the growing energy storage needs of the future.

With the increased adoption of electric cars, boats, and other vehicles, stationary storage for renewable energy and society’s voracious appetite for cell phone and other transportable technology—all of which are powered by lithium ion batteries—mining companies are expanding lithium production processes significantly to keep up with demand. Amanda and her team of engineers and scientists are determined to ensure that this is done with wisdom. “We’ve created a technological process to take lithium out of natural occurring brine using no fresh water and creating significantly less chemical waste, while doubling yield and reducing the time to product recovery,” she explains. “This is an opportunity to be part of a rapidly growing sector and we feel that it is our responsibility as global citizens to ensure



At Summit Nanotech, we’re creating jobs and training scientists to think outside the box. Albert Einstein said that we cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.



that increased production occurs with the least environmental impact. We don’t want to repeat extraction mistakes made in the past by scaling up without foresight.”

Summit Nanotech is supporting the energy transition in Canada by working with industry and the government to better understand Canada’s lithium resources. They are transitioning professionals and skills from the oil & gas sector, bringing this knowledge into a new Canadian lithium sector. “At Summit Nanotech, we’re creating jobs and training scientists to think outside the box. Albert Einstein said that we cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them,” she shares.

Amanda’s passion for her field and her commitment to developing new technologies that meet the needs of an evolving energy landscape have garnered her multiple industry awards, including *Women in Cleantech*, *Energy New Ventures*, *Inventures* and inclusion in *NACO’s Top 30 Most Promising Start-ups in Canada*.

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# ERICA THOMAS



I am such a strong believer in these educated women and professionals who have so much expertise and education. Our company provides a place for these amazing experts to excel, with the flexibility where they do not have to choose.



## CONTACT

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Erica Thomas is president and CEO of Transitional Solutions, Inc., a management consulting firm with focus on finding transitional solutions for organizations in both the public and private sectors. As a seasoned management consultant with 16 years of experience, she is the driving force behind a company that has doubled in size consistently over the past five years, both in the size of her team and in gross sales, and a champion of the untapped workforce of stay-at-home-moms and retirees. “I am such a strong believer in these educated women and professionals who have so much expertise and education, many of whom had to choose between their careers and their family. Our company provides a place for these amazing experts to excel, with the flexibility where they do not have to choose. These people are the lifeblood of our organization,” she explains.

Founded 13 years ago, Transitional Solutions provides expertise that runs the gamut within municipal administration and governance. From organizational reviews to strategic planning, from emergency management reviews and plans to recruitment, they help municipalities work with each other. While many other consultants provide generic templates as solutions, Erica and her consultants start from scratch with every client. They find solutions for the client with the client, and work on ensuring that solution is implementable, with an aim to provide strategies to help their clients move forward.

Erica took over the helm of Transitional Solutions in 2015, where her husband serves as vice president. Founded by her father eight years earlier, she brought with her a wealth of expertise gained over an 11-year career and valuable insight gained from her own experience as a professional woman and mother faced with her own decision between career and family. She used this powerful combination to grow the company nearly tenfold, despite a personal crisis that threatened to derail it. In May 2019, when her five-year-old son was diagnosed with cancer, their team of consultants came to the rescue. “They rallied around us and carried the company forward through another banner year, which allowed us to focus on our son. They all worked as a team and a family, which was amazing,” she shares.

Erica began her career in economic development, and then moved into oil and gas, focusing on public engagement for different, large energy developments in Canada while pursuing an MBA from the University of Calgary. When she had her second child, she took maternity leave from her employer to test out the world of consulting—and she never went back. She took the wheel of TSI and lit a fire under the marketing scheme, attracting some of the best consultants and experts with great reputations.

Transitional Solutions is unique in that it is formed of a team of consultants rather than employees—and the bulk of them are retirees and stay-at-home moms and dads. “Our best consultants have retired from a long, successful career, so they have some flexibility when working with our company, and the quality of the work is better because our people do it because they enjoy it and they’re passionate about it.”

Erica holds a BComm in international marketing, an MBA in global energy management and sustainable development and an Economic Developers Certificate. She and her husband volunteer and contribute to the Kids with Cancer Society and the Childrens Wish Foundation—where her son was granted a wish. They also have a nine-year-old daughter and four-year-old twins, and their son is in remission and is now six years old.

# Usama Chaudhry

## CEO and Founder

As founder and CEO of Primus Workforce, Ltd., an Edmonton-based temporary staffing company that provides experts in the oil and gas, construction, warehousing, and administrative fields, Usama Chaudhry has one goal—“to enable the sharing of talent between various organizations and employers so we can all benefit from the expertise of the people that keep Canada ticking.”

A chemical engineer by profession, with a bachelor’s degree in chemical engineering and nine years of experience in the oil and gas sector, he has an intimate understanding of what his clients need. “We relied on other companies for our project-specific work, and I was in charge of raising these personnel, so I thought why not use my experience and knowledge to help other companies and workers benefit?” he shares.

Usama founded Primus Workforce in January of 2019, bringing with him nearly a decade of industry experience, knowledge, and insight. The business focuses primarily on companies with a lot of project-specific work, such as construction, oil and gas, and renewable energy companies, as well as warehousing and delivery companies, for which the company provides an abundance of versatile heavy equipment drivers and equipment operators who fill a multitude of roles.

With “Peace of mind with Primus Workforce” as their motto, the Usama and his team ensure that their entire workforce has the skills and experience to fulfill the needs of their clients, whether for project-specific positions or long-term permanent jobs. They vet workers by reviewing and evaluating their résumés in detail, interviewing them, and verifying their credentials, and then match them with opportunities consistent with their experiences and core competencies. They work to try to convert the fixed employee costs for their clients into variable costs for them. By doing so, their clients don’t have to keep a large roster of staff permanently because the staff is available when the work is available.

Although Usama founded the company just over a year ago, his entrepreneurial spirit that led him there existed since he was a boy, when he used to sell candy to high school kids. “Even as a child, I wanted to be a business professional. I kept a ledger for the kids that owed me money for candy. I saw my father investing throughout his life, although a doctor by profession, but I always wanted to get into business. It was always a goal of mine,” he shares.

He first answered the call of his entrepreneurial tendencies in 2017, when he left a successful eight-year career in roles as field engineer, private manager, dispatcher, and sales for some of the biggest names in the industry, including General Electric, to serve as partner of a company similar to Primus Workforce.

When the business closed a year and a half later, Usama launched his own company to provide higher-quality people



with more experience than other staffing companies provide. “I like to say that other companies are more focused on having HR professionals and people who don’t have field experience, but we use people experienced in this industry that they’re hiring for the industry,” he explains.

The business focuses primarily on companies with a lot of project-specific work, such as construction, oil and gas, and renewable energy companies, as well as warehousing and delivery companies, for which the company provides an abundance of versatile heavy equipment drivers and equipment operators who fill a multitude of roles.



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# Ronald R. Kumar

Founder, Ronald Kumar Law Group



Founder of Ronald Kumar Law Group, Vancouver lawyer Ronald Kumar's passion for the law and his entrepreneurial drive led him to become one of the youngest lawyers to be called to the British Columbia bar at age 25. Now at the age of 33, he is a savvy professional at the helm of a progressive boutique law firm in Vancouver, B.C., specializing in family law, personal injury, estate litigation, civil litigation, immigration appeals, and real estate law. Over the last eight years of his swift ascent as a reputable litigator, he has garnered the respect of both clients and peers for his lawyering skills, unwavering pursuit of excellence, and the personal attention that he shows to every client. But what drives Ronald is not professional accolades or industry status. Having overcome obstacles in his own life, what drives him is empathy, compassion, and his sincere desire to help people.

Born and raised in Vancouver, Ronald established the practice in his home province in 2014 and serves clients across the Lower Mainland as a strong legal advocate. Through either negotiation or litigation, he has successfully obtained favorable results for his clients via settlement or court. With the firm growing at an astounding pace, Ronald recently expanded his practice areas to include family law

(divorce/separation cases). His firm provides both collaborative services and litigation services when it comes to family law cases. Despite having a very busy law practice, Ronald commits time to providing pro bono legal services to help people who can't afford lawyers.

The son of immigrant parents, whose sacrifices allowed him to get where he is today, Ronald's path to success was not an easy one. He worked hard to achieve his dream of becoming a lawyer. After graduating from Simon Fraser University with a bachelor's degree in criminology and completing his Juris Doctor law degree, he began articling with boutique law firm, Vertlieb Dosanjh, where his love of litigation was born. Just one week into working at this firm, he was hit with the most formidable challenge he would face—Hodgkin's lymphoma. Despite the devastating diagnosis, Ronald would not let anything stand in the way of the dream he'd fought so hard for; not even cancer. He continued working full time while battling the deadly disease and undergoing chemotherapy, driven by the same perseverance and determination that had pushed him to overcome every other obstacle that had threatened his goals. In 2017, he was considered cured. After being admitted to the B.C. bar in 2013, he worked as an associate with Vertlieb Dosanjh for one year before starting his own firm in 2014.

Ronald's passion for law extends outside his practice, as does his commitment to his community. He was the former chair of the New Lawyers Committee, former member of the Membership Committee, and former member of the board of governors at the Trial Lawyers Association of B.C. His active affiliations include being a member of the Trial Lawyers Association of B.C., the Canadian Bar Association, the South Asian Bar Association, and the Law Society of B.C. In service to his own community, he was a former board member of Marpole Oakridge Family Place, and is the founder of the Ronald Kumar Law Scholarship, which is awarded annually to two graduating secondary students at his alma mater, John Oliver Secondary School. He is also an active donor to various cancer research initiatives.



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# Karm Panesar

## — Founder & CEO —

Karm Panesar is a lifelong entrepreneur who dove into the world of accounting straight out of high school and at just 18 years old opened his first business—one of many successful ventures over the past 15 years. As the founder & CEO of Westgroup Financial Management Inc., a wealth management and financial planning firm, he is passionate about helping businesses and families achieve their financial goals. He adds tremendous value through his uniquely diverse experience and specialization in detailed accounting finding the best solutions to meet his clients' needs and change their financial paths for a better future. As the leader of a company with a 50-percent growth rate year-over-year, his record of success continues—and he's bringing his clients with him.

Karm founded Westgroup Financial Management in 2018 in South Surrey, British Columbia, as a firm specializing in the universe of financial planning and wealth management services, including investment planning, retirement, health insurance planning, estate and tax planning, as well as accounting services. Through its offices in Vancouver, South Surrey, and Langley, he and his team of financial experts are committed to ensuring their clients' success through a calculated strategy built on honesty and integrity. Karm officially entered the financial industry in 2017, with an extensive corporate accounting and tax planning background already in place, proven through a successful career as a business owner and business executive—a record that instills a higher level of trust in his clients.

Long before Westgroup Financial was even a glimmer in his eye, Karm launched his first entrepreneurial venture, Global Earthworks Ltd, an excavation and construction business, in 2005, and grew it from nothing to 40 employees. He followed this with six other successful companies—all built from scratch—including Global Earthworks Group, a property development and real estate firm, and today, he still leads the thriving Global Earthworks. For each of them, he managed all the accounting and corporate structures, building them into flourishing businesses. He brought to bear his extensive business experience to found Westgroup Financial Management, where he now helps other businesses structure corporations and helps families ensure their financial futures by developing and implementing a key business process to support their goals.

Karm is a member of ADVOCIS, Financial Advisors Association of Canada, which is the largest voluntary professional membership association of financial advisors in Canada. In his tireless quest for knowledge and insight, he is currently completing his CFP to support his mission to provide his clients with the best solutions to drive their goals in the ever-changing world of financial planning. He has also completed the real estate training course at UBC Sauder School of Business.



He adds tremendous value through his uniquely diverse experience and specialization in detailed accounting finding the best solutions to meet his clients' needs and change their financial paths for a better future.

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# Ranko Vukovic

## Founder and CEO

In addition to becoming a successful entrepreneur, Ranko Vukovic holds a master's degree in physical therapy from The University of British Columbia and is a registered physiotherapist (RPT), licensed with the College of Physiotherapists of British Columbia. He is also a member of the Canadian Physiotherapy Association. Most recently, Ranko became the founder and chief executive officer for VanCity Physio, Vancouver's premier tele-physio and virtual physiotherapy service.

Based in British Columbia, VanCity Physio is a pioneer in the tele-physiotherapy and tele-rehabilitation spaces and has expanded to include mobile physiotherapy services for both individual and corporate clients. "By integrating the latest technology in patient care, VanCity Physio is on the cutting edge in terms of convenience, quality of treatment, and personal service," says Ranko. The company has become a leader in tele-physio through its offering of personal services, which take advantage of the opportunities presented by technical solutions to improve patient care.

Another aspect that sets the company apart from their competitors is the platform VanCity uses. It enables them to not only participate in video conferencing and exercise

prescription but to also receive messages from clients at any time. As a result, instead of people Googling what they should be doing or waiting two weeks for a follow up session, they have open communication to message VanCity Physio's practitioners and to get immediate answers.

For the future, Ranko sees a hybridized model that is also collaborative in its approach. He believes people will communicate a lot more through a model that allows physiotherapists to link directly to their clients in real time. "Such a model will not only improve people's lives and health, but it will also improve overall efficiency," explained Ranko.



By integrating the latest technology in patient care, VanCity Physio is on the cutting edge in terms of convenience, quality of treatment, and personal service.

As an innovator in the physiotherapy space, Ranko leads the development of new strategies and techniques to improve the health and wellbeing of VanCity Physio's clients. As a practicing registered physiotherapist, he has developed specializations in temporomandibular joint dysfunction (TMJ), orofacial pain, intramuscular stimulation (CG-IMS), and functional dry needling (FDN). Ranko not only manages the operations of VanCity Physio, but he also leads the team of pain and movement specialists while expanding the possibilities for patient care through the hybrid model (blending tele-health with in-person treatment) of physiotherapy.

Prior to obtaining his physiotherapy degree, Ranko studied Kinesiology and graduated with a bachelor's degree in human kinetics from The University of British Columbia. After graduating, he became a practicing member of the British Columbia Association of Kinesiologists (BCAK) as well as a certified personal trainer through the British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA). Ranko also holds a certificate in *Functional Movement Systems* and utilizes those skills to provide movement screens for clients.

When he is not busy treating patients and managing VanCity Physio, Ranko enjoys playing sports, swimming, riding his bike on Vancouver's iconic seawall, and alpine skiing. He also loves spending quality time with his friends and family.



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# Pedro Villalon

President

He believes that tea is grown, not manufactured; the quality of each batch is a function of space (origin) and time. If you have healthy leaves, carefully handcrafted, it is easy to create drinks that will make people smile.



Pedro Villalon is a founding partner of O5 Tea, a company dedicated to curating rare tea menus at third wave coffee bars, boutique hotels and O5's iconic Vancouver tea bar. He is also a director at Two Hills Tea, a pioneer in the North American organic tea market since the 1990's and developer of health-oriented drinks.

A chemical engineer with two decades of experience in marketing and business management, a love for exploration and a passion for tea, Pedro travels to remote villages to learn from the locals. By touching soil, picking the leaves and living with the people who handcraft the tea, he looks to discover the rich history behind this beautiful drink. He believes that tea is grown, not manufactured; the quality of each batch is a function of space (origin) and time. If you have healthy leaves, carefully handcrafted, it is easy to create drinks that will make people smile.

Founded in 2011 in Vancouver, O5 Tea Company is the *National Geographic* of tea—it's about discovering. Born and raised in Mexico, and having lived and worked in China, the U.S., and Canada, Pedro has a passion for learning about different cultures and traditions. He documents his experiences of making friends, sharing local foods, and building friendships. "It's a fun job," he says. "We learn about the soil in which our tea grows and the people who care for it."

He is also proving that tea can be a profitable. The company works with boutique hotels and third wave coffee bars—those who believe in transparent origins and meticulous handcrafting. The goal is to take their programs and elevate them to the standards of their wine, craft beer, specialty coffee or cocktail menus. Pedro explains his goal to emulate the success of major 3W roasters. "Blue Bottle was one of

the pioneers that elevated the standards for coffee in North America. They were recently purchased by Nestle for 500 million; Intelligentsia and Stumptown were also acquired for hefty sums. Third wave coffee is no longer a niche industry. This is our goal with tea; I would like to see more people enjoying the really good stuff!"

Pedro and his team work closely with their customers to develop tea programs that are right for their needs: offering delicious drinks while improving profitability. From sophisticated zero-proof cocktails to single dose solutions for paced environments, it is critical to understand the goals and resources of each customer.

Pedro began his career as an intern with Procter & Gamble while he was still in college in Mexico City. After he graduated, he joined P&G as assistant brand manager and moved to Cincinnati. During his decade with the company, working in marketing, he was transferred to China, where he was serendipitously exposed to the world of tea. "My best friend became my driver; he introduced me to tea. His wife, coincidentally, is from the most famous tea mountain in Guandong; during a trip to Phoenix Mountain I became fascinate by this plant."

Pedro and his family decided to move to Canada; the mountains, ocean and a vibrant multi-cultural society made it an ideal place to live and build the project that became O5.

Pedro holds bachelor's degrees in chemical engineering from Universidad Iberoamericana, Ciudad de México. He is currently working on a documentary to be shot in the mountains of Gifu, Japan next year. "The idea is to document ancient traditions that are at risk of getting lost; we will explore calligraphy, martial arts, theatre... using tea as a viewing glass."

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Photo by Sophia Hsin

# SHANE ROBINSON

President



A 4th generation Canadian entrepreneur, Shane Robinson knows the value of hard work and customer centric business. In 1912, his great-grandfather, Samuel Davidner, immigrated to Canada and settled near Swift Current, Saskatchewan. Soon after, Sam lost his wife to the Spanish Influenza and moved his farming operations closer to Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, with his daughter, who was only 11 months old at the time. Sam eventually remarried, had more children, and opened a clothing & tack store just West of Central Avenue on River Street. Sam's son, Herschel Davidner, eventually took over the store and was a community pillar, known for his philanthropy and civic involvement. After Herschel passed away and over 80 successful years in business, the store was closed in April 2014 by Shane's mother, as per the wishes of Herschel's estate.

Inspired by his family's work ethic, and highly fascinated and proficient with computers, Shane had his first business card by age 9. He made it himself, at home, and offered snow removal and lawn care to his neighbors, even employing friends from time to time. By 14, Shane found himself hiring part time drivers more than twice his age to valet

vehicles for him and his junior/high school job; a vehicle detailing company he built from scratch. After high school and a varied mix of education, employment, and business experience, Shane started a mobile carpentry service in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. In 2011, he moved the business to Prince Albert to be closer to family. By the start of 2015, while competitors were struggling, business was booming for Shane's customer-focused residential and light commercial building, renovating, and general contracting business. It was during this time that his love for computers and carpentry collided and he built his first computer assisted woodworking machine in September of 2015.

Shane states, "There are so many people, organizations, and businesses that helped me along the way, but I've got to give a big shout out to; Praxis School of Entrepreneurship, Saskatoon, SK, for an unforgettable year, Gabriel Dumont Institute and The Metis Nation of Saskatchewan for all their incredible support, Blue Moose Media Saskatoon, SK, for a completely practical and highly recommended workshop together. To Social School, Calgary, AB, for the 12 month scholarship you awarded me, and so many others during globally difficult times. And a huge thank you to Firebird Consulting, Saskatoon, SK, for their continued service, sage advice and diligent work!"

Aureate Manufacturing has begun to establish itself as a trusted, high-value, Saskatchewan based, custom manufacturing company.

By January 1st, 2020, Shane's largest venture to date, Aureate Manufacturing, was born. In its infancy and due to Covid-19, like so many other businesses, Aureate was forced to pivot and did so by offering critical custom manufacturing solutions that help local businesses to re-open safely and that help front line workers protect themselves against the deadly virus that has plagued the globe. "A week after reserving the name, I was watching what was going on (with The Coronavirus) overseas and knew we'd have changes coming too, so I immediately went back to the drawing board and said, 1; how can we help? and 2; how can we survive?"

By refocusing parts of the company to accommodate the demand for informational Covid-19 related signage and by developing manufacturing processes for "customer & worker protection products" like face shields, sneeze guards, and partition walls, Aureate Manufacturing has begun to establish itself as a trusted, high-value, Saskatchewan based, custom manufacturing company. With a diverse product and service offering and nationally centralized location, Aureate Manufacturing is poised for big growth in the coming years. "We can make *such amazing things* with our creativity, machines, software and technology, that honestly, the biggest challenge is keeping it simple!"



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# Jill Button, CSCMP

President & CEO

Jill leads a company whose goal it is to help small and medium enterprise (SME) businesses, source, contract, and implement IT solutions.

After more than 25 years of climbing the corporate ladder and hitting her head one too many times on the glass ceiling, Jill Button took her expertise in supply chain and procurement, and with a passion for business, leapt off the corporate ladder. Taking that fearless leap of faith along with a lot of hard work and unrelenting persistence, now, seven years later, Jill has become a successful entrepreneur and author. Her new book, *How NOT to Get Screwed by Your Suppliers and SAVE Millions*, modeled after Agile Software Development, teaches executives and procurement practitioners her customized, *4 Steps to Agile Procurement*.

As president and CEO of ProcurePro Consulting, a boutique procurement, project management, and IT consulting firm, Jill leads a company whose goal it is to help small and medium enterprise (SME) businesses, source, contract, and implement IT solutions. With a focus on technology, ProcurePro specializes in sourcing and implementing enterprise resource planning (ERP) solutions including finance, HR, payroll, customer relationship management (CRM), supply chain, and procurement systems. "I started the company to help SME businesses make smart technology decisions and the right investments to help them streamline, automate, and grow their business," she explains.

With a reputation as a high performing leader, Jill took her expertise in IT procurement, professional and consulting services, outsourcing, and offshoring, and founded ProcurePro in Toronto in 2013. Celebrating seven years since its launch, the company has grown to meet its expanding client needs, with a team of certified professionals including procurement and supply chain consultants, project managers, business systems, sales, and digital marketing analysts.

Four years ago, as she was focusing on helping clients and growing her company, Jill's entrepreneurial mind hit upon a new business idea. "I'm always thinking about what I can do to solve problems and makes things better. Experiencing my own challenges to find experts to help me run and grow my business, I had an epiphany and realized that I, along with a lot of other entrepreneurs, don't always have the breadth of knowledge and experience beyond our own core competence. I'm a procurement and supply chain expert so when it came to sales and marketing, frankly, I was struggling," she shares. As a result, she reached out to like-minded entrepreneurs and in February 2020, partnering with complementary business executives, Jill and her new partners formed ThryvX Consulting. This enabled her to exponentially expand her service offering to clients to include marketing, IT, and HR.

ThryvX is focused on helping SME businesses grow, offering back-office services normally reserved for large enterprise that are challenging for SME's to find and afford. We can offer retainer, part-time, or project-based services, virtually or at our client's site, including fractional executive services. We help companies with their business strategies and execution including marketing, social media, application development, health and safety training, human resources compliance, recruiting, and of course, sourcing, contracting, and implementing the right technology solutions to manage and grow their business. We will be adding more complementary services with plans for national and global expansion coming soon. "Eighty percent of small



businesses have been hugely impacted by COVID-19, so it is really timely and critical that we help SME's not just survive, but *THRYV*."

Self-described #GenXFempreneur, given her over thirty years of experience and the way Jill has risen to the challenge to become the leader of two flourishing companies, it is no surprise that Jill was named one of the *100 Influential Women in Canadian Supply Chain™* by Supply Chain Canada and nominated for the *RBC Canadian Women Entrepreneur Award*. "I am so humbled and honoured to be recognized. I am especially grateful for the amazing relationships I have been able to build across Canada, the US, and around the world."

Jill is a passionate supporter of girls and women, doing her part to support, inspire, and promote future female leaders. As a former board president of her local chapter of Girls Inc. Durham, the organization is near and dear to her heart. "Girls and women really need encouragement and support so they can achieve their greatest potential."

To support relief efforts for those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, Jill is donating 100 percent of the profits from her book in 2020 to COVID relief in Canada.



## Daniel Vendette

### President

“Clients come to us to get expert support for their decisions in terms of infrastructure and distribution to make their operation more efficient and cost effective.”



**CONSEIL 2.0**

Daniel Vendette is president of Conseil 2.0, a Quebec-based advisory firm that specializes in offering strategy, implementation, management, and optimization services covering the entire supply chain, with specific focus on transportation, procurement, and systems related to transportation and procurement. With offices in Montreal and Quebec City, the company serves customers across North America, and it counts some of the biggest names in the marketplace among its clients, including Walmart, Quebec Liquor Board, and Lowe’s Canada. Daniel leads a group of 10 highly experienced supply chain consultants who provide transportation and other categories procurement management services, transportation and supply chain strategies, and procurement through systems—running bids via Internet platforms such as Coupa CSO, Trade Extensions, Freightender, and BluJay Procurement. They also help customers with network design, run procurement events for customers, as well as offer category management solutions. “Clients come to us to get expert support for their decisions in terms of infrastructure and distribution to make their operation more efficient and cost effective,” he explains.

Conseil 2.0 is unique in its model, taking an unbiased, very mathematical approach—a departure from its industry counterparts. Daniel and his team don’t run off feelings. Rather everything is calculated via algorithms and uses the power of tools. They work with customers while using machines in the background to accomplish the success of their analysis. “We’re not biased at all. Some of the freight audit guys or brokers are biased. We are not. It’s not based only on economy but making sure that we cover capacity transportation. It is not only price, but culture, goals, capacity,” he shares.

Daniel is an entrepreneur at heart with an interest in transportation that began when he was just 12 years old and grew into a successful career that spans over three decades. “I was helping out on trucks for Cascade Paper, helping drivers, and touring the eastern U.S., unloading crates. That led me into transportation,” he shares. At 17, he joined his uncle at C.H. Robinson in dispatch and climbed up the ladder, eventually starting the company’s Canadian intermodal division and international division, touching every field of transportation along the way. Finally, he moved to the consulting side as transportation expert—a role that he has relished for the last 28 years.

In 2016, with a deep appreciation for the challenges that supply chain managers face in an increasingly competitive landscape, Daniel saw the need for more personalized attention to help companies optimize their operations. He set out to deliver tailored solutions to help them become more successful with the launch of Conseil 2.0. “I started the company because I was an entrepreneur working in a big consulting firm, but I didn’t have a ‘big firm’ mentality. I wanted to be more hands-on consulting, more strategic, and on a basis where we could help clients structure themselves without the larger fees,” he shares. “All companies want to save money in their operations. They are concerned they may not be optimizing their inventory distribution network, their transportation costs, their best practices, using the best computer systems. We’re here to help them.”

Daniel holds an MBA in transportation logistics from University of Québec in Montréal and as served as president for CITT Montreal area council, a non-profit professional development association in the supply chain industry.

# Ross Cadastre

Ross Cadastre is a recruitment executive and a passionate change agent who has dedicated nearly his entire 25-year career to helping companies solve some of the most complex talent acquisition challenges. Hailing from the Island of St. Lucia, Ross started his career in the hotel and insurance business. When he moved to Canada in 1998, he entered the IT recruitment industry, working for a few small boutique recruitment agencies. By 2010, he was leading the Canadian recruitment delivery operations for Experis (a ManpowerGroup division), responsible for the strategic and transformational growth of the delivery team. He was a proud part of the leadership team that achieved significant growth for the organization. He is a people-centric, goal-driven industry leader who is guided by the words of Barack Obama:

*“A change is brought about because ordinary people do extraordinary things.”*

Given his reputation as a disruptor in the talent acquisition industry, Ross is putting these words into action. Ross launched Toronto-based Innovative Talent Solutions, Inc., in 2017 as a talent solutions company specializing in helping start up tech companies scale by offering cost effective solutions while finding the most suitable, high quality talent. Under the brand ITS Global, with the tagline, “We invest in business growth,” and led by the core values of leadership, integrity, and vision, Ross leads a team of experts focused on helping start-up founders grow their businesses by providing top tier talent. They work with start-up tech companies to understand their hiring goals and build a recruitment delivery plan to achieve these goals allowing them to focus on other aspects of growing their business. “We have developed a hiring process that walks an organization from sourcing the ideal pool of candidates to onboarding top talent. This fully customizable process is called HireRight and it truly demystifies the recruitment process and enables our founders to procure talent,” Ross explains.

Two years after the initial launch of Innovative Talent Solutions Inc, Ross and his team established the Kontingence Recruitment brand, a boutique recruitment agency on providing superior customer service while helping mid-size to large organizations tap into a highly qualified contingent workforce. This bold move was in direct response to the growing demand for staffing services from Innovative Talent Solutions Inc. Ross’ vision ensured that Kontingence Recruitment would provide value to its clients, “Companies in our industry don’t provide a great customer experience. We’re experienced in customer service, and we put the focus on servicing our clients and giving them a great experience,” he explains.

The Company’s two brands have developed game-changing solutions to help companies, large and small, to thrive. As Founder and CEO of Innovative Talent Solutions, Inc., he leverages his experience and networks to help businesses meet their business goals. He brought with him nearly two decades of experience serving organizations ranging from small family-owned businesses to large multinational corporations.

While he manages his growing business, Ross finds time to give back to the community through his involvement with a host of organizations, including the St. Lucia Toronto Association, the Council of Caribbean Associations Canada, and the OECS Council



Under the brand ITS Global, with the tagline, “We invest in business growth,” and led by the core values of leadership, integrity, and vision, Ross leads a team of experts focused on helping start-up founders grow their businesses by providing top tier talent.

Canada. He is also the current Communications Director for the Black Business and Professional Association and President of The Union of St. Lucian Overseas Associations. In recognition of both his corporate and community work, Ross has received numerous awards. In 2017, he was recognized at the Black Business Awards and inducted into the Black Canadian National Wall of Role Models. As business leader, community advocate, and citizen, Ross embodies a powerful quote he coined long ago: “Leadership is more than a position. It is more than a title, or a role. Leadership is the central and defining characteristic of a family, community, company or a nation.”



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## Jean Paul Lim



As an internal medicine and complex care specialist, Jean Paul Lim believes in proactively treating his patients so they can attain true health by building solid foundations consisting of a proper diet, nutrients, and exercise. Once they have

established a foundation, he moves on to address their more complex health-related issues. Jean Paul's mission is to explore different approaches to health and to find ways to integrate them all into a comprehensive and cohesive model where patients are seen in their entirety. As a result, he became the co-founder and medical director of Ollo Health Technologies Inc., a modern collaboration tool for Canadian health care providers, as well as the owner and medical director for Ageless Living Inc., a comprehensive anti-aging clinic that guides patients in aging youthfully by way of individualized treatment plans.

All of Jean Pau's training took place at the University of British Columbia where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in microbiology and immunology as well as a Doctor of Medicine degree. He has been in practice as a medical specialist since 2011 and in addition to his work in internal medicine and complex care, he holds training in echocardiography and serves as a board-certified anti-aging specialist through the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine (A4M). Jean Paul also takes pride in maintaining his patients' natural youthfulness by utilizing his certification as a neuromodulator (Botox, Dysport, Xeomin, etc.) and dermal filler injector.



Jean Paul is also passionate about preventative medicine, which involves effectively treating a patient

before a disease has the potential to occur. Therefore, in August 2019, he joined Ageless Living, an age-management clinic where the goal is to help clients age in the best way they can. Under his guidance, Ageless employs holistic techniques to help patients manage the challenges that come along with growing older. In fact, their motto is: "Your best self, at any age," and their mission is to help people regain their youth, from the inside and outside, and reach true health. This is achieved through an approach that focuses on treating each patient as a whole. Team members employ bioidentical hormone balancing, biohacking, lifestyle modifications, supplements and cosmetics to help patients look good on the outside and feel great on the inside. "Beauty and wellness must go beyond the skin in order for a person to truly be happy," explains Jean Paul.

Under the same theme of holistic care, Jean Paul co-founded Ollo Health Technologies in September 2019, which provides health care professionals a way to efficiently communicate with each other about their patients. The technology company's platform enables community health care workers to connect virtually as a solution for team-based care, which is widely known to deliver better patient care than solo care. For instance, when patients are treated in the community, current health services provide a good foundation, but the independent operation of each organization often leave patients coordinating their own care. In order to address this issue, Ollo designed their platform to be an easy, secure, and collaborative tool that is not limited to any one health care system. It can be seamlessly used in conjunction with each user's existing workflow.

As part of exploring different approaches to health, Jean Paul has also become a recent leader in the medical cannabis space as he believes it has numerous clinical benefits. When he is not busy at work, he enjoys spending time with his wife and children as well as playing a variety of sports.

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In fact, their motto is: "Your best self, at any age," and their mission is to help people regain their youth, from the inside and outside, and reach true health.

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# Jeff Mocha

Vice President, Enterprise Innovation

Jeff Mocha is the Vice President of Enterprise Innovation for Oakville Enterprises (OEC), which is a group of companies that specializes in providing energy and infrastructure services solutions. Customers include infrastructure owners within the electricity, telecommunications, gas and municipal sectors. Integrated services include electrical distribution and telecom engineering, asset management, infrastructure locates, suite metering systems, meter reading, GIS mobile aerial mapping, and innovative power generation, energy storage and geo-exchange solutions.

Jeff has extensive experience in the industry, is a licensed professional engineer, and a supporter of local swing dancing communities where he dances, teaches, and helps with event coordination. Prior to joining OEC Jeff worked in steel manufacturing where he was a thought leader for innovative power system solutions. After joining OEC Jeff was initially focused on the engineering aspects of the business, successfully overseeing major projects. He proceeded to make significant innovative enhancements and process changes to the company's approach to asset management. Jeff was also instrumental in advancing the automation of a 24/7 electricity distribution control room, reducing power outages in the service territory. Jeff's drive and forward-thinking nature progressed to leading the newly founded Innovation division of the organization.

"Through Innovation at OEC, we are seeking new and better ways to work, build, perform, and connect in ways that create value for the organization. It's an evolution and an approach that aligns resources, technology and collaborative partnerships to generate solutions to business challenges, productivity and profitability," he explains.

Jeff's role is twofold – fostering, accelerating and embedding a culture of innovation across the organization internally, while externally providing customers with innovative and valuable solutions to meet their specific needs.

"Internally in our organization we want to think, embrace, and drive innovation into our daily fabric. I engage with people and encourage collaboration, helping to foster creativity and find new opportunities. By creating an innovation-centric culture, we believe our employees will become difference makers," he shares.

"With our customers, their expectations and the technology they are using are changing at a rapid pace. We look for opportunities for our businesses to actively disrupt the status



"Through Innovation at OEC, we are seeking new and better ways to work, build, perform, and connect in ways that create value for the organization. It's an evolution and an approach that aligns resources, technology and collaborative partnerships to generate solutions to business challenges, productivity and profitability."

quo through the adoption of technologies, including artificial intelligence, augmented reality, etc.," he explains.

Jeff's naturally inquisitive engineering mind and his affinity for people drive him in his role - along with the company's brand attributes: "Lead. Innovate. Commit to Excellence." He leads the company in advancing the organization forward to strategically align all of its businesses with the fast pace of change, meeting the challenges of new and disruptive technologies, while continually preparing for the ongoing transformation of the energy and infrastructure sectors.



## Md Mizanur Rahman, P.Eng.

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### President & CEO

With almost two decades of diverse experience as a professional engineer, Md Mizanur Rahman is president and chief executive officer of MR Engineering Limited. He also serves as the senior structural engineer for the company. Headquartered in Edmonton, Alberta, the company is licensed in five provinces, serving clients across Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario. His primary areas of expertise include structural and civil engineering, project management, administration, and Level I welding inspection. He's been involved in the structural design of numerous commercial, industrial, and residential infrastructures.

Founded in 2011, MR Engineering is a Canadian-based engineering, surveying, and material testing company offering a variety of multidisciplinary professional services, such as design, engineering, procurement, and construction support. Mizanur and his team emphasize safety, creativity, and sustainability in their everyday performances, and together they work to not only cultivate superior designs, but to also meet and exceed customer expectations.

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His primary areas of expertise include structural and civil engineering, project management and administration, Level I welding inspection, and he's been involved in the structural design of numerous commercial, industrial, and residential infrastructures.

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Although Canada has recently seen an economic downturn, MR Engineering is continuing to grow steadily as they prepare to celebrate their 10-year anniversary. According to Mizanur, the company's success is partly due to their multidiscipline work for both commercial and industrial projects. Their team specializes in civil/structural, electrical, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) engineering, as well as all environmental and geotechnical aspects so that customers can shop in one place instead of being forced to get consultation of different packages from multiple companies. They do municipal engineering work for towns, cities, and counties as well. MR Engineering also boasts a geomatics team, which conducts topographic, legal, land, and construction surveys, material testing, which covers concrete, soil and compaction testing, and quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) during construction; basically, they do everything. "A variety of testing is always completed in order to ensure the quality of the project," explains Mizanur.

Mizanur's wife, an electrical engineer, has been helping the company to grow as well. She looks after the safety and electrical engineering disciplines and ensures MR Engineering is meeting all government requirements and safety standards. Because of her vast experience, she is equipped to oversee and participate in projects that involve electrical engineering while also serving as the company's radiation safety officer (RSO), a critical role given the company's utilization of nuclear gauges for compaction testing.

A COR-certified company, MR Engineering holds a *Certificate of Recognition* for safety from the Alberta government. They are also registered with the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta (APEGA), the Professional Engineers of Ontario (PEO), the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of British Columbia (APEGBC), the Association of Professional Engineers of Saskatchewan (APEGS), and the Alberta Land Surveyor Association (ALSA). The company is also committed to helping the community and recently distributed surgical masks to their clients and community members to help protect them during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Md Mizanur Rahman, P.Eng. | President & CEO  
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# Nawar Alkhamesi

MD, PhD, FRCS (Gen. Surg.)

Nawar is part of a highly specialized medical team that treat his patients while teaching medical residents, fellows, and visiting fellows from abroad.

An esteemed surgeon of almost 20 years, Nawar Alkhamesi holds both diverse experience and international recognition in surgery, academia, and medical research. Within his specialization of minimally invasive and robotic colorectal and general surgery and oncology, he incorporates almost every technique available and provides his patients with a comprehensive treatment plan, no matter what type of surgery they require. He currently practices at Western University in Ontario and London Health Sciences Center University Hospital and serves as the associate program director for the Advanced GI and MIS fellowship at Western University.

Dedicated to both the practice of medicine and the advancement of the field, Nawar is part of a highly specialized medical team that treat his patients while teaching medical residents, fellows, and visiting fellows from abroad. He places the utmost importance on patient care and recovery. During the patient journey, from diagnosis to treatment to after surgical intervention, Nawar and his team of nurses, dieticians, and pain care specialists, and other medical experts look after them while they're in their care.

Nawar's focus on the minimally invasive aspect of surgery began decades ago, in medical school, where he pioneered techniques that are now part of the standard of care. He completed his surgical, general surgery, and colorectal surgery training at Imperial College London and St. Mark's Institute in the U.K and Western University in Canada. While a research fellow at Imperial College, he developed an innovative technique for peritoneal aerosolization in minimally invasive surgery, and then continued his study of this specialized area at the University of London, where he earned his Ph.D. in surgical sciences.

Prior to joining Western University seven years ago, Nawar worked as a minimally invasive colorectal and general surgeon at Imperial College London. While serving within that role, he worked throughout the United Kingdom at The Royal Marsden, Chelsea & Westminster, Charing Cross, and St. Mary's Hospitals. In addition to caring for patients through his practice, Nawar continues his research work in England, participating in the development new technologies to deliver therapeutics into the body cavity during minimally invasive surgery through utilizing a combination of fluid and gas to create an aerosol. His research interests include surgical innovation and education, advance minimally invasive and video-assisted surgery, colorectal oncology, and the improvement of the operative environment, and he has published more than 40 journal articles and book chapters, which can be found on PubMed.



As a result of his research and dedication to the field, Nawar has received numerous awards, including:

- Top 100 Health Professional 2018. The International Bibliographical Center. July 2018
- Top 100 Health Professional 2017. The International Bibliographical Center. July 2017
- Award of Excellence in teaching Surgery from USC Teaching Honour Roll, Canada 2014-2015
- The Ronald Raven Prize for the best research project. British Association of Surgical Oncology. London, UK. November 2006

Nawar is a fellow of the Royal Colleges Surgeons of Great Britain, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, the American College of Surgeons, and the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons. He is also a member of the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons, European Society of Coloproctology, Association of Coloproctology of Great Britain and Ireland, Association of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland, British Association of Surgical Oncology, European Society of Surgical Oncology, Royal Society of Medicine, and sits on many boards, including the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons and the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons.

Nawar Alkhamesi, MD, PhD, FRCS (Gen. Surg.), FRCSEd, FRCSC, FACS, FASCRS

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## RAGAN NIEPEL

As a successful entrepreneur who built her business from the ground up, Ragan Niepel serves as a living testament to overcoming adversity. Her life began in southern Alberta, Canada, where she endured a challenging childhood after being adopted as an infant. Her family was so dysfunctional that at 15-years-old, Ragan was placed into a foster home by her adoptive mother. Nevertheless, she remained resilient, and although Ragan had to escape from a turbulent situation, she continued to set goals and to achieve them. Today, Ragan is the founder and president of Econo-Chem, a maintenance products company that has been leading the industry for over 31 years.

With an eleventh-grade education, Ragan left the foster home at age 17 after being recruited by a Florida-based chemical company to pursue a career in direct marketing. As a door-to-door salesperson, she traveled to 23 countries, including Europe and the Middle East, selling a product called Spray Clean. She also began to learn a lot about manufacturing and the ins and outs of the business.

By age 20, Ragan had become the director of sales and was overseeing 200 people. Eventually, she even helped

to build their team to 400 employees. Unfortunately, as she moved up, she discovered the company was not interested in adhering to sound and compliant business practices. She knew she could not remain an employee as Ragan's mission was to make a safe, specialty product with a legitimate company.

With the goal of replacing all other cleaning products, in 1989, Ragan, used her prior experience to develop a product called Econo-Clean. She then founded her own company. Headquartered in Calgary, Alberta, Econo-Chem's inside sales team has served over 30,000 customers throughout Canada and North America. The company's sales concept is based upon the issue of consumers buying thousands of products that contain the same ingredients and then ultimately adding them to the landfills. As a solution to the problem, Econo-Chem offers an all-purpose concentrate where consumers can add their own water and custom blend their own products. In turn, dangerous solvents, degreasers, aerosols, and other specialized products are eliminated. As an added bonus, the environment is protected with a food-safe, biodegradable, eco-friendly product that delivers the same effective results.

“ It doesn't matter where you came from but rather where you are going, and you can create that through your own resilience. Dream big because you can make it happen.

Ragan is always looking for ways to enhance her business and to attract new clientele. For instance, she recently expanded her product line to start making hand sanitizer. She also takes pride in providing alternatives that can benefit her customers long-term. As a result of her commitment, Ragan was featured in a book called, *I am a Brilliant Woman*, by Karen Klassen; a collection of stories featuring women who have overcome adversities to embrace their own strengths. Dedicated to female empowerment, Ragan says, “It doesn't matter where you came from but rather where you are going, and you can create that through your own resilience. Dream big because you can make it happen.” This is the message she wants to share with her own two daughters as well as the rest of the world.

Outside of running Econo-Chem, Ragan offers business consulting to various companies. Ragan knows the importance of strong inside sales training and the art of motivating and inspiring salespeople to reach their true potential. Ragan also took on the additional role of director of business development for a Toronto-based automotive software company called, Tire Storage Solutions. Not only has Ragan tripled the amount of clients they currently had prior to joining, she has also assisted in bringing their software into the International market place as a by-product of her commitment to sales excellence.

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# LUC BRUNET

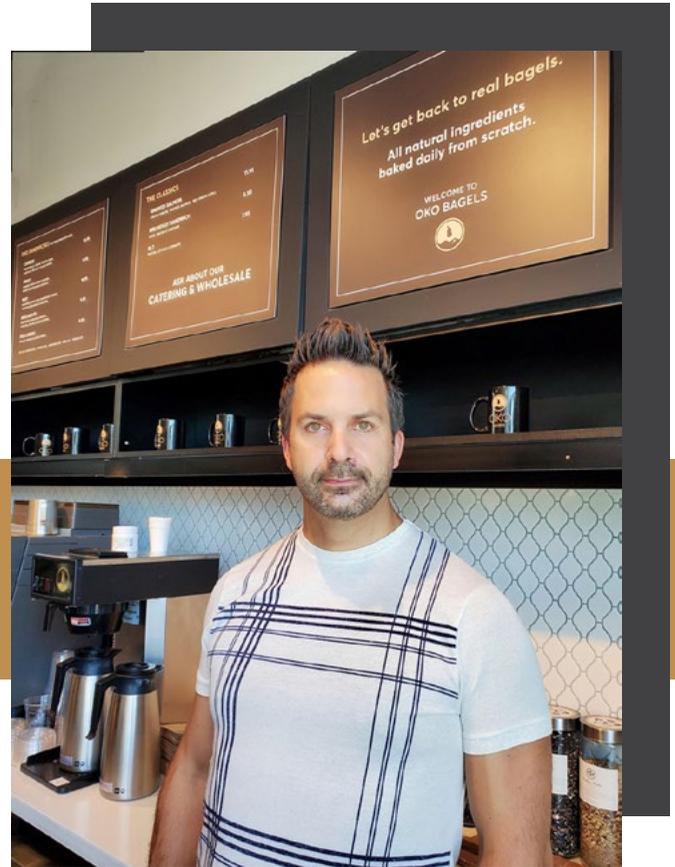
With over 20 years of diverse experience in the corporate industry, Luc Brunet has established a reputation as an adaptable, performance-driven, and bilingual business leader. Throughout his career, he has consistently been recognized as a relationship builder and team motivator with the ability to deliver against challenging and complex business matters. Recently, Luc transitioned into the small business arena as the new owner of OKO Bagels in Oakville, Ontario.

OKO's bagels are popular because of the strong brand awareness for offering quality products and great service.

As a Montreal-style bagel shop, OKO strives to provide customers with a satisfying and authentic experience. "Through our selection of top quality and fresh ingredients, we aim to redefine comfort food as a part of everyday nutrition, both for the body and the soul," says Luc. The company's bagels are baked fresh daily in a wood-fired oven, creating a unique texture that is crispy on the outside while chewy and dense on the inside. Luc explains, "Montreal-style bagels are a little different from the New York-style bagels because those are less sweet than ours." OKO's bagels are popular because of the strong brand awareness for offering quality products and great service.

Although the wood-fired oven already helps to create an artisan feel, Luc hopes to evolve OKO toward an even more European style, complete with a sit-down café area in future locations. "The OKO brand is strong, so we are now looking to expand our product suite to include other unique and premium offerings," says Luc. In the future, he hopes to not only expand his current business venture in the West end of the Great Toronto Area, but to also eventually franchise into other areas throughout Canada and even internationally.

Prior to purchasing OKO Bagels, Luc held a variety of professional positions, primarily in the corporate space. His approach to career progression has always been to broaden his skill set as much as possible in order to successfully take on whatever challenge comes his way. He first entered the workforce as a high school teacher but eventually went on to earn a Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Windsor, including a semester abroad in Sweden. Upon his graduation,



Luc was hired into a finance rotational program where he earned his stripes in all things accounting, budgeting, planning, and analysis.

Luc later entered the banking space, where he specialized in card payments. He held various roles in product management, overseeing the bank's co-branded portfolio, and eventually led the innovation team, which was responsible for launching North America's first EMV contactless chip cards among other accomplishments. Luc gained additional valuable leadership experience by becoming chief of staff to the President of the merchant services business before moving on to take on senior roles at MasterCard. He has since offered consulting services in addition to running the OKO business.

According to Luc, it is his ability to gain success in a variety of roles within different businesses and industries that sets him apart from most other professionals. He has garnered experience in many areas, particularly strategic planning, business development, and product management. From the beginning, his mission was to have a broad set of skills to rely upon, and he has certainly accomplished that.



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# Adam D. Segal

Chief Executive Officer



Adam leads the diverse, progressive, and passionate team at Storkcraft—the longest-standing name in the North American baby furniture sector—in keeping safety, design, and value top of mind when producing nursery products.

As president and CEO of Storkcraft, Adam Segal understands exactly what it means to start at the bottom and work his way to the top. Adam first joined Storkcraft in his early twenties, soaking up every opportunity to learn and gain experience across multiple positions in the company. As a result of his broad exposure to multiple areas of the business, Adam not only gained an in-depth understanding of the business, but also cultivated a genuine appreciation and understanding of every job function and employee. Today, Adam leads the diverse, progressive, and passionate team at Storkcraft—the longest-standing name in the North American baby furniture sector—in keeping safety, design, and value top of mind when producing nursery products.

Adam graduated from Ontario's Western University in 2006, where he earned a combined bachelor's degree (Hons.) in sociology and statistics, and from the University of British Columbia's Robert H. Lee Graduate School, where he attained a master's degree in business in 2009. Adam continues to further his education and leadership skills by completing



executive education courses at UBC as well as becoming a member in MacKay CEO Forums.

Assuming the role of president and CEO in 2017, and ushering in a new era for Storkcraft, Adam put in place an almost entirely new team – with diversity and inclusion, female empowerment, and progressive thinking top of mind. In addition to establishing Storkcraft's first-ever dedicated design and innovation teams, and investing into building best-in-class customer care and operations teams, Adam also put significant focus on developing a fresh and innovative product portfolio, a multi-faceted pricing structure and opening key distribution centers across the US to benefit both customers and the end consumer alike.

Under Adam's leadership, Storkcraft has been awarded the *Women's Choice Award® for America's Most Recommended Baby Furniture (2018 & 2019)* and the *Women's Choice Award® for 9 out of 10 Customer Recommended Baby & Kids Furniture (2020)*. Adam has also partnered Storkcraft with multiple charities—including Baby2Baby and Ronald McDonald House—to help bring dream nurseries and children's rooms to life for deserving families across North America.

With its brand name and recognition growing, and powered by a forward-thinking team, the 75-year old Storkcraft recently announced the newest license in its brand portfolio: Motherly, one of the leading online voices for millennial parents. Storkcraft is excited to bring to life the first-ever nursery collection for this influential, leading online platform for expectant and new parents.

Established in 1945 and based in Vancouver, Canada, Storkcraft has grown into an impressive global corporation. While Storkcraft's focus remains on growth in North America, the company is aiming to expand into Europe and Asia. Storkcraft's products are available for purchase through well-known retailers such as Amazon, Walmart, Target, and Wayfair, and will soon be available to purchase directly on their own website.

## Contact:

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# Mashood Ali

As an executive leader, he wields his well-honed mastery in aligning product development with marketing and sales strategies to grow loyal brand recognition.

Mashood Ali is vice president, Western Canada, for Agile Underwriting Solutions (formerly UCAI), responsible for quoting and placing business for insurance brokers across Canada, with a specific focus in the western region. With 22 years of experience in the industry, he serves his clients with a unique combination of skill, expertise, and the ability to work with a vast broker network across a large variety of specializations and maintain strong relationships with each of them.

Agile Underwriting Solutions (formerly UCAI) was founded in 1995 in Halifax NS as a managing general agent. Agile Underwriting Solutions was launched with the mission to “help brokers build their business by finding coverage for hard to place products.” The company serves as an intermediary between insurance companies and the retail broker, finding insurance solutions for complex risks that domestic insurance companies are unable to provide. The firm focuses on specialty lines business some of which include hard to place property and casualty, construction, medical malpractice, professional lines, pollution, manufacturing, realty, homeowners and other industries. As a commercial insurance executive with broad experience spanning the areas of underwriting, risk management, sales, marketing, and claims improvement, Ali’s primary focus is on large construction, hospitality for bars, restaurant chains, and, especially, large hotels. He also serves clients in the area of medical malpractice.

Mashood has built a reputation for not only his commitment to the firm’s mission, but for his skill as a corporate and industry leader. As an insurance expert, he applies his industry knowledge and expertise to provide the best solutions that serve the complex needs of his clients. As an executive leader, he wields his well-honed mastery in aligning product development with marketing and sales strategies to grow loyal brand recognition. In 2019, the industry recognized his dedication to and success with simultaneously serving both of these masters, when Mashood ranked as a finalist for *Underwriter of the Year*, after being nominated by *Insurance Business Awards*.



As a commercial insurance executive with broad experience spanning the areas of underwriting, risk management, sales, marketing, and claims improvement, Ali’s primary focus is on large construction, hospitality for bars, restaurant chains, and, especially, large hotels.

Mashood began his career with HB Group Insurance in his hometown of Toronto before moving to TD Meloche Monnex, where he served as a more personalized agent. In 2002, he joined Aviva’s commercial division as a senior commercial underwriter. “This role changed the course of my career,” he explains. “After being transferred to Vancouver, I left Aviva in 2007 and began my career in the specialty lines MGA space.” Over the next 13 years, Mashood built on his expertise and knowledge across the roles of branch manager, VP, and then regional business development manager before joining Agile Underwriting as VP, Western Canada, in January 2020.

He holds an FCIP (Fellow Chartered Insurance Professional) designation from the Insurance Institute of Canada—the highest educational designation in Canada for insurance—with a specialization in management. Outside of the office, Mashood supports the community by assisting in the local city food bank.



Mashood Ali, BA, CIP, FCIP — Vice President, Western Canada  
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# Robert Woolgar, P.Eng. FEC



“ Our approach to developing projects and relationships is not like what you would see in larger companies. We pride ourselves on doing the right thing, and establishing strong relationships is important to us, especially with the communities in which we work.

Robert Woolgar is the president and CEO of Growler Energy. As a professional engineer, Robert’s interest in renewable energy began in university, which led him on a 25-year journey across the industry. Robert now leads Growler Energy on a mission to produce and distribute clean energy. As one of four owners, he drives a unique energy company that departs from the “profit-first” mentality and firmly believes in a “Creating Shared Value” approach – a belief that is driven by the company’s passion for protecting the environment and empowering communities. “We are a devoted group, and we see ourselves as strategic thinkers. Our approach to developing projects and relationships is not like what you would see in larger companies. We pride ourselves on doing the right thing, and establishing strong relationships is important to us, especially with the communities in which we work,” he shares.

Long before he joined Growler Energy in 2018, Robert was a civil engineering student at Memorial University in Newfoundland and Labrador, finishing up his last two work terms at a waterpower consulting firm. It was his first exposure to renewable energy, and he was hooked. After graduating, he jumped into a career in the water power sector and never looked back, working on renewable energy projects across Canada, and gaining exposure to other areas of the industry. Robert was recognized as a fellow with Engineers

Canada for his outstanding contribution to the community and industry through dedicated volunteerism with the local *National Engineering Week* committee.

After 22 years working in the renewable energy sector, Robert realized there was something missing; he needed to explore his own ideas and concepts for renewable developments. It was during this time that Robert joined Growler Energy and from there, the company’s focus became locked-in on finding and developing renewable resource potential. Now as president and CEO, Robert is helping build the company from a renewable energy development startup into one that now partners with internationally recognized companies, such as Landsvirkjun Power in Iceland and Tetra Tech in North America, synergizing Growler Energy’s expertise in renewable energy. For Landsvirkjun Power, the partnership with Growler Energy is helping the team develop renewable energy strategies that reduce community dependence on diesel energy in Canada, reducing overall greenhouse gas emissions and fostering economic growth within communities. This renewable energy development partnership has led to specific renewable energy development projects with C&T Enterprises in Labrador and Nunavut Nukkiksautiit Corporation in Nunavut.

As Growler Energy continues its growth, Robert and the team at Growler Energy have also set their sights on expanding the company’s professional services to the offshore wind market in the United States and the Eastern Seaboard, including power generation, submarine power cables, landfall drilling, and project management professional consulting services. With Robert’s enthusiasm for renewable energy, the future is both green and bright for this emerging energy company.



## Jonathan M. Hartney | Founder, CEO, and Vice President of Project Development



YYC TECH  
CONSULTING

Jonathan Hartney has always been an entrepreneur with a passion for technology. As a result, he has opened several of his own companies in the technology space, ranging from project management to software development and high tech. Among the many titles he has held throughout his industrious career are blockchain innovator, enterprise project manager, SharePoint expert, business analyst, and bitcoin and crypto currency consultant. Today, Jonathan serves as an independent management consultant and as the founder, chief executive officer, and vice president of project development for YYC Tech Consulting headquartered in Calgary, Alberta. The company is a part of his family business, Hartney Enterprises.

*“Some men see things as they are and ask why. Others dream things that never were and ask why not.” – George Bernard Shaw*

An innovative thinker with a head for business, Jonathan hails from a long line of entrepreneurial minds. His great-grandfather, JD (John), started a horse-drawn laundry cart in Vancouver in the early 1900s and was one of the early conductors of the BC Street Cars. His grandfather, Ronald, began his career climbing telephone poles for the phone company in Vancouver and went on to assist with many business and charitable initiatives in the area, including the New Westminster Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, Junior Achievement, and Telephone Pioneers. Jonathan’s father, Michael, worked for many years with CP Rail, helping to develop innovations in the field of signals & communications and to establish one of the largest fiber optics infrastructures in Canada.

YYC Tech Consulting specializes in project and program delivery, organizational change management, business intelligence and analytics as well as operational excellence with a focus on value benefits and realization. “In other words, the firm works with enterprise businesses to roll out big software projects,” says Jonathan. They also help startups get set up with web applications and other innovative technologies. Team members work with clients to solve their business problems and to discover what is needed to help grow their business. They also offer services in project management, custom software development, applications, blockchain, and business process engineering. “The cornerstone of our success is working together with our clients to understand their needs and to bring a fit for purpose approach that will achieve the desired business outcomes,” Jonathan explains.

Prior to founding YYC Tech Consulting, Jonathan studied psychology in Calgary and started his career in youth work. Although he was passionate about the field, he discovered that he most enjoyed the technology industry. In fact, Jon and his wife continue to support and to be involved with youth programs through their initiative called shelterfrom.org. He obtained a diploma in information technology from Lethbridge College and his degree in management information systems from the University of Lethbridge in Alberta.

After graduation, he started out managing technology projects for several large companies. In 2007, he ventured out on his own as a consultant, which he loved because he was able to work with many different companies as well as on a variety of projects. Jonathan began to grow his own team from there while remaining focused on technology with the goal of helping businesses make their processes more efficient.



He has now worked as a technology consultant for over 13 years.

Jonathan also holds a master’s certificate in business analysis from Villanova University in Pennsylvania as well as a blockchain certificate from the University of Oxford. He also holds a certificate from The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he participated in the MIT Entrepreneurship Bootcamp, in which his team made it to the final round of presentations as a top viable business.

Presently, Jonathan is also involved with the Canadian Blockchain Consortium (CBC) where he serves as a director of the board. The organization was founded to unite Canada’s diverse community of blockchain business owners, developers, and those interested in exploring technology’s transformative potential. Through their inclusive ecosystem, members work to advocate for technology space, educate the public, and ultimately bring more prosperity to the nation.

Some of his upcoming projects and initiatives can be found at either [www.yyc-tech.com](http://www.yyc-tech.com) or [www.hartneyenterprises.com](http://www.hartneyenterprises.com):

**ProjectEngineer.net:** an initiative established to share project management experience with upcoming project managers and early PMP students.

**Nebulome.com:** the cloud beyond the clouds. A software platform dedicated to building better cloud software tools for businesses and industries

**Propentos.com:** this is an initiative for founders with no technology background. We bring our technology team alongside you and fulfill a CTO role for you and your start up

**Intelliphants.com:** this is an automated newsfeed that has been established to harness the power of automation technology and give you the information you need. Recently, we’ve re-focused this site to collect and provide information about COVID-19 and also provide some entertainment relief.

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# Rojit Sorokhaibam, Chief Executive Officer



With over 24 years of international managerial experience, as well as three companies of his own, Rojit Sorokhaibam is one of the most valued entrepreneurs in his industry. As a native of a small Indian city, Manipur, he understands the importance of working for the community. In fact, in the year 2007, Rojit was also among the top nominated entrepreneurs selected by the Indian government to represent India in dozens of other countries.

He has worked in India, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and the United States, and has served in multiple roles including advisor, organizer, and represented at the managerial capacity of community organizations. Currently, Rojit is the co-founder and chief executive officer for IDHUBS, a unique startup company that offers an integrated software as a service (SAAS) platform.

IDHUBS is working to be the source of global digital identity by providing a unique integrated SAAS collaboration ecosystem platform that is delivered through a white-label portal and custom iOS and Android app for the organization.

The platform can help participating members to transform their personal branding through interactive resumes and gain opportunity while using the platform for professionals and students.

With IDHUBS' approach, it can bring the team members, stakeholders, and their focused customers on board the same platform. The platform also provides a community-focused eMarketplace and personal branding for participating users. The solution will help to achieve the vision of every business, organization, and community. With an effective collaboration ecosystem among the team members and strategic stakeholders, IDHUBS can help and contribute to success which leads to higher efficiency and profitability.

"Time is changing fast; every business is striving to be the winner in their respective industry. In today's competitive world, there are lot of options available for a customer and information is widely available that helps make a well-informed decision. The continuous engagement has always been the key to a successful relationship and a successful relationship is something that money cannot buy and replace," says Rojit

IDHUBS helps and motivates the participating members and also gives credit for their contributions within an intently managed community environment. In addition, the platform can help participating members to transform their personal branding through interactive resumes and gain opportunity while using the platform for professionals and students.

IDHUBS also offers a fully functional B2B and B2C community eMarketplace. Business owners can do their business easily, securely, and efficiently with multiple payment gateway options and can benefit their target customers, who are already connected and verified.

IDHUBS also offers features like creating and managing events, opinion polling, crowdfunding for a verified good cause in the community, and a dashboard for the management of various reports.

As the chief executive officer of IDHUBS, Rojit also focuses on solving current challenges such as monthly business expenses, maintaining the cooperation and high morale of the team, and recruiting like-minded visionaries to join their team of investors.

"IDHUBS is based upon the principle of change," Rojit explains. "Everything on this earth is in a continuous state of evolving, refining, improving, adapting, or enhancing. As an IT entrepreneur, I see it in two ways: consumer patterns and technology." And IDHUBS is the answer and the new platform that the world has been looking for.

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# Karim Chandani, Vice President

“ It’s the team approach that makes HUB stand out from the competition. Our goal is the client and putting their needs first! ”

With over 25 years of experience as a business owner, Karim Chandani holds an in-depth understanding of his clients' insurance needs. In fact, he has been frequently recognized for his ability to use a hands-on approach and creative thinking when working to support his clientele. Today, as vice president of HUB International Insurance, headquartered in Canada and Chicago, Illinois, Karim continues to work on behalf of his clients and to provide them with tailored insurance solutions, peace of mind, and advocacy.

Known as a leading, full-service, global insurance broker, HUB International provides property and casualty; life and health; employee benefits; and investment and risk management services. The company currently employs over 13,000 people and has more than 500 offices located across North America, making it the largest insurance brokerage in Canada and one of the largest in the world. HUB's vast network of specialty experts are dedicated to providing instant information and industry leading solutions that smaller brokers simply cannot provide. For example, one of the company's primary advantages is its ability to offer specialty practices such as hospitality, real estate, health care and construction to name a few.

Another unique advantage HUB offers is the ability to assist clients with their businesses as well as with their employees and employee benefits. Team members can also help clients with their personal home needs, automobile insurance, pet insurance, and travel needs. HUB has become a one-stop shop, encompassing every insurance product and service within one company. “It's the team approach that makes HUB stand out from the competition. Working with high quality, experienced people like Yvonne Douglas in marketing, Marion Haralds as team lead, Tammy Anstiss handling certificate requests, and Tim Geddes and Mani Sharma providing leadership, our goal is the client and putting their needs first!”

As the vice president of hospitality at HUB, Karim not only focuses on the hospitality sector but also on retirement homes and manufacturing across Canada. As a result, he has developed a large client base with a variety of different needs. It is, therefore, Karim's responsibility to evaluate every company's unique business needs and to determine the best coverage options available for each.

Recently, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most insurance companies have experienced significant losses, which means they do not have the capacity to insure many risks. Consequently, the companies must then deal with worldwide markets in order to find the best insurance options, and that is where Karim comes in. He treats each customer's business as his own and offers everyone he works with the best service possible.

Another change that has resulted from the pandemic is HUB's increase in communication with clients. Team members have remained in



contact with clients both by phone and by email to answer questions and to keep them updated on what is happening within the company as well as with insurance coverage options. HUB has also involved the company's 90+ risk managers to develop and release a variety of checklists, which have been vital for their client base.

HUB's team members have also been working to offer multiple webinars and resources. “The information and resources that have been created and provided to our clients throughout this challenging time have been industry leading,” says Karim. HUB has proven that despite a rapidly changing world, its employees will continue to provide unrelentless advocacy and will continue to help clients reach their goals through risk services, claims management, and compliance support.



# Babak Shafiei

Founder and CEO

“ Our focus on oil and gas, expertise with data, and our repeatable processes give us the ability to quickly deliver value and solve challenges with laser-precision.



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Babak Shafiei has held a passion for technology since early in his life. Throughout his youth, he enjoyed building electronics and working with computers, and it was these same proclivities, coupled with enthusiasm, that ultimately led to his becoming the founder and chief executive officer of Integra Data and Analytic Solutions.

Headquartered in Calgary, Alberta, Integra is one of the few Canadian companies that focuses solely on solving the operational challenges faced by the oil & gas industry. Their mission is to provide advanced data and analytics, along with innovative solutions that incorporate machine learning (ML) algorithms and artificial intelligence (AI), to facilitate industry-wide transformation, which ultimately reduces costs and facilitates global competition.

Integra's team of engineers and data scientists have developed a cloud-based platform called, Digital Hub™, which enables rapid development of data solutions that can scale on demand. The platform helps to create a repeatable process and code collateral that address real-world engineering challenges in operations, maintenance, health, and safety. Integra's team also recently developed solution accelerators, which, in addition to helping clients advance in the fields of AI and ML with minimum cost, improve pipeline integrity, well production, energy management, maintenance, and drilling operations. So far, Integra has completed 10 such projects and achieved a 100% customer

satisfaction rate. Babak credits much of their success to Integra's methodology of starting small and growing by business value; they identify the business objective, define a hypothesis backed by data science, collaborate with the client to fine tune the insights, and quickly deliver a data solution, leveraging their deep expertise in data analytics. Using these parameters, the team can successfully complete a project within a short period of time.

“Our focus on oil and gas, expertise with data, and our repeatable processes give us the ability to quickly deliver value and solve challenges with laser-precision,” Babak explains. In fact, he continues, “Integra was recently recognized for their innovative projects and accepted to the government-backed, *Research Assistant Program*.”

Babak is one of the few people in North America with a unique background in developing analytic organizations that deliver business solutions. After working in the industry for over 20 years and excelling in all of his roles, he takes pride in his ability to select smart people and innovative minds. This ultimately allows him to solve problems in a cost-effective manner, while still maintaining the highest quality service.

Prior to founding Integra, Babak developed the analytic organization at Suncor Energy, Canada's largest integrated oil and gas company. Earlier in his career, he led the analytic teams at top consulting firms such as Deloitte and IBM. Babak is always thinking outside the box, is focused on delivering value to his clients, and loves to innovate in every aspect of his work. He is looking forward the launch of his latest innovation (Digital Hub) later in 2020.

# Sarah Seale

CEO – Seale and Garland Consulting  
Managing Partner -Cannabis Global Consultants

Sarah Seale is the CEO of Seale and Garland Consulting and one of four managing partners of Cannabis Global Consultants, Inc., both based in Canada. As a business strategist with over 15 years of experience on the international market and five years of exclusive expertise in the cannabis sector, she assists businesses and international governments with navigating the unique challenges of the industry. During the course of her career, which started in the franchise sector, Sarah has worked with over 34 countries and uses that experience to provide cannabis companies with a broad range of solutions, including business strategies, HR, distribution, and organizational structuring. “Any area you can think of in the cannabis arena, or affiliated with it, I’m working with it,” she shares.

As an entrepreneur with exclusive focus on the cannabis sector, Sarah has launched three successful companies in the past five years and helped over 20 others grow within the cannabis industry. With a reputation as a trusted advisor, she holds a range of knowledge, skill, and insight that is uncommonly broad—and supremely effective. She serves clients across the cannabis universe, from licensed producers to distribution companies, growers, extractors and companies operating within the tech sector.

In 2019, Sarah, along with her partner, Harwant Garland, founded the Toronto-based, Seale and Garland Consulting, which serves small and large companies and many of the Canadian-licensed producers. She and her group of high-level HR consultants, each with extensive knowledge in the complex issues related to the cannabis industry, help their clients set themselves up for operational success. They assist with employee recruitment, business strategies, organizational structure, and setting up HR departments to accommodate the rapid growth and change seen in this industry. “We help our clients to strategically build their company with a human resources focus, both financially and responsibility. We work not only with startups, but also with well-established companies that need external support. We only take on a few clients at a time to ensure that we are executing for these companies at the highest levels” she explains. Seale & Garland Consultants has been listed as one of the *50 Innovative Companies to Watch in 2020* by the *Silicon Valley Review*.

Cannabis Global Consultants was founded in 2018 in Ontario. The company focuses on assisting international governments with their medical cannabis legalization initiatives and helping individuals launch new companies in the industry. As one of four managing partners, Sarah and her partners, David Hyde, security and regulatory expert, Shlomo Booklin, cultivation expert, and Lauren Booklin, EUGMP and compliance expert, assist in the development of strategies ranging from educational conferences to regulatory affairs and legislation to licensing, logistics, and distribution. “We’re working with a number of governments and stakeholders, including Barbados, where we just had the *2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Medical Cannabis Educational Conference*. Our goal is to bring our networks and resources to emerging markets so that they can set themselves up for success. It includes a de-stigmatization and educational forum that we hope to continue throughout new emerging market. For instance, Barbados is now legalizing their medical cannabis program,” she shares.



“

We help our clients to strategically build their company with a human resources focus, both financially and responsibility. We work not only with startups, but also with well-established companies that need external support. We only take on a few clients at a time to ensure that we are executing for these companies at the highest levels.

Sarah also sits on two strategic advisory boards; Vinzan International, working on developing their international market in Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, and Colombia, and XTRX Solutions, which is set up to be a world-class extraction and fulfillment facility in Canada.

Sarah’s passion for the cannabis field reaches beyond her work life and into pro bono work for the medical cannabis industry. Her team works with a number of small companies and are strong advocates for patients’ rights and setting up frameworks for the medical cannabis industry.

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## Brian Roth

With more than fifteen years of diverse experience in finance and operations management, strategic planning, sales and marketing, mergers and acquisitions, and capital raising, Brian Roth is one of the most valuable leaders in his industry. He has the proven ability to perform complex analyses, lead teams of experts, efficiently manage multifaceted projects, and increase profitability in both large and small business environments. Today, as the chief executive officer at Ergosun Integrated Solar Roof Tiles and as the owner of Emergent Strategies, he leverages his experience to create value within growing entrepreneurial business.

As CEO, Brian is responsible for leading all business operations at Ergosun and reporting to their board of directors. Ergosun's mission is to solarize common building materials, making it easier and more aesthetically pleasing for people to integrate distributed



rooftop solar into their homes, without resorting to unattractive solar panels. The Ergosun product is a polymer solar module that mounts seamlessly onto a standard concrete roof tile, for installation by roofers who already install concrete tiles every day. The combination of beautiful aesthetics and simple installation have enabled the business to experience international success over the last few years.

Brian joined Ergosun in 2017 as the chief financial officer when the product was first developed. Ergosun has since gotten the solar module certified for installation internationally and have begun commercialization. Most of the selling is done through global distributors, who are taught how to bond the modules onto concrete tiles in local markets and sell through to local builders and roofers for installation. Ergosun then works with their distribution partners to assist in brand building and customer acquisition within each of their own markets. Ergosun roofs are now installed on homes in seven countries around the globe with the number growing every day.

He has the proven ability to perform complex analyses, lead teams of experts, efficiently manage multifaceted projects, and increase profitability in both large and small business environments.

In addition to his work with Ergosun, Brian performs strategy and financial advisory work for small to medium businesses under the brand of his own consulting company, Emergent Strategies. In order to help clients reach their goals, Brian focuses on three service areas: Value maximization, CFO-for-hire consulting, and corporate triage. In the value maximization service area, Brian works with business owners to evaluate what levers of control they have within their business, then builds a model to best leverage their strengths and opportunities to put them on a path to success. Brian delivers a model and metrics his clients can work towards and measure against on an ongoing basis. As a CFO-for-hire, Brian explains that “a lot of businesses, especially, in their early stages, need the strength a traditional CFO brings, but not full time.” Therefore, providing a hired consultant is often a better solution. In the third service area, corporate triage, Brian provides assistance to entrepreneurs, who have often ignored some of the documentation and filings necessary for fund-raising and other efforts during their focus on developing and launching their new products or services.

Prior to Ergosun and Emergent Strategies, Brian earned both a mechanical engineering degree as well as a Master of Business Administration degree. In his first role after graduate school, he joined a small entrepreneurial business that hired him to investigate other uses for the technology within their portfolio. Over the course of eight years there, Brian spent time in both product management and strategic sales before taking over the finance and accounting portfolios as well. During his time there, he also became a chartered professional accountant (CPA) by attending night school. Brian and the rest of the senior management team negotiated a successful exit for their investors through a strategic sale of the business.

Subsequently, Brian joined a building science engineering consulting firm. By opening several new offices, organically growing their existing offices, and making acquisitions of competing firms, Brian worked with the senior principals to grow revenues more than 65% in just three years. Brian credits all of his diverse work experience with putting him on a successful path and for ultimately preparing him for his current roles at Ergosun Integrated Solar and at Emergent Strategies.

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# Brian Jones

Vice President,  
Portfolio Manager  
& Investment  
Advisor

As a wealth manager, he incorporates how the economy works with stocks and believes it's important to walk each client through everything to help them interpret and understand their investments.

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As a vice president, portfolio manager, and investment advisor with TD Wealth, Brian Jones has dedicated his entire 20-year career to helping people manage their wealth to achieve their goals and reach their dreams. As

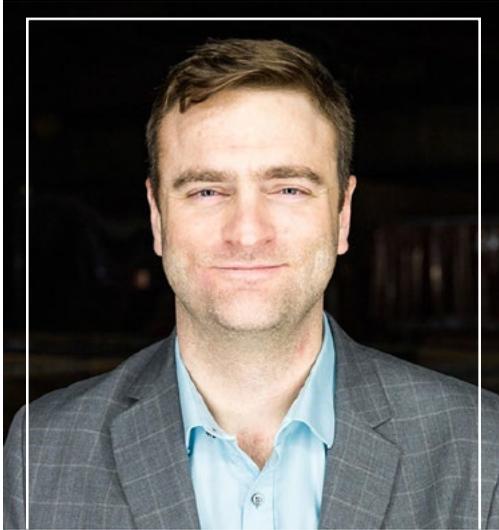
a wealth manager, he incorporates how the economy works with stocks and believes it's important to walk each client through everything to help them interpret and understand their investments. He is an economist and an award-winning financial advisor committed to academics, a citizen dedicated to philanthropic causes who has raised over \$2 million for his local community, and an ambitious athlete whose prowess has taken him from professional sports to the top of Mt. Kilimanjaro. One might say Brian is the quintessential Renaissance man.

Brian is a fellow in the Canadian Securities Institute, a Certified International Wealth Manager, and a Canadian investment advisor whose skill and commitment to the field has garnered multiple awards, including *Advisor of the Year in Canada* by *Advisor Magazine* and being twice ranked as a *Top 7 Portfolio Manager of the Year in Canada* by *Wealth Professional Magazine*. He draws from his vast knowledge across the universe of finance and economics to deliver solid results for his clients. In addition to the insight gained over his two decades of experience in the field, he harnesses his knowledge from a cache of degrees and certifications. He holds a

bachelor's degree from UNB in economics and military history, and he is a graduate of the SIFMA program at Wharton School of Business, Negotiation Essentials at Notre Dame Mendoza College of Business, Advanced Risk and Investment Management at Yale School of Management and a graduate of Authentic Leadership Development at Harvard Business School.

Committed to community, Brian uses his success to contribute to the betterment of people's lives, taking much of the profits he makes and putting it back into the community. However, he not only commits money to causes, he gets involved hands-on to learn about the charities he supports, which include kids at risk, autism, The Hospital Foundation, and mental awareness and homelessness. To generate awareness to the plight of the homeless population, Brian spent a week homeless in his hometown. For other charities, he and a friend walked the length of New Brunswick for Liberty Lane, a second-stage housing program for women at risk and spent a week on the top of a transport for local food banks.

A lifelong athlete, Brian is a former professional rugby player and the first person in New Brunswick to ski to both the North and South Poles, and he uses his skill to help community causes. In support of charities, he has climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro and Mt. Vinson, Antarctica, and has run Ultra marathons in The Sahara, Gobi, Atacama, and Wadi Rum deserts. "When I go to the Poles and these deserts, it's a large learning experience; a lot of grit and dedication goes into it. I get out to go share this with the kids I work with. I also take into consideration everything going, on such as racial issues and COVID," he shares.



## John Clarke

As a civil engineer with over two decades of experience in residential, commercial, and industrial commercial construction, John Clarke is not a self-described environmentalist or a tree-hugger, but a citizen who believes that everyone has a role in environmental stewardship. When he co-founded Niche Development Corp., he didn't set out to help save the planet or change society. Yet as president of the only development firm in North America that can build zero-emission multifamily buildings, he is doing just that with a company comprised of its own engineering, construction, and development groups all working toward the goal of environmental sustainability. As the leaders in energy efficiency across the continent, they are the designers behind the first zero-emission building—an eight-story affordable housing project heated and cooled geothermally and outfitted with solar rays on the roof and walls, using zero gas. “Trying to convince people to change the way they do things is really hard. When we first started, no one believed us. Now that we're showing people how it's done, people believe us, and we can help invoke change in society and change the planet,” John explains.

John founded Edmonton-based Niche Development Corp. with partner Peter Purewal in 2015 as a company inspired by sustainability, durability, and zero-energy innovation. With a focus on green energy and the ability to construct a multifamily building with almost entirely renewable energy, they established a brand-new niche in the construction industry. “We named ourselves Niche because we

knew we had a niche market for people. There's no one else in the business who builds or produces the buildings that we do, and within the time frame we do. A 69-unit building took us 14 months, and it has the first zero-emission HVAC system. We used geothermal heating and cooling with no gas whatsoever.”

Niche is certainly a different kind of development company. As leaders in tech, and with in-house engineering, they both design their innovative buildings and build them. With these advantages, people get high quality with a low cost, and with construction of almost entirely renewable energy, they get a very comfortable living environment with cleaner, fresher air, and excellent insulation that provides a consistent temperature. “People can't hear their neighbors, which is huge. You cannot hear the person above. EVER! Not even dropping a hammer on the floor would do it,” John explains. Niche also places tremendous importance on safety, using only pretested concrete and structural steel, unlike most developers who use wood, which can pose a danger to residents. “A lot of people here build with wood, but it burns, rots, and molds, and shouldn't be used in houses. That is not our model. We like to make sure people know that when they build with us, they're safe and can sleep well at night.”



Niche also places tremendous importance on safety, using only pretested concrete and structural steel, unlike most developers who use wood, which can pose a danger to residents.

John reflects on the early days of his trailblazing development company, and where they are now—as a firm who is changing the face of North America's construction industry. “To build, you need engineers, and that was the largest hill we had to climb. We had to have our engineers design our buildings in a way no one else has ever done. Now we're changing the planet and, essentially, society by convincing an industry they've been doing it wrong and showing them how to change the way things are done. We do it because it helps people and our planet, and it just makes good buildings.”

John is a proud NAIT graduate with a civil engineering technology diploma, which he has used extensively in his career. In addition to the charitable work on behalf of the company, he also extensively supports the ALS society.

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# Daniel McIntyre

## Vice President

In his role as vice president and partner at 3GA Marine LTD (3GA), Daniel McIntyre challenges the tried and true methods of the Canadian marine ship building industry and offers technological advancements to bring a new era of creativity. Daniel encourages ideas and collaboration from both his customer's and his team members to bring the project vision to reality while improving safety, delivering products faster, and economically and ultimately having fun while doing it.

Most recently, Daniel applied the 3D laser scanning concept to the marine marketplace and developed a service that enables ship owners to refit their vessels faster, cheaper and with less risk. After a few short years, this innovative method has fast become standard for refit engineering in Western Canada, with competing companies following suit. "The scanner is basically a camera that shoots lasers to record the exact position of any physical object or space. The spatial data is often referred to as a point cloud. 3GA uses this point cloud to develop refit engineering deliverables capable of an accuracy to production acceptable levels of 1mm. This powerful tool allows ship owners, shipyards and naval architects to pre-plan, pre-engineer, and pre-fabricate any retrofit project to unparalleled levels of efficiency and risk reduction." Daniel explains.

3D scanning wasn't enough for Daniel's thirst for innovation. Along with his engineering team, they took the process one step further by adding a virtual reality component. This technology creates a new kind of engineering environment possible all but from a desk, it feels like you're standing inside the ship and have access to all and any spatial information at a whim. This unprecedented level of awareness is the key to eliminating almost all errors in vessel refit design because perception is everything.

Daniel is always looking to the future and for ways that advancing technology can be integrated into the marine industry to solve problems and better service his customers. His current focus is developing a new 3GA drone surveying service to bring to the market. The drone will be used to supplement, and eventually replace, the need for surveyors to enter hazardous spaces for inspection work. Daniel explains "Safety is of the utmost importance, but it is also expensive. To eliminate this safety concern and its cost, we just need to eliminate the risk, let's send in a drone to inspect instead." Once the service is approved and running, Daniel expects to see a significant improvement in workplace safety numbers and cost savings for his customers. A win-win for everyone.

Another important way Daniel brings value to his team and his customer's is his focus on aligning people's aptitudes and interests with roles they enjoy doing. This brings a high level of creativity, results, and employee satisfaction and fulfillment. Working with his two business partner's, David Stocks and David Mietla, and 25 employees, Daniel's design firm works on a



**Daniel encourages ideas and collaboration from both his customer's and his team members to bring the project vision to reality while improving safety, delivering products faster, and economically...**

variety of vessels from ferries, patrol boats, workboats, and tugs to barges. The team strives to align product, price, and process with each customer's individual need for quality, budget, and on-track schedules. As an international partner of Marine Professionals, 3GA provides services in engineering, project support, laser scanning and consulting to shipyards, ferry fleet owners, and tug and barge operators. They not only service the entire market in Canada, but they are also moving into the United States and other international markets.



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# Sue Ozdemir

## Chief Executive Officer

Sue Ozdemir is one of Canada's proven leaders in the innovation and manufacturing of electric motors. She has worked across North America, Asia, and Europe in key executive roles, advancing the innovation and commercialization of electric motor technology in numerous sectors.

After almost a decade at General Electric, where she became chief commercial officer and then CEO of GE's Small Industrial Motors Division, she decided in the autumn of 2019 to take on a new challenge: CEO of Exro Technologies. That Canadian company was developing what she calls "a brain" for electric motors, to dramatically improve their performance, particularly in the mobility sector with respect to electric and non-electric cars, heavy equipment, and last-mile transportation vehicles such as motorcycles, e-bicycles, and e-scooters.

"When I learned about Exro's breakthrough technology, and then saw it in action, I knew I had to take on the role as CEO

“ “ I'm a company builder and innovator at heart. ” ”

of Exro," said Ozdemir. "Exro's technology is now proven and I believe we will have global impact. Not just in making electric motors and powertrains much more efficient for businesses, but also in contributing to our planet's environment by making sure we get the most out of the energy we put into the electric motors that are essential to so many parts of our daily lives."

Sue returned to Calgary in 2019, to take up her new role as Exro's CEO. She has since put together a team to advance Exro's innovation and commercialization program. Working out of the new Exro Innovation Center in Calgary, where ongoing R&D in power electronics, motors, generators and batteries are the focus, she has made it Exro's mission to help the world use minimum energy to get maximum results from electric motors. Investor interest is growing in the company and the Exro team have now completed more than a half-dozen partnerships with mobility companies to commercialize Exro's technology.

"A company — and a CEO — can only succeed with a team of talented people behind them," she says. "Building that team, and constantly adding to it in a disciplined way, has been my priority at Exro. That's the secret to success when you are bringing a new innovation to market."

Building rapid commercialization strategies isn't new to Sue. After building up GE's Small Industrial Motors Division in global markets, that GE division drew international interest. That's why GE asked her to be part of the executive team to sell its Small Industrial Motors Division to China's largest motor manufacturer, Wolong Electric. That goal was achieved in 2018, after which Sue was asked to stay on by Wolong as CEO of the newly formed GE Industrial Motors Division. But after a year in that role, the possibilities of Exro's technology, and the chance to commercialize another new technology, was a challenge she couldn't resist.

"I'm a company builder and innovator at heart," said Ozdemir. "Even as a kid in Milton, Ontario, I would work in my family's motor shop fixing motors and learning about running the business from my parents. Motors are part of my DNA. That's why the opportunity to join Exro and build a team that takes this Canadian-made technology to the global marketplace, to help make the world's electric motors more sustainable, to make an impact on building a more sustainable future, was a challenge I had to embrace."



The Power Within

# SID ZERBO

Boasting a strong entrepreneurship background, Sid Zerbo holds over 30 years of professional experience in engineering, project management, and business development throughout Canada and the United States. As a native of Africa, he also holds extensive global experience as well as strong ethical values. Sid has always believed in having a dream and working hard to make it come true. Today, as owner of Royal Systems in Montreal, Quebec, Sid dedicates himself to the electrical integration of hydro-electric, automation of industrial processes, and other clean energy proposals and projects. He also strives to maintain a high level of professionalism and competency within every role he undertakes.

Royal System is a computer science company specializing in information technology, electronics, security, and energy. Royal System team offers a range of innovative products for both companies and individuals to facilitate the management and development of their businesses.

In addition to his role as owner of Royal Systems, Sid has made significant contributions to other companies. For instance, he worked as a project manager at ABB, a leading global technology company, for almost 10 years before accepting a position as a national sales manager for American Superconductor, which provides wind turbine electronic controls and systems, designs and engineering services that reduce the cost of wind energy.

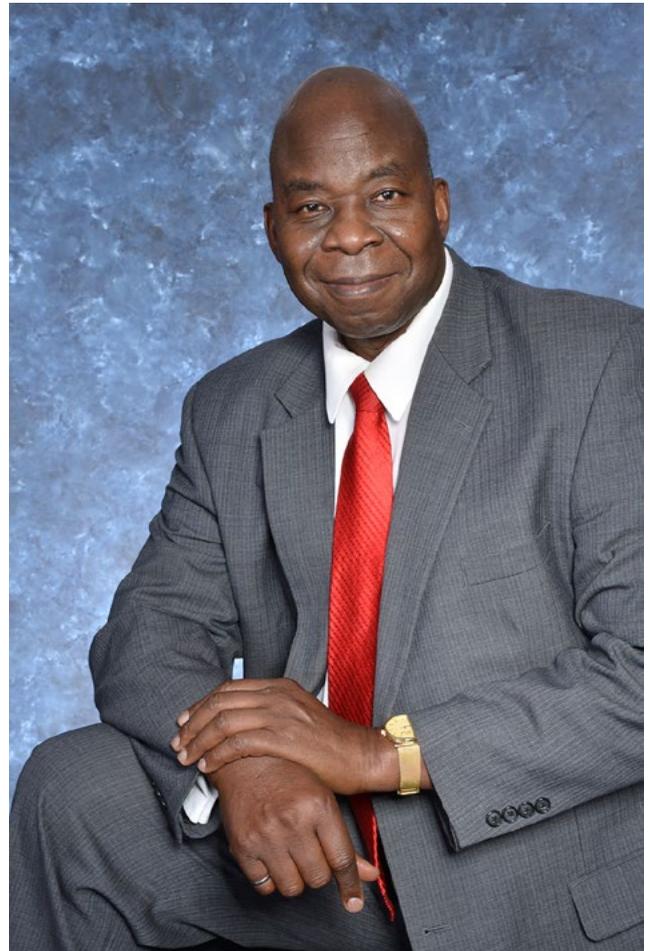
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As owner of Royal Systems in Montreal, Quebec, Sid dedicates himself to the electrical integration of hydro-electric, automation of industrial processes, and other clean energy proposals and projects.

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Not only has Sid made a difference by working within the engineering industry itself, but he has also been involved in a number of professional organizations. He has served as vice president for the Order of Engineers Quebec, the main organization in charge of the competency of over 63,000 engineers. Sid has also acted as president of Quebec's most important chapter: The Montreal Chapter of Engineers. After that, he was elected as a board member for Engineer Canada, which is at the national level. Most recently, Sid became president of the board for the Festival International Nuits d'Afrique, the largest world music festival in North America.

While serving on the boards of organizations has provided Sid with an opportunity to learn and to contribute, he credits his ethical background for enabling him to successfully perform his duties as an engineer. "In addition to social involvement, it is essential to maintain trust, good ethics, and strong values," says Sid. Throughout his career, he has worked to adhere to the highest ethical standards for his clients, for the engineering industry, and for



himself. Sid believes that every true professional should be able to interact with other professionals in a positive way.

Sid is a proud alum of Polytechnique Montréal, the first engineering school in Canada. It was there that he earned a degree in electrical engineering with a specialization in automation and computer science. Sid also holds numerous honors and distinctions: He was awarded the highest distinction as an engineer by the Fellow Engineers of Canada (FEC) as well as a distinction for his involvement in The Order of Engineers in Quebec.

In 2019, Sid was also presented the Order of Merit by the ambassador of Burkina Faso in West Africa, the region from which he hails.



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## Casey Binkley

Casey Binkley is the founder of Movia, a unique Toronto-based, out-of-home advertising and media provider that combines data analytics with traditional OOH advertising. This makes Movia the only mobile billboard advertiser with unique GPS tracking and impression analytics technology.

He is a lifelong serial entrepreneur with a string of successful ventures, a former member of AngelPad, a seed-stage accelerator program that has launched more than 150 companies and has served as a Canadian entrepreneur delegate for the G20 in Argentina. With a head for business, the creative mind of a marketing authority, and the analytical skills of a tech expert, Casey leads this tech-driven company in its drive to increase the brand awareness of its clients with targeted truck-side advertising. “Before advertising, we were a full-blown tech company, and still are. Unlike traditional truck-side ads companies, our moving billboards use beacon technology for analytics measurement, and to serve retargeting ads back onto mobile devices that come in contact with the mobile billboard campaign—doubling their visibility and ad recall,” he explains.

# MOVIA

Casey Binkley, Owner  
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LinkedIn: Casey Binkley

Casey founded Movia in 2016, bringing to bear a cache of diverse knowledge, experience, and skills gained throughout an entrepreneurial career that spanned the recycling, manufacturing and distribution, special events, and gold mining spaces. Still, with an impressive history of success, he is a humble leader with a hardworking, personable nature and an unwavering work ethic. “I don’t feel like you are a top performer by delivering only on what you promised, but rather by over-delivering. I’m focused on building a profitable business and shooting for the stars at the same time,” he shares.

The idea for Movia was born in 2015, when Casey noticed that trucks had no advertising on them—they were blank mobile billboards that begged to be used for creative advertising. As he explains, “I thought this is an underutilized asset for truckers and advertisers.” He knew that companies were demanding more outdoor brand exposure while the supply of traditional billboards was shrinking, and he recognized that there was a critical need for data analytics to help marketers target their ads and expand their reach. He launched the data-driven, mobile billboard company a year later with an innovative truck-side advertising approach that would change the face of outdoor marketing. “Mobile billboards are viewed by 95 percent of people that go by them and are read by 85 percent of them—almost twice the attention that static billboards receive,” he shares.

Movia partners with trucking companies to provide premium outdoor advertising space on the sides and backs of delivery trucks and semi-trailers, and uses a proprietary tracking device that provides real-time analytics on



**I don’t feel like you are a top performer by delivering only on what you promised, but rather by over-delivering. I’m focused on building a profitable business and shooting for the stars at the same time.**

impression data, location data, and frequency reports through Wi-Fi scanning of mobile devices. “When people leave the Wi-Fi on their cell phones, as the truck rides around, it picks it up. We measure those impressions, and working with mobile device retargeting companies, we can send messages back onto phones that come in contact with those trucks. And it’s driving huge results. For example, a recent execution for Mody, a US online interior design service, produced a 14% lift in online conversions.

Movia’s fleet currently delivers over 2.7 billion impressions per month for its clients across North America and into Europe. Still, Casey’s entrepreneurial spirit continues to drive his team of marketing, advertising, and tech experts on their mission to innovate new ways to help companies gain an extra edge over their competitors through data-driven mobile advertising—and Movia’s clients continue to reap the rewards.



# James Hobson



Our work inspires hundreds of thousands of youth around the world into STEM fields, as we show how cool it is to be an engineer.



As founder and CEO of Hacksmith Entertainment Ltd., James Hobson runs one of the largest tech-based *YouTube* channels in the world called, *The Hacksmith*. In their *Make It Real* video series, they turn fictional ideas from movies, comics, and video games into real working prototypes as a way to inspire youth around the world into science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields. *Make It Real* began as a glimmer of an idea, inspired by a pair of metal Wolverine claws he built for a Halloween costume in 2009, and is now a company on fire, with over 9 million subscribers enthusiastically fanning its flames. For James, this is an engineer's dream come true. "Our work inspires hundreds of thousands of youth around the world into STEM fields, as we show how cool it is to be an engineer."

Based in his hometown of Kitchener, Ontario, aka, the Creative Capital of Canada, James founded the company in 2016, when he quit his full-time job as an engineer to pursue *YouTube* full-time. Today, the company has a 13,000sf facility with over a dozen full-time employees, receives millions of *YouTube* views daily, offers an international internship program, and works with *Fortune 500* companies to create unique, one-of-a-kind advertising opportunities. However, before launching his brainchild, James' career was similar to most engineers; as an employee for someone else's company. He joined Athena Automation in 2012 as a mechanical designer after graduating with a Bachelor of Mechanical Systems Engineering from Conestoga College. In 2014, he moved to Christie Digital Systems, where for over a year he designed and tested digital projectors as a product developer. During most of this time, he juggled his full-time job with a part-time job as a writer for *Hack a Day*, all while making *YouTube* videos on the side.

That all changed in 2014, with an idea that would ignite the *YouTube* torch and capture the attention of the masses. Armed with a single-car garage full of tools, the creative mind of an inventor, and an entrepreneurial spirit, James built an exoskeleton similar to the one worn by Matt Damon in the movie *Elysium* (2013). The video series grew his *YouTube* subscribers to 70,000 and gave James the confidence to quit his job the following year to pursue *YouTube* full-time. His long-time friend, Ian Hillier, joined him as a business partner that summer and they released their first "truly-viral" video about an electromagnetic Captain America shield that could be recalled to the user's arm from short distances. The video coincided with the release of a blockbuster Marvel movie, resulting in mega-viral views online and the channel grew from 100,000 to 500,000 subscribers in less than a month! Since then, the channel has produced hundreds of *Make It Real* episodes and the business has enjoyed near exponential growth, doubling year after year in almost every metric, from views, subscribers, revenues, and even employees.

James attributes the growth to treating the platform as both a *YouTube* channel and a business from the start. "With the internet, you can have your 15 minutes of fame, but if you don't have an entrepreneurial mindset and treat it like a business, the opportunity can vanish," he explains. "We're different from most other *YouTube* channels in that we knew that reinvesting everything back into the channel was a key to success. Because we treat it like a business, we succeed where others may not." While the prototypes that James and his team create are usually not commercially viable to produce at scale, he believes in the value of bringing all ideas to life. "We believe that all ideas are worth prototyping for the sake of innovation and pushing the envelope -- inspiring millions around the world on the way."



James Hobson, Founder and CEO  
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# Donna Purcell

## President and Founder

With over 30 years of experience, Donna Purcell, Q.C. provides practical and timely legal representation for all types of civil disputes. Motivated by a desire to help and support others, she decided to become a civil litigator. Using her diverse skill set, Donna has successfully resolved disputes for numerous clients in varying situations and with various issues including catastrophic and serious personal injury and employment law matters as well as other civil litigation cases. Today as president and founder of Donna C. Purcell Professional Corporation, operating as Donna Purcell QC Law, her goal is to provide expedient and cost-effective solutions to clients, including via alternative dispute resolution processes through her hybrid bricks-and-mortar/virtual law firm.

After studying psychology at the University of Calgary, Donna went on to pursue her Juris Doctorate and began practicing law in 1988. She has had a remote practice for 20 years and a fully digital practice for the past 10. This has allowed her the freedom to travel, spend time with family, and pursue myriad volunteer community and legal profession initiatives. In fact, Donna designed a virtual litigation series early after the declaration of the global pandemic and continues to advocate for the future of digital legal services in the legal industry to share with other professionals how to maintain successful careers while still being able to enjoy

life outside of work, spend valuable time with family and contribute to the community.

Running a virtual office has not only allowed Donna to be efficient in her practice, but it has also allowed her to become a leader in her profession. She has served as president of the Alberta Civil Trial Lawyers Association and is on the Leader Development Committee for the Canadian Bar Association, Alberta Branch. Donna has also been a member of the Legal Archives Society of Alberta as well as with many other organizations and is involved with various groups to support access to justice issues during the Pandemic and beyond.

Donna Purcell's goal is to provide expedient and cost-effective solutions to clients, including via alternative dispute resolution processes through her hybrid bricks-and-mortar/virtual law firm.

In addition to her various leadership roles, Donna is frequently asked to present at seminars and arranges presentations for professionals including other members of the bar. Most recently, as noted, she led a group of lawyers in developing a webinar series on virtual litigation from the beginning stages of meeting the client to attending trial. The series also includes a component of virtual resiliency to deal with court suspensions due to Covid-19.

Whether she is in the bricks-and-mortar offices of Donna Purcell QC Law or elsewhere in the world, Donna's practices focus in two main areas. She primarily handles catastrophic and serious personal injury matters resulting from various civil law breaches including motor vehicle accidents, product liability and occupiers' liability. As well, she also regularly advises on employment law issues for both employers and employees, from human rights breaches, to termination, to injunctions. Trained in the mediation of disputes, Donna strives for alternative dispute resolution processes apart from the court system which has become too expensive, slow and complicated for most Canadians involved in civil disputes. Nevertheless, she is always prepared to litigate a case when necessary.

As a result of the exemplary client and community service she provides, Donna has received numerous honours and awards. These include the *Women in Law Leadership Award*, the *Central Alberta Pro Bono Prism Award*, and the *Gary J. Bigg Champion of Justice Award*.

**DONNA PURCELL QC**  
LAW

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# Shami Baba

## Chief Executive Officer

Shami Baba is the CEO of 1ONEFUND Financial Group Ltd., a leading mortgage brokerage and lending institution based in Ontario, Canada. Under his direction, 1ONEFUND Financial and its lending division, 1ONEFUND Administration Group Ltd., specialize in often overlooked areas, such as agricultural, vacant, and rural properties, and jumbo loans. As the only company in Ontario that provides financing for rural areas and serves clients outside of the province, they stand as the industry leader in this space.

Shami founded 1ONEFUND Financial Group in 2006 as a mortgage brokerage and added the private lending arm, 1ONEFUND Administration Group, two years ago, through which the company works with private individuals who invest cash on an equity basis for a property, secure it against the home, and release funds accordingly. 1ONEFUND Financial Group serves the general public, working with banks, trust companies, ultimate markets, and the B-segment to provide mortgage solutions and financing options for homeowners and investors. The company caters to a broad range of clients, from people with great credit scores who are eligible for banking or institutional financing, to those who are self-employed or without consistent income, for whom Shami uses his 16 years of brokering experience to “think outside the box” and find solutions that fit their situations.

“The investor always comes first, and by protecting them, they keep coming back.”

What makes 1ONEFUND Financial Group unique is what Shami describes as its “fundamental system,” in which the company has conquered five important facets of the lending space—all with an eye on growth and protecting investors. For example, if someone stops paying a mortgage, Shami goes to court and gets possession of the property, then puts it up for sale immediately to save his money. The company has also grown organically by purchasing companies. They have a project management company and law firms that they work with, and



1ONEFUND Financial Group serves the general public, working with banks, trust companies, ultimate markets, and the B-segment to provide mortgage solutions and financing options for homeowners and investors.

investments in real estate. Because Shami is the originator and can offer these services, the contract with his investors states that they get their money first before anyone gets paid. “The investor always comes first, and by protecting them, they keep coming back,” Shami says.

Shami takes great pride in the company’s relationships with clients and key players in the industry, and it’s these relationships that have allowed the company to thrive as a niche lender that commands 95 percent of the market in rural areas—a space where people don’t usually lend money. “We can lend in this challenging area because we have relationships with people who broker the deals and send us the mortgages to lend on. Our clients come to us via referrals, so people feel more comfortable,” Shami explains.

As for his 10-year vision for 1ONEFUND Financial Group and his role as a leader, Shami draws on the tools and skills gained through his former role as pricing leader for General Electric to guide the direction of his company and how he operates it. “My role as a leader is so important. I have empowered my people, and it’s my job to make sure they have a nest egg when they retire,” he shares.



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# YURI RUNOFF

As the president and chief executive officer of Runoff Capital Management Inc., Yuri currently invests in various companies related to information technology (IT), pharma, life science, and real estate.

A highly esteemed private equity professional, Yuri Runoff has garnered years of experience in corporate development, product management, mergers and acquisitions, product marketing, valuations, and due diligence. He is also an active angel investor who has been involved in the market research of potential portfolio companies such as the successfully exited Blue Bat Games and Shelfie (BitLit Media). As the president and chief executive officer of Runoff Capital Management Inc., Yuri currently invests in various companies related to information technology (IT), pharma, life science, and real estate.

Headquartered in Ottawa, Ontario, Runoff Capital Management is a management company of Runoff Capital Group, a private equity investment firm that provides clients with an opportunity to invest in a diversified portfolio of global IT holdings. The company first opened in April 2018, and a few months later, in 2019, Yuri started Runoff Capital Fund I LP, an investment fund with a focus on sustainability solutions and IT such as artificial intelligence (AI) and Internet of Things (IoT).

As the company's CEO, Yuri makes all the top-level decisions and frequently serves as an advisor and mentor to team members as well as fellow investors. Another of his primary responsibilities is to watch the markets in order to know when and how to re-focus the fund's portfolio. For example, due to recent sector trends and rapidly changing industries, Yuri is currently working on re-focusing the fund's portfolio companies to sustainability and climate change with IT solutions in the areas of IoT and AI.

Prior to starting Runoff Capital Management, Yuri co-founded several other companies in Vancouver. In the beginning, he and his wife, Natalie, became co-founders in 2003, when they opened their first business in Canada. Next, in 2004, RC Security Technologies International was incorporated. The company originally focused on the development and export of

software and hardware for the surveillance industry. However, later, Yuri began to invest in private equity, and as a result, RC Security now holds a diversified portfolio of first-class IT companies and real estate properties worldwide. Seven years later, in 2011, Yuri and Natalie co-founded their next company, Maat Administration Inc., a business consulting company specializing in strategy development and operational efficiency improvement.

Yuri holds a master's degree in radiophysics and electronics from Belarussian State University and an Advanced Certificate in Business Strategy from IPM Business School in Belarus. In 2010, he patented his method of data transmitting for centralized security systems. Yuri is currently pursuing an Executive Certificate in Management and Leadership with a focus in AI and IoT from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Although he has obtained numerous accomplishments, Yuri is most proud of his family. "I want to say thank you to my wife Natalie for being my partner before our first son was born and for having my back since then," says Yuri. He enjoys spending his free time at home with Natalie and their three children, at the gym, or at the shooting range.

Yuri Runoff, President and CEO — Runoff Capital Management Inc.  
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# Rick Couronne & Larisa Wells

As the vice presidents of Cape Cove, one of Canada's premiere exempt market dealers, Rick Couronne (whose name means "crown" in English) and Larisa Wells are a rare combination of expertise, seldom seen in the investment industry. Rick's thirty years of experience in the financial markets is perfectly complemented by Larisa's analytical skills, as a Doctor of Mathematical Economics. The result of this pairing created a catalyst which resulted in a private equity firm that is built upon integrity and experience, Wells & Crown Investments. Rick and Larisa are co-founders of the firm, a brand of Cape Cove, where, as private equity specialists, they work with high-net-worth individuals to identify promising investment opportunities and create diversified portfolios.



"As a team, I think what makes Rick and I unique is our combined backgrounds... Together, we create portfolios that provide a balance of security, cash-flow, and upside potential."

**Rick** serves as vice president of business development for Western Canada at Cape Cove, where he focuses on recruiting talent and advancing the reach and scope of the firm. In this appointment, and as the co-founder of Wells & Crown Investments, he brings 34 years of experience in senior executive roles across the public and private sectors, from vice president of sales, to the president and CEO of a private equity firm. He also brings the insight of a seasoned finance veteran, whose earlier career included positions as a pro trader, stockbroker, and investment advisor. Now, as a private equity expert, Rick's clients receive the benefit of this expertise and experience, as he works closely with them to explain the valuable benefits of a diversified portfolio. "The stock market is never predictable, so it's important for people to understand the benefits of private equity," he explains. "Larisa has a Ph.D. in mathematical economics, and we combine our skills and knowledge to build tailored portfolios that consider and mitigate risk factors. I am fortunate to have Dr. Wells as a business partner, as are our clients."

**Larisa Wells** joined Rick four years ago and within that time, quickly rose to the position of vice president. She now focuses on operations and identifying ways in which to expand the range of services that both Cape Cove and Wells & Crown Investments offer. Larisa holds a Ph.D. in mathematical economics and has over 20 years of experience as a university professor. Her career encompasses banking, education, and private equity, making her a powerful amalgam of learned academic and financial expert. Larisa's unique talents allow her to proficiently educate her clients about investment opportunities within the private equity and alternative spaces. Drawing on her broad network of business leaders and portfolio managers, she is able to create diversified portfolios that are built for growth. "As a team, I think what makes Rick and I unique is our combined backgrounds. He is a financial guru, who has been on both sides of the market, and as an economics expert, I'm able to identify advantageous tax-efficient investments and strategies. Together, we create portfolios that provide a balance of security, cash-flow, and upside potential," she shares.



**WELLS AND CROWN**  
INVESTMENT CORPORATION

specializing in private equity investment and portfolio management for high-net-worth individuals. With the clients' best interests at their core, Wells & Crown Investments focuses on identifying sound financial opportunities,

## About Wells & Crown Investments

With the motto "Doing good is good business," Wells & Crown Investments is a brand within Cape Cove,

combined with sound tax strategies, to create diversified portfolios that have the best potential for growth.

## About Cape Cove

Cape Cove is an emerging portfolio management firm that offers traditional and alternative investment solutions in the securities market. The combination of a flexible management style and progressive brokerage offerings contribute to their ultimate goal, which is to deliver value while maintaining a stellar reputation for customer service.

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# Tarik Aziz

President and CEO



Tarik Aziz is truly nothing short of an inspiring success story. He was born in Lebanon in 1974, and his father passed away when Tarik was only 3 months old, leaving him to be raised by nine women in one household. In 1984, ten-year-old Tarik left the war-torn country with his family and relocated to Calgary, AB, Canada. Tarik's family always displayed fearless leadership when it came to self-improvement. In doing so, Tarik became very self-motivated from a young age as he strived to create a fulfilling life for himself and his future family. Tarik has always had an entrepreneurial mindset which highlights how today he is the owner of multiple different companies, all of which he personally started from the ground up. Now married with two kids of his own, Tarik remains motivated to continue pushing boundaries and expanding into new work territory.

During 1998, at the age of 24, Tarik established his first business, Urban Image Fine Homes. He began by purchasing some land and building a home on it. He lived on the property for a while before selling it and repeating the process. The business took off from there, and he has been building homes ever since.

With the nature of home building, Tarik noticed the demand for automation. As a result, he decided to put together a team for a new company called Progressive Home Automation. They specialize in lighting controls, security cameras, home and commercial automation.

In 2008, Tarik had water damage in one of his units and realized restoration was a market that he could apply his current knowledge to. Ambitious to build forward, Tarik got certified with all his tickets to ensure his clients would receive the utmost professional and educated technicians in the industry during a time of need.

In 2009, Tarik started Nationwide Restorations and continued doing home construction as well. Nationwide Restoration services include fire, flood, and reconstruction as well as insurance work. Having experienced

his own loss, Tarik's expectations for professionalism, knowledge, cleanliness, and efficient work is always a priority for his clients. The team contributes to working in all Canadian provinces, from east coast to west coast.

Tarik's companies and reputation began to grow. Driven by success and growth, Tarik decided to pursue jobs on both small and large scale commercial construction. This is when he started a company called Alliance Commercial Construction. A recent project that Tarik's company proudly took on was the Ramada Hotel in Regina, SK. It had a 6 floor water damage and Alliance Commercial Construction did the abatement and reconstruction on it. They are also currently rebuilding a hockey arena from the ground up.

As a new opportunity presented itself in 2017, Tarik decided to step out of his comfort zone of construction and venture off into the cannabis industry. Strategizing the demand of supply, Tarik invested his own personal savings, yet again, into starting a business called Original Craft Growers. Original Craft Growers is a premier cannabis cultivator that is headquartered in Calgary, Alberta with an 80,000 sq. ft. facility based in Drinkwater, Saskatchewan, just outside of Regina. The company is looking to grow craft cannabis in a GMP approved facility.

2019 brought more opportunities to the surface in the cannabis industry. Tarik is now the founder and CEO of a luxury cannabis company called Original Goods Cannabis. Most recently, Original Goods Cannabis opened two newly built, luxury shops in Airdrie and downtown Calgary, AB. In addition to these locations, two more stores will be opening in Strathmore and Beacon Hill. Original Goods Cannabis plans to have four more locations within the next six months and will expand to fifteen locations by the end of 2021.

As owner and operator of these businesses, Tarik plays an active and important role in keeping each company running smoothly and moving forward. He takes great pride in the success of each and every venture he pursues and never neglects to give back to the community.

Tarik's companies are known for donating generously to a number of local organizations including cancer drives, Habitat for Humanity, phantom football, and several other organizations.

Tarik is a natural born entrepreneur who is always looking for a business opportunity to expand and grow his platform.

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# Rounak Langhe

## President

Rounak Langhe is the founder of Toronto-based financial firms—Mint Canadian Capital and Durham Asset Management, Inc. (DAMI)—both specializing in helping clients reach their financial goals. Mint Canadian Capital is a residential and commercial private lending business that offers clients first and second mortgages to meet their desire for home ownership across Ontario. As the director and dealing representative, Rounak drives the company’s vision to be the lender of choice promoting responsible home ownership, and ensuring that investors achieve financial independence through superior returns.

As one of a small group of fixed-income experts, Rounak serves as president of DAMI, a portfolio management firm that focuses on alternative fixed-income strategies, working to bring clients fixed income funds. He has a reputation for consistently delivering solid returns for his clients for last 14 years. “The financial industry is very personal and trust focused. Portfolio managers are known by strategy and reputation, so it’s important to me how I interact with my clients and portfolios,” he explains.

Rounak founded Mint Canadian Capital in 2019 after a successful 14-year career as a portfolio manager and just a year after launching DAMI. With expertise in portfolio construction, risk management, asset-liability management, credit market functions, structured product investments, and fixed-income product trading. Rounak launched Mint Canadian Capital with the mission of “bringing together investors and borrowers so that they can build on a wealthier future.” Rounak uses his financial skill and vast knowledge of the investment universe to help borrowers who were turned away from traditional lenders by seeing beyond the rigid restrictions and guidelines to find alternative lending solutions while also mitigating risks for investors—meeting the needs of both while providing consistent returns.

Originally from India, Rounak’s is an inspiring story of Canadian opportunities and first generation immigrant success! Rounak holds a MBA (finance) from the Tippie School of Business at the University of Iowa, USA and the chartered financial analyst (CFA) designation from CFA Institute underlying his fiduciary duty commitment to his clients. Rounak immigrated to Canada in 2003 and joined Aegon Capital Management (now Forester Asset Management), where held progressively senior investment roles before assuming the role of senior portfolio manager. In 2017, he joined Investors Group, as vice-president where he was responsible for managing a \$2.2 billion fixed-income portfolio until he left in 2018 and launched DAMI, followed by Mint Canadian Capital.

In addition to his MBA, Rounak holds a bachelor’s degree from Punjab University Chandigarh, India, and a chartered investment manager designation from the Canadian Securities Institute.



Rounak launched Mint Canadian Capital with the mission of “bringing together investors and borrowers so that they can build on a wealthier future.”

**MINT**   
CANADIAN CAPITAL INC

*Invest | Prosper | Preserve*

 **Durham Asset Management Inc.**

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## GEORGE FILTSOS

Founder, Owner, Operator

“What sets us apart in a big way is the advanced wireless controls, giving clients the best ROIs in the business.”



After devoting 25 years to industrial automation, lighting controls, and industrial IoT, George Filtsos’ start-up company, EcoGrid Technologies, has catapulted onto the energy scene by putting their unique twist on turnkey, energy efficiency projects. The company has a mandate to future proof everything they do

by establishing a digital ceiling in the industrial, commercial built space via their lighting with open standards IoT solutions.

As an individual, George is as down to earth as they come. He is as comfortable working with engineering specification firms as he is collaborating with electrical contractors. Having started his career as an electrician, he developed a valuable and unique perspective, as well as a stellar reputation for his technical expertise, sales acumen, and leadership abilities.

In 1993, George obtained his masters license as an electrician, which he used to generate income to finance further education. He had decided to go back to school in order to become an electrical engineer. After that, George inadvertently entered the business development world due to the difficulty of finding electrical work. He responded to an ad seeking an electrical automation technician, but it ended up being a technical sales position.

George worked at several prominent, multinational companies such as Rockwell, Siemens, Schneider Electric, ABB, and then pivoted to lighting controls specification work with Leviton. There he wore two hats, serving on their R&D board while running their national accounts in Canada.

In 2015, George took a huge risk and left Canada to join a start-up company called, Daintree Networks, in Los Altos, California. Daintree Networks provided him the opportunity to become one of the early pioneers, who would disrupt the lighting controls space by introducing IoT solutions. “Daintree taught me the best path for facility-wide IoT tech was via the lighting,” says George. Eventually, Daintree Networks sold to GE for \$75 million. George stayed on with GE for the transition before moving on, taking his IoT expertise as the foundation for a new start-up venture.

George started EcoGrid Technologies, which came out of the gate running in 2019, and they have already helped companies save well over 14 million kWh of consumption. “What sets us apart in a big way is the advanced wireless controls, giving clients the best ROIs in the business.” He goes on to say, “Our competitors just don’t offer IoT solutions because of its inherent complexity; they’re just not equipped to even sell it, let alone have the specialized expertise it takes to execute.”

According to George, competitors are “racing to bottom” by cutting corners and not offering wireless solutions. He sees no other alternative to using IoT technology. “It pays for itself today as an energy savings component and future proofs your investment. As emerging technologies come to market tomorrow, you simply just hop on the facility-wide network we established through the lights.”

Recently, EcoGrid Technologies assisted 6 companies to be awarded assistance from the *Canadian Climate Action Incentive Fund* (CAIF), which provides funding for environmentally sustainable, energy efficiency projects to small and medium sized businesses. He is looking forward to executing more successful projects that bolster incredible paybacks. “We just executed a large project that had a payback of just one day. I wouldn’t have even imagined that before IoT controls came into the picture.”

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# Garrett Plester

Garret Plester is a member of Emerging Equities Inc.'s ("EEI") Corporate Finance Group, operating in an investment banking capacity. Garrett specializes in the structuring, managing, and marketing of the private placement of debt and equity securities for corporate issuers. EEI is an independent, employee-owned investment dealer, focusing on underwritings, mergers and acquisitions, and divestitures of emerging companies (i.e. market capitalization of \$200M - \$300M). It is a Type III Introducing Broker; a member of IIROC, CIPF, and is a participating organization of TSX Venture Exchange. Simply stated, Emerging Equities Inc. is a full-cycle investment bank that focuses on helping companies at any stage in their life cycle; from new companies looking for shareholders or debt equity, to mid-life companies needing help to grow, to aged companies looking to sell or transition. Emerging Equities was also recently engaged as a strategic advisor for the initial equity raise of a new Alberta Film Fund, dedicated to the creation of a sustainable Alberta-based movie industry. This is a current and live offering to accredited and institutional investors, with a \$35M USD initial raise (<https://alberta1st.fund/>).

Garrett's passion for banking and finance has taken him through roles as a banker, commercial banker, commercial mortgage underwriter and originator, debt capital markets and advisory associate, transaction banker partner, director on the board of a foreign exchange consulting firm, and vice president of a private merchant bank.

Garrett's education and career has afforded him the knowledge and experience to excel in his current position, working with clients to develop and customize financial models, feasibility studies, financing arrangements, and aggressive debt structures. "I have a very close relationships with all of my clients. I am just as invested with every company I work with as I am my firm," he explains.

Along his career journey, Garrett has had inspiring mentors to guide and teach him. "Nick Stewart, a director of Bank of Nova Scotia, was the first to hire me out of university. Nick taught me all the necessary skills and processes of banking at the commercial level," Garrett says. Another mentor, Brent Buhler, managing director of Cambio Merchant Capital, understood Garrett's strengths in investment banking and suggested he leave mortgages to pursue his current position. Jim Hartwell, CEO of Emerging Equities, also played a significant role. "Jim is one of the longest standing investment bankers in Calgary," says Garrett. "What I learn from Jim is a wealth of information that I am fortunate to receive."



## EMERGING EQUITIES INC.

Garrett's passion for banking and finance has taken him through roles as a banker, commercial banker, commercial mortgage underwriter and originator, debt capital markets and advisory associate, transaction banker partner, director on the board of a foreign exchange consulting firm, and vice president of a private merchant bank. He also currently serves on the board of directors for Django Financial Ltd., which provides full-service currency exchange and hedging services for its customers.

After receiving a Bachelor of Commerce degree with a double major in finance and economics from the University of Alberta, Garrett's commercial banking career began with Bank of Nova Scotia. As the youngest person ever assigned to their Alberta commercial banking group, he worked with companies to structure and implement debt instruments. Two years later, Garrett moved on to a mutual fund, where he worked underwriting debt and locating mortgages to buy. In 2017, he started with Avison Young in Calgary, starting up their new debt capital group division; acquiring mortgages for clients who wanted to buy, not lease. In 2019, Garrett joined Emerging Equities. Now, with unbridled drive, Garrett Plester and Emerging Equities continue to move full speed ahead, blazing a path of success.



## Wendy Lumby

Owner and Operator



I created my agency to service and represent all people and cultures but when an ethnic performer is needed, especially an Aboriginal actor, my agency is usually the first call.

As an Olympic athlete and an Aboriginal woman, Wendy Lumby knows first-hand what it takes to overcome challenges. Through hard work, resilience, and a genuine drive to succeed, she rose to become one of the world's elite athletes, competing as an alpine skier in the 1988 Winter Olympics.

After retiring from sports, Wendy focused her strong work ethic and unique skillset in the entertainment industry and founded Faces of Wendy. Now one of the busiest talent agencies in Alberta, Canada. From Scotland to Budapest and across North America, Wendy has become a catalyst for creating life-changing opportunities. "I decided to start my own talent agency because I knew I could help my clients succeed," Wendy notes. Her goal has certainly

achieved fruition and as a result, she has established a stellar reputation as an agent and career-shaper. Faces of Wendy represents a wide range of performers who work on some of the biggest cinematic and print productions across the globe, including *Jumanji*, *Outlander*, and *Ghostbusters*, to name just a few. In addition to providing actors with the tools and resources necessary to succeed in a highly competitive industry, Wendy has a trusted rapport with casting directors, which results in more placements.

Faces of Wendy is also the only Aboriginal-owned talent agency that Wendy knows of and maintains a unique niche within the industry. "I created my agency to service and represent all people and cultures but when an ethnic performer is needed, especially an Aboriginal actor, my agency is usually the first call," she explains. "As an Olympian, my strong connection to sports has also made me the 'go-to agent' for booking world-class athletes," she adds.



Faces of Wendy represents a wide range of performers who work on some of the biggest cinematic and print productions across the globe...

Although Faces of Wendy is now a world-renowned talent agency, Wendy started her career in entertainment without a name and without any clients. Through hard work, a lot of 17-hour days, and a willingness to go above and beyond, she now represents over 1,000 artists in a vast range of demographics. Wendy connects these talented individuals with opportunities in movies, television shows, print work, voice-over, and commercials. "I love the excitement my clients get when they are selected for a role. Knowing they are taking steps to achieve their life goals and that I am aiding them in their development is important to me. I continually look for ways to support my clients and help them grow. I believe that is why they choose me as their agent," says Wendy.

Wendy has an equally admirable and interesting personal life. She was born in Regina, Saskatchewan, adopted at an early age by English parents. "My life turned out amazing because of all the opportunities that were given to me and my good fortune prompted a desire to good for others," Wendy shares. Early on, this altruistic inclination led Wendy toward social services and one of her first career roles was as a registered social worker. Although Wendy was also interested in becoming a police officer, imperfect eyesight kept her from joining the force. Currently, Wendy is a member of the Swan Lake Band in Manitoba and, in recognition of her athletic achievements, she was chosen to run with the Olympic torch in the 2010 Olympics. She was also announced by the government of Canada as an *Aboriginal Sports Hero*.

Faces of Wendy

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# Sonny Christensen

## President

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Sonny Christensen is president of West Country Pump and Filtration, a water treatment and product manufacturing company that began in a tent and grew to become a nominee for *Business of the Year* by the Alberta Chamber of Commerce and winner of *Service Provider of the Year* from a central Alberta newspaper. West Country Pump and Filtration is also involved in Canada's *Shred Program* and in just five short years, received recognition for their water conserving products. Dedicated to green practices, the company specializes in manufacturing custom water treatment systems and water well pumping solutions that save and conserve as much water as possible.

Based in Red Deer and Calgary, Alberta, the company provides turnkey solutions, such as skid packages and portable packages of complete water treatment systems and specializes in commercial reverse osmosis systems. "These are water-purifying systems used in agriculture and chicken farming, dairy farming factories, manufacturing, and anywhere from a residential house right up to big applications, such as oil and gas," Sonny explains.

We are able to achieve our motto, "Supplying clean, clear, safe water without the waste," as its guide. The company is committed to the adherence of all safety and electrical standards and uses only NSF-rated products.

The unique packing design of reverse osmosis and H2O2 injection systems allow the reduction of a tremendous amount of wastewater, which can then be reclaimed and recycled to render it usable. "We take the old ways of treating water and modernize the technology. They're turnkey solutions with a small footprint, while at the same time they're able to cut the wastewater in the industry by over half," Sonny says. Having worked in the industry since he was a kid, if anyone knows how to merge the old with the new to create innovative solutions, it's Sonny.

Sonny and his brother, Rob, founded West Country Pump and Filtration in 2015. It was born from an entrepreneurial spirit and a lifelong passion for the field, passed down from his father during his childhood, when he spent his days riding along with his dad, who also did water treatment. What began as a boy following his



dad to work, turned into a 30-year career that led him to corporate management positions and back home again, to his roots, and then to the rise of his own company, that has doubled in size every year since its inception.

Sonny's professional career in the water industry began in the early 1990s. After pursuing his degree in business administration, he and his father opened bottled water stores. Fifteen years later, they sold the business and Sonny entered the realm of large pump companies, managing Canadian distribution arms. After five years, he grew tired of the corporate world and he missed his passion for what he did on his own, so he started his own company—in a tent. With his brother Rob, he built a few water systems. The first job they landed was a \$100,000 project. West Country Pump and Filtration took off, growing at an astounding pace; eightfold in just five years, with anticipated expansion into the United States.

Sonny attributes the company's growth to his three decades of experience in the industry. "I've been in this field for 30 years now, doing field work, and seeing the problems people had with water systems and finding ways to remove those headaches from the solution. It excites me to be able to use my knowledge to help others," he shares. As the business continues to grow, it remains grounded in Sonny's dedication to green solutions and high ethical standards. Along with the addition of an automation expert Nick Sztym, and commercial plumbing expert, Tim Busch, we are able to achieve our motto, "Supplying clean, clear, safe water without the waste," as its guide. The company is committed to the adherence of all safety and electrical standards and uses only NSF-rated products.



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## ◆ Howard Harkness, Vice President ◆



A transformational corporate entrepreneur, Howard Harkness has profitably led pharmaceutical, medical device, and biotechnology companies in expanding their global footprints and in launching new products while continuing to grow their existing product portfolios. As Vice President Medical Cannabis Sales at Aurora., Howard is not only responsible for sales in Canada, but Australia, Africa, Cayman Islands/West Indies, Scandinavia and parts of the middle east. From the start of his career, his mission was to expand his proven success by improving the health, wellness and lives of patients while supporting the healthcare professionals who treat them. His moto is be stubborn about your goals, and flexible about your methods.

Founded in 2006, Aurora Cannabis Enterprises Inc. is a global leader in the medical cannabis space due to their continuous work with physicians and scientists around the world. Offering several brands, such as CanniMed, MedRelief, and Whistler Medical, team members strive to provide their patients with the highest quality of cannabis and hemp products available. Aurora's menu of certified items includes dried cannabis, oils, soft gels, edibles, and vape cartridges. All of which are available online to all patients who submit the necessary medical documents along with their doctors' approvals. Currently, Aurora employees serve the medical and

consumer markets in 23 countries through the company's own network of import, export and wholesale distributors, and e-commerce and mobile applications.

Howard joined the Alberta-based company three years ago after spending 20+ years in the pharmaceutical, and medical device industries.

I have helped to bring success to Aurora through building strong sales and marketing teams and being adaptable to building products and services to meet the needs of physicians and medical patients at large.

As he transitioned into his new role as Vice President of Sales, Howard found his previous work experience to be helpful not only in Canada but internationally. The medicinal cannabis space is unique as it involves growing an agricultural product, manufacturing and then understanding cannabis pharmaceutical marketing to physicians, clinics, nurse practitioners requiring new holistic treatment in their practice patient protocols. Howard explains, "I have helped to bring success to Aurora through building a confident, adaptable, and strong sales and marketing teams well trained to effectively promote medicinal cannabis products and services to meet the needs of Healthcare Professionals and medical patients at large. It is an accomplishment I am distinctly proud of as a professional in this new innovative medical industry."

In fact, Howard credits his adaptability for giving him his edge in the medical cannabis industry. Throughout his career, he has worked for large corporations, small companies, privately held businesses, and startups. However, he has always excelled at sales and at assembling and building medical teams, who are laser focused on achieving the desired result. His vast number of specialties include pharmaceutical, biopharmaceuticals, medical devices, biotech, veterinary medicine, strategic planning, sales, marketing, and operational executive level leadership.

After growing up on a family corporate farm in Western Canada and earning a Bachelor of Science, Agriculture degree from the University of Manitoba, Howard got his start in the agricultural industry with Monsanto before moving into the pharmaceutical industry two years later. In addition to working for Ortho Pharmaceutical (J&J), GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), Novo Nordisk and Trudell Medical International, Howard worked to obtain his pharmaceutical industry designation through the Council for Continuing Pharmaceutical Education (CCPE) in addition to the Executive Leadership Program, Western University, Ivey Business School.

Howard has worked tirelessly to earn his experience within the corporate medical field. His career has been an accumulation of hard work, milestones, and continuous learning. As someone who is a lifelong learner and innovator, he has no intention of slowing down. His passion for helping patients improve their lives continues to be his primary reason for working.

### CONTACT:

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# SAM KERSHEH, CEO

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Sam Kersheh is CEO of The Kersheh Group, a North American distributor of men's, women's, and children's sleepwear, underwear, and socks. In the past few years, they launched Family Sleepwear, which has been instrumental to the continued success of the company. Based in Montreal, the company designs and distributes their own brands of apparel, including Jellifish Kids, Fox & Badger loungewear for men, Sleep Riot women's loungewear/sleepwear, and Jammin' Jammies pajamas for the entire family. In addition, TKG has partnered with well-established brands, including Disney, Warner Brothers, the NHL, and Gloria Vanderbilt, among others, to design and distribute their products to retailers nationwide. TKG also designs and distributes exclusive sleepwear/loungewear through established private brands for retailers in both the U.S. and Canada. They have strategic partnerships with retailers, such as Walmart, Costco, Sam's Club, and Hudson's Bay Company, as well as online marketplaces, such as Amazon. It also offers its products through its own e-commerce Shopify platforms.

Sam is a CEO who has adopted the mission of his role. He is a second-generation leader of a 42-year-old family-owned business who has lived its purpose from very early on in his career: "Family is the centerpiece of our lives." He is an inspiring leader who views his role as a mentor and coach to members of his team. "I am extremely fortunate to lead some of the most passionate and talented people who treat this business as their own," he shares. "The truth is, it's now all about everyone else. My role is to lead and inspire others, and mentor where possible. The goal is to create a true entrepreneurial environment where all key members are owners of their own departments and businesses."

Founded in 1978 by his father, Theo Kersheh, Sam joined the company right out of college, starting at the ground level and working his way up as his dad paved the roadmap to understand all aspects of the business. As Sam evolved, so did the company, growing both organically and through acquisition, and they have continued to build upon their trusted reputation by adopting a simple motto: "Under-promise and over-deliver every single time." Driven by his core values and entrepreneurial spirit, Sam and his passionate, creative team continue to move forward with investments in innovation and fresh designs for comfortable, fun, high-quality sleepwear, underwear, and socks that continue to be met with energetic enthusiasm from the marketplace. "Our direct-to-consumer business has increased 300 percent during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is very exciting for us. Our goal was to come out of COVID stronger than when we went in," Sam says.

Sam's responsibilities have evolved considerably since his early days at TKG, when it was a small, local, family-owned business. Through perseverance and hard work, together with his sister Paula, they built the business into a major apparel company, developing strategic partnerships with the biggest and most successful retailers and licensors across North America and building relationships with consumers worldwide. The Kersheh Group culture is built around true family values, and over the years they have attracted top talent. As Sam often mentions, "We



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“ My role is to lead and inspire others, and mentor where possible. The goal is to create a true entrepreneurial environment where all key members are owners of their own departments and businesses. ”

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are currently transitioning from a family-owned business to a business that is owned by a family. We've recruited professional management, and we look to continue to recruit the best-in-class people to join our journey." He adds, "To this day, my dad and I have a wonderful relationship. He comes to the office almost every day, and it is very gratifying that he still gets to see and participate in the success of the business."

Committed to giving back to the community and charitable causes is extremely important to Sam, and he currently serves on the board of directors of the Cedars Cancer Foundation in Montreal. "Giving back to our local communities is our duty as business leaders, and our obligation and responsibility as good citizens."



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## RISHI LAL

As the director of the Canadian Hockey League for the past five years, Rishi Lal is responsible for closing the largest sponsorship agreement in the league’s history—a multi-year, multimillion-dollar deal. As he works with an organization with nine million fans, he also serves as CEO of his own corporation, Silver and Black Sponsorship Marketing. The company specializes in helping its partners strategically match brands with the right partner and developing new avenues for revenue, with a true focus on building genuine and authentic programs for his clients. Underlying Rishi’s success is his unique ability to build relationships, which sets him apart from his industry peers. “I’ve always been fortunate to connect with folks on a personal level which helps in building out real and lasting business relationships,” he shares.

As director of the CHL, Rishi draws from nearly 15 years of diverse experience in the sports industry to deliver successful marketing partnerships for its 52 Canadian hockey clubs as well as their flagship national events. By combining title naming rights opportunities and national and regional team partnerships with broadcast content that reaches millions of consumers, Rishi has created award-winning partnerships, including a *Silver Medal* at the *Summit Creative Awards* for a digital program he put together for a league partner. “We have created some really unique programs for our partners that are natural extensions for our fans and more importantly, our partners brand targets, which has really driven great business results all around,” he explains.

Rishi’s diverse background gives him a unique combination of skills that drive the success of both the CHL and Silver and Black Sponsorship Marketing. His career has taken him from story editor for *TSN (ESPN Canada)* to corporate sponsorship sales executive for University of Virginia’s athletic programs, from account manager with S&E Sponsorship Group to part of the collegiate sports marketing division of *CBS*. “It was a great adventure, and the connections, relationships and great mentors along the way have led me to where I am now,” he says. “Still hungry, still excited about the path forward.”

Rishi holds a master’s degree in sports administration from the University of Ohio, a post-graduate diploma in journalism from Humber College, and a B.A. in political science/communications from York University in Toronto, where he graduated with honors.

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## KENNY MACEWEN

Kenny MacEwen is vice president, projects of Technical Management Group (TMG) Inc. The Toronto-based technical services company is focused on augmenting owner’s teams and providing consulting services to mining executives engaged in growing or enhancing their enterprise through capital project delivery. While he is also responsible for corporate development and strategy, his passion is on providing the best delivery possible to their clients.

As a registered professional engineer, who has spent his entire 15-year career in project development, focused on mineral processing plants and surface infrastructure in the mining sector, Kenny recently joined TMG. Prior to this, he had progressively more senior roles with New Gold Inc. on the Rainy River Project in northwestern Ontario and with Centerra Gold Inc., where he was responsible for the design and development of a global portfolio of projects worth \$1.6 billion USD within the corporate project management office. Having worked both in consulting

and on various owners’ teams, he understands each parties’ risk drivers, and this allows him to create alternate execution approaches and development strategies to maximize the potential benefit to project stakeholders.

Kenny’s vision is to provide a unique service offering to help clients in the areas of project planning, strategic oversight, and execution support. He and his team provide full-service project management, project controls, risk management, project monitoring, and communications to ensure that all stakeholders are aligned on the execution objectives. They also look to partner with other consultants on specific mandates to achieve best-for-project objectives. “In my past, working on the owner’s team, I’ve never really focused on the names of the companies that I’ve hired; I much prefer assembling a team of strong consultants I know can get the job done, and working with them on delivery per the project vision” he shares. “That’s the mentality I’ve brought with me to building the team at TMG. I always look to establish a team-based culture first, and this allows for the successful development of challenging global mining projects while meeting all necessary investment criteria.”



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## MIN PEI

Described as organized, driven, and resourceful, Min Pei is both a successful entrepreneur and criminal defense lawyer. In addition to founding two cannabis businesses, she recently launched a personal protective equipment (PPE) company while continuing to work as an attorney.

Min takes pride in her ability to play various roles within the professional world, especially as it has historically been dominated by older white men. She has always remained true to herself while also demonstrating her willingness to adapt in order to progress within the courtroom as well as within the business world.

Straight out of high school, Min enrolled at the University of Ottawa, earning both a civil law degree and a Juris Doctorate. She then moved to Toronto and accepted a position with a boutique criminal defense firm where she has practiced for the past nine years. Because Min speaks English, French, and Chinese, she serves a variety of clients and is particularly popular with the young Asian population.

Because Min has a flexible boss who affords her the freedom to do what she needs, she was able to take advantage of the legalization of cannabis. She raised \$2 million to purchase a cannabis production facility, which she is currently selling for \$8.5 million. Her second cannabis company, which launched last year, is even larger and will include retail, production, extraction, medical research, and more. After Min's latest company started in April, she said, "I thought the cannabis world was difficult, but that was before I entered the PPE world! Although it has been challenging, Min is still determined to supply equipment to all who need it.



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## CHRISTINA ROMANZAS

Known for her ability to recognize the unique needs of her clients, Christina Romanzas brings professionalism, enthusiasm, and diverse experience to the financial services industry. As the chief executive officer of Roman Capital in Ottawa, Ontario, Christina treats clients like members of her own family, providing them with superior customer service and the best interest rates possible.

Roman Capital is an independent financial services firm with 13 representatives located across Canada to help clients meet their financial goals. Although they are a relatively new company, Roman Capital is growing fast and is welcoming new lenders every day. They also deal with the United States market, conducting loans both in Canada and in the U.S. Christina attributes the firm's growth to the mission and values of her team. Committed to service and to building client relationships, they strive to be the best in the industry.

Christina began her career in financial services 15 years ago as a financial advisor, mortgage broker, and insurance agent at the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC). She remained at the bank until 2007 when she decided to move into the automotive industry as a financial manager. Nine years later, she took on the role of regional manager for Carfinko, a subprime lending company in Eastern Ontario, but soon returned to the dealership as a sales manager for Acura.

At that point, Christina knew she wanted to make a difference in the financial services industry, and, as a result, Roman Capital was founded. Offering an extensive portfolio of financial products and services, the firm extends an invitation to clients: "Call us today to plan for tomorrow."



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## NEVIN ROSAASEN

Nevin is from a long line of farmers and passionately describes himself as a 4<sup>th</sup> generation Canadian food and fibre production engineer and carbon collector. Mr. Rosaasen holds a Bachelor of Science from the University of Saskatchewan, major in agronomy, minor in agricultural economics, and a graduate degree in international trade policy from the Middlebury Institute of International Studies, at Monterey California. He has worked at all levels of government in various policy and agronomic capacities. He published with the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in the field of carbon accounting and life cycle analysis. You will currently find Nevin digging in soil, inspecting roots, looking for insects, and transferring knowledge to grass roots farmers at local field days across Alberta.

Nevin volunteers, contributing to various boards and committees. He is currently on the Canadian Standards Association Agriculture subcommittee for transition to green finance. Nevin is the inaugural chair and remains a director of Biological Carbon Canada, an Alberta based non-profit serving as a conduit between academia, government, farmers, foresters, and ranchers in the development of beneficial management practices and adoption of practices and technology that sequester or mitigate carbon. Nevin also led a team in earthquake reconstruction with the UN after the devastating earthquake in Chile in 2010. In 2004, he met his fundraising goal of \$6,000.00 and completed a full marathon in Iceland to raise awareness for the Canadian Diabetes Association. Nevin has travelled to over 35 countries across six continents and enjoys all forms of sport including rock climbing, snowboarding, skiing, surfing and various team sports.

Mr. Rosaasen is trilingual, with working fluency in English, French, and Spanish. Nevin currently works with Alberta Pulse Growers as the policy and program specialist and continues to farm with his family in East Central Saskatchewan on a century farm.



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## SHELLEY D. CHUCHMUCH

Along with her diverse experience in Middle Eastern foreign markets, organizational culture systems, and literacy skills development, Shelley Chuchmuch has held multiple titles throughout her career. She has worked as a teacher, administrative educator, author, life coach, consultant, and cultural analyst. Most recently, Shelley became the founder and chief executive officer of ABC-IQ Skills Canada, an online learning platform that provides educational programs, products, books, and training certifications to individuals as well as organizations.

As a leader in the e-learning industry, Shelley's mission is to move education forward by designing a new online system of education through mixed media interactive technologies. As a scientist and leader as learner, she strives to not only achieve a desired outcome

based upon the needs of her clients but to also make e-learning fun through interactive's and gaming. By taking information and condensing it into smaller pieces, creating "ABC-IQ Tips", digestible, bite sized bits of life and arts literacy skill tips, Shelley makes concepts easier to understand as clients look, learn, and apply them.

Established in 2014, ABC-IQ™ delivers online, distance and hybrid learning with over 40 programs geared toward home schoolers, foundation bridging programs, and high- school students. The platform embraces technology as a teaching tool and focuses on personalized skills in areas such as job skills essentials, emotional intelligence and alternative health. Instruction is leveled up until each learner reaches mastery through applied skills. Shelley also provides consulting and specialized training courses for B2B and B2G agencies through a small group learning environment where teams learn cohesiveness, leadership capacity skills, strategy, sportsmanship, strategic and systematic problem-solving strategies. As a life-long learner, Shelley holds a bachelor's degree in education from Manitoba's Brandon University as well as a master's degree from Michigan State University. However, she considers ABC-IQ to be her greatest teacher as she continues to garner experience as a small business owner.



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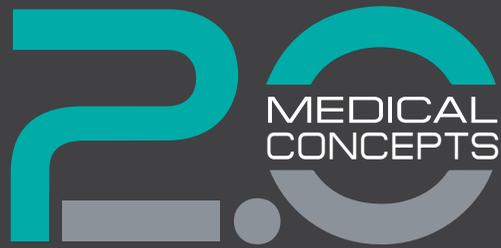
# PROMOTING YOUR BRAND CAN BE CHALLENGING

## WE CAN HELP

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