



Dalene Allen

Dalene Allen, Executive Director, Business Network International (BNI) Maritimes.

Known for being a master networker, she has spent over 30 years developing countless contacts. She built a multi-million-dollar direct sales business as an independent sales rep with Mary Kay Cosmetics. Like any entrepreneur, she is always learning and growing as an individual and searching for ways to promote herself and others.

Dalene is passionate about connecting local business people and seeing the productive relationships that develop. From being a member, to now the Executive Director of BNI Maritimes, she believes in BNI's philosophy, core values, and the notion that "Givers Gain".

BNI has been recognized in Forbes magazine, ranking #1 in Forbes 14 Smart Ways for a Business Owner to Reach New Contacts. Dalene believes we all want to be connected to something bigger than ourselves and when we share our networks, we are doing service to our friends and business contacts.



Nora Perry

Nora Perry - Manager of Programs and Special Projects, the Centre for Women in Business

Nora Perry is the Manager of Programs and Special Projects with the Centre for Women in Business and works with businesses focused on growth. Nora guides clients on a learning journey to grow their business. She is spot-on at identifying gaps in the entrepreneurial skill set and honing in on strengths that can be channeled to take a business to high growth.

Nora conducts research and evaluations for workshops that are focused on goals and tailored to the needs of our community: the young, the newly established, the business veterans. She gets that time is a hot commodity so you won't come out of a workshop wondering why; you will always leave knowing how.

Nora leads the Advanced Management and Mentoring Program at the Centre guiding women through growth stages of business using facilitated peer advising and strategic planning conversations and activities.

Nora has been an entrepreneur off and on for over 30 years. She understands the kinds of things that small business owners need to be aware of: knowledge that can make or break your success.

Nora holds a Bachelor's Degree from MSVU, Certificates in Business, Office Information Systems, Human Resources and Adult Education and a Master of Education from Mount Saint Vincent University. Nora has been a part-time instructor in the MSVU Business Department since 2016 teaching courses on Entrepreneurship, Marketing and in the Community Leadership and Non-Profit program.



Tia Upshaw – CEO Black Women in Excellence

Tia Upshaw is a remarkable individual who excels as a mother, author, serial entrepreneur, and mentor. Her passion for empowering women and fostering business excellence has made a significant impact in her community and beyond. Tia is a dedicated mother of three who balances family responsibilities with ambitious goals, drawing inspiration from her children to create positive change.

As an accomplished author, Tia's insightful work empowers individuals to overcome obstacles and achieve their full potential. Tia's entrepreneurial mindset has led to the establishment of multiple successful businesses, creating employment opportunities and contributing to her community's economic growth. Her outstanding leadership and business acumen have

earned her nominations for prestigious awards, including Business Leader of the Year 2021 & 2022 and RBC Woman of Influence 2021, 2022, & 2023. As the Professional in Residence at St. Mary's University's L. Authur Entrepreneurship Center, Tia shares her expertise and guides aspiring entrepreneurs on their journey.

Tia also is the founder and CEO of Blk Women in Excellence, an organization dedicated to supporting and uplifting Black women, providing a space for connection, collaboration, and empowerment. She is a sought-after motivational speaker, inspiring audiences to unlock their true potential and pursue their dreams fearlessly. Tia's mentorship extends to various initiatives, offering guidance and support to aspiring female entrepreneurs. Her unwavering dedication to empowering women and fostering entrepreneurship has transformed lives and inspired countless individuals. Blk Women in Excellence NS & BC are non-profit organizations supporting the education and empowerment of Black women in Nova Scotia & BC, providing support, education, and mentorship for Black women entrepreneurs.



Philip Mondor, President and CEO, Tourism HR Canada

Philip is an accomplished leader with nearly 35 years of experience working with labour market stakeholders across Canada and abroad including foreign governments, pan-global organizations, Canadian and non-Canadian businesses, and various education and training bodies. His work spans over 15 industrial sectors and in 11 countries, with most of his career focused on the tourism industry.

Philip is an industry representative to the Deputy Minister's Advisory Council, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. Currently, he is an advisory member of the Labour Market Information Council and a Director on the Board of the Tourism Industry Association of Canada.

Throughout his career, he has been called upon to offer input to various workforce policy directives with governments and associations. Philip has worked with a variety of boards and committees, and volunteers for causes that help advance workforce issues and improve opportunities for people to engage in community and meaningful employment.

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