



**PeopleWorx**  
*opportunity for more*

# ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026

---

Coldbrook, Middleton, Annapolis Royal

Website: [peopleworx.ca](http://peopleworx.ca)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Board of Directors	4
President's Report	4
2025-2026 Board of Directors	5
Executive Director's Message	6
Pay-it-forward	10
Operations	13
Highlights 2025-2026	14
PeopleWorx in Action	24
Nova Scotia Works Centres	24
Projects: PeopleWorx RISE Program	46
Annapolis Valley Work Centre	49
Employment Training Partners	54
Continuing Care Assistant Programs 2025, 2026	56
Employer Engagement Partners	59
Community Partners	61
Notes	62

# INTRODUCTION

## History

PeopleWorx Society was founded in 1986 as a non-profit, registered charity. From the very beginning, our mission has been to help people overcome obstacles to employment. In other words, we work one-on-one with people to help them solve personal, financial, educational, and social challenges that are between them and the life they want. We employed close to forty staff members, however, with cuts to programs and the closure of our founding program, the Annapolis Valley Work Centre, that number was reduced to twenty-two in January 2026. All of our staff were and are committed to building a strong and vibrant community one person at a time. People from various backgrounds and abilities access our programs and services at our three locations in Coldbrook, Middleton, and Annapolis Royal.

## Our Purpose

Enhancing lives, supporting the economy and changing communities by maximizing personal and employment success.

*We believe that every individual and every community has the ability to be successful*

Coldbrook Office	Middleton Office	Annapolis Royal Office
Opportunity Centre 11 Opportunity Lane Coldbrook, NS B4R 0A5 Telephone: 902-679-7460	298 Marshall Street PO Box 760 Middleton, NS B0S 1P0 Telephone: 902-825-3118	PeopleWorx @ the Hub 253 George Street PO Box 298 Annapolis Royal, NS Telephone: 902-532-0605
Website: <a href="http://www.peopleworx.ca">www.peopleworx.ca</a>	Toll Free Number: 1-866-609-9675	Business Hours: Hours vary by Location. Check the Website for opening hours

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2025- 2026 was a challenging and busy year trying to navigate and deal with program restructuring and cancellations as the provincial Government was trying to realign its priorities towards the sector.

We continued to advocate for necessary supports for people with disabilities and barriers, such as community involvement in consultations and initiatives to address homelessness and food security to name a few.



In December, some members of the Board had the privilege to attend the graduation ceremony for the Continuing Care Assistance class.

The Board supported the annual Holiday Hampers program and the Pay It Forward program. Several of our Board members had the pleasure to participate in the holiday luncheon with staff.

We would like to thank Vickie Petrie, Senior Manager and manager of the Work Activity Centre who retired after 24+ years of service. We acknowledge and thank her for her dedication and commitment to PeopleWorx.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Kim Aker, our Executive Director, and the senior members of the management team for their hard work and commitment to PeopleWorx. Your caring attitude is what makes a positive difference in our clients' lives.

I would also like to thank all staff and Board members for your dedication and commitment to PeopleWorx and helping to make our community a better place to live and work.

All the best in 2026-2027.

Mandeep Panesar

President, PeopleWorx Society

June 2026

## 2025-2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



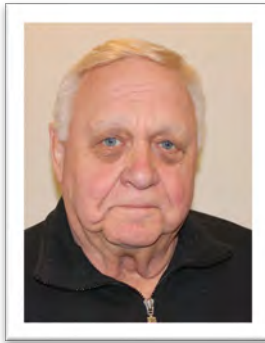
**Mandeep Panesar**  
Chair/President



**Christine Bigelow-Popowich**  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President



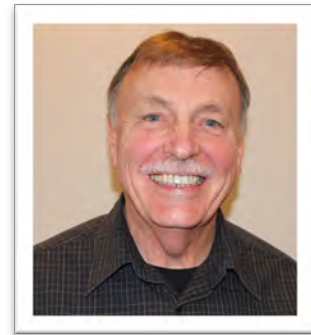
**Mark Mander**  
Secretary/Treasurer



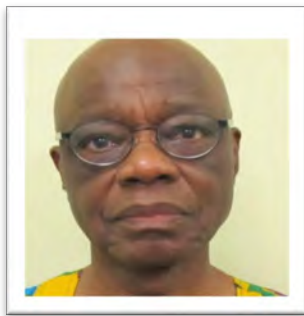
**Peter Spidle**  
Director



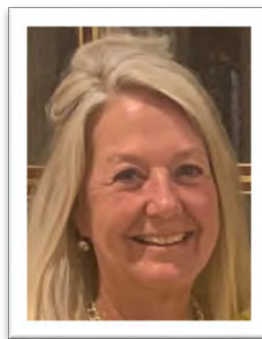
**Earle Illsley**  
Director



**Kevin Cleary**  
Director



**Muhammed Abudulai**  
Director

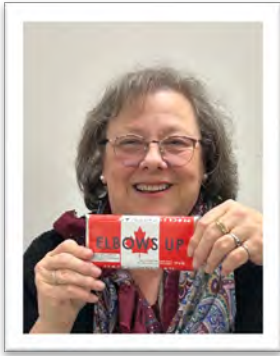


**Susan Campbell-Baltzer**  
Director



**Christopher Manning**  
Director

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



The impact of PeopleWorx over the past year has included achievement, collaboration and grief.

We collaborated with many other impactful organizations in our community and province to enhance the quality of life of our neighbours and residents of Nova Scotia. The needs of employers and job seekers continue to present as multifaceted with challenges in the economy and this Annual Report illustrates the significant results achieved by our clients, participants and students accessing funded programs with the support of our amazing teams.

The grief and concern were expressed by participants, current and graduates, their families, collaborative partners, our staff, our Board of Directors, and me regarding the closure of the Annapolis Valley Work Centre, and our sister Work Activity programs around the province. We had trusted that the stated commitment by the Department of Opportunities and Social Development to have a Concept and proposal process, to fill the gap created by the impending closure, would be brought forward by the fall of 2025, and then again with a delay by December 2025, but that has yet to materialize. The employment readiness skills building is still in need, as expressed by NSW case managers, IA/ESS case workers, mental health service providers, justice service providers and individuals and families. The loss of not only the funded training supports but also the wrap around supports provided through the generosity of our business/employer partners, our social enterprises, donations and collaborative partners is leaving a concerning gap in the continuum of supports that contribute to the quality of life and determinants of health. Our community has seen an increase in dependence on income assistance, homelessness and crime, which can be influenced by employment rates and job retention. We remain committed to contributing to a continuum of supports for our community and anxiously await the Concept and proposal process.

The grief was also felt by the entire organization as the AVWC staff team wrapped up the program. We lost several long-term team members, some with more than 20 & 25 years, skilled facilitators and leadership.

The AVWC team made a real difference in the lives of many this year, the success bell rang often with pride and confidence!

More than 570 individuals became new clients, participants, and students in our programs with more than 290 being employed as they left our programs, with many more accessing further education or becoming employed at a later date. Hundreds of students in three high schools in the Annapolis Valley benefitted from the services provided by the PeopleWorx School Liaison as they explored their pathways to post-secondary, careers and employment.

The year one program evaluation of the new three-year agreement with Labour Skills & Immigration to provide Nova Scotia Works services, including financial monitor and Good Governance assessment were all achieved with excellent results through the support of our Board of Directors, the Management Team, the Finance Team and the monumental and creative efforts of the Operations Manager and Nova Scotia Works team members.

The Department of Seniors and Long-term Care and the CCA Program Advisory Office introduced the new 2025 Curriculum and Standards in the summer of 2024 with considerable changes to the length of the program, delivery plan and content. The funding for our CCA program transitioned to a shared model between One Journey Initiative and Seniors & Long-term Care. I am very grateful to the CCA team who undertook the significant task of implementation. We continued to provide access to a palliative care course for individuals participating in the Challenge Exam initiative and Prior Learning program with the HANS - CCA Advisory program.

Beyond those funded programs there are many supports we deliver or facilitate access, in some cases it was direct supports while in other cases it was indirect or unseen. Whether it was the annual Holiday Hamper and Pay It Forward initiative, the onsite food pantry for those accessing our sites experiencing food insecurity, the daily "Breakfast" cart, the donations of clothing to and from the Grab and Go, providing connections to donated professional counselling, cost reduced dental services and transportation and haircuts and providing space for incidental meetings and events to community partners and groups. The Grief Library of the Valley Hospice Foundation continues in our site in Coldbrook and provides a very meaningful and valuable resource to our community.

We value the partnership with the Kings County Family Resource Centre, we continue to stay connected and explore ways to work together for the mutual benefit of our community.

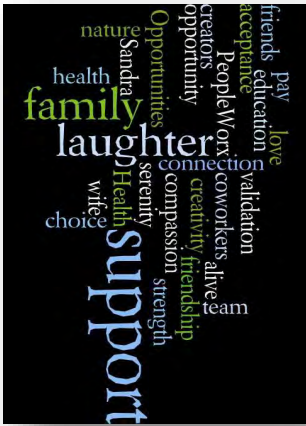
I am deeply grateful for everyone at PeopleWorx, particularly our volunteer Board of Directors, and our partners, friends and colleagues and their support as we navigated a difficult and sad transition as we lost our founding program and celebrated our successes with Nova Scotia Works and the CCA Program. Thank you to the Sunshine Committee that planned and brought smiles and fun to us all this year!

Kim L. Aker  
Executive Director, PeopleWorx  
June 2026

**The Amazing PeopleWorx Team!  
2025-2026!**



# PAY-IT-FORWARD



## Holiday Season

The commitment to a long-standing tradition and the contributions of staff and the Board, and the support of local businesses to waive limits allowed us to provide 75 hampers of food and extras to participants and clients over the holidays again this year. It was particularly appreciated this year given the financial stress and food insecurity felt by many.



This year the PeopleWorx Staff participated once again in our Pay It Forward campaign providing Gifts to the following groups:

- Four youth were supported with gifts who were identified by organizations in the community.
- Chrysalis House received warm hats, leggings, personal hygiene products as well as a gift card for M&M so they could all enjoy some special treats during the holidays.
- Both the Middleton and the Annapolis Royal teams once again selected clients from their respective locations who were in particular need and provided gift cards and Hampers to help these individuals through the holiday season.
- Last, but not least, for the tenth year we donated Teddy Bears and chocolates to Local Emergency Support workers/ First Responders. The Chocolates were a small treat for the workers during the holidays and the Teddy Bears are comfort Bears for children that might have been affected by an emergency during the Holiday season.



The holiday luncheon on December 12<sup>th</sup> was well attended by staff and Board members and as usual the pot luck was abundant and delicious. These traditional activities are a highlight of each year but held a special memory this year as we recognized and thanked the team of the Annapolis Valley Work Centre for their dedication and contribution, particularly in the last few months!

### Staff Recognition 2025/2026



Greg Saunders - 25 Years



Vickie Petrie - 24 Years



Ronda Spears - 20 Years



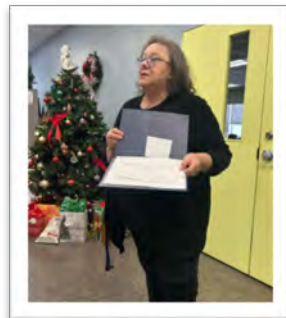
Wendell MacKinnon - 20 Years



Mike Rueff - 15 Years



Deb Kendall - 11 Years (Retired in January 2026) Of course wearing her usual PeopleWorx Christmas Party Attire...



Kim Aker - 10 Years



We would like to acknowledge that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. This territory is covered by the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship" which Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) people first signed with the British Crown in 1725.



# OPERATIONS

PeopleWorx employed on average 30-32 individuals until the end of December 2025 and 22 individuals from January to March 2026, and manages an annual operational budget of \$2.6 million. The organization consists of multiple programs running simultaneously in various locations across the Valley region. Programs are supported by the management team and administratively by the finance team, Regina and Peter, CFO. Every team member brings a wide range of skills, abilities and experiences that contribute to the overall success of the organization. Our custodian has been a key player in keeping us all safe as we navigate the post pandemic efforts to manage any viruses and changing usage of the building in the past year, thank you Eric. Mike keeps everyone, clients, participants, students and staff, connected and humming with our IT and addresses the day to day minor repairs and updates for the building!

Our social enterprise activities began to pick up this year, in particular our shop program continued to provide simple products to local businesses like Andritz giving broader experience for some of our participants. However, those activities have ceased with the closure of the Annapolis Valley Work Centre as they provided real time hands-on learning for the participants by skilled facilitators.

Our facility in Coldbrook continues to be sought by outside organizations as an ideal location for meetings and workshops. We have been able to offer that service on an increasing basis during this period. We also have three community partners co-located: Native Council of Nova Scotia, Grief Library- Valley Hospice Foundation, Roman3 as well as one Local Area Coordinator of Department of Opportunities and Development, the Remedy Initiative.

## Management Team

*Kim L. Aker, Executive Director*

*Peter Campbell, Chief Financial Officer*

*Vickie Petrie, Work Activity Centre Manager*

*Julie Bibby-MacNabb, Nova Scotia Works Centre Manager*

*Jacquie Dale, Executive Assistant to ED*

## Finance

*Regina Gould, Finance Clerk*

## Support Services

*Mike Rueff, Information Technology Specialist*

*Eric Brown, Custodian*

# HIGHLIGHTS 2025-2026

## Recruitment and Job Fairs

**Reporting Period: April 1, 2025 - March 31, 2026**

PeopleWorx Nova Scotia Works Centres across the Annapolis Valley delivered and supported a strong calendar of recruitment events, job fairs, and employer engagement activities throughout 2025-2026. These efforts were grounded in collaboration with employers, community partners, and post-secondary institutions, with a focus on connecting job seekers to meaningful employment opportunities and supporting regional workforce needs.

Across the reporting period, Nova Scotia Works engaged hundreds of job seekers and employers through a coordinated series of recruitment events, strengthening workforce connections across the region.

---

### Spring Forward into a New Career Job Fair

**Date:** April 16, 2025

**Location:** Louis Millett Community Complex, New Minas



This large-scale regional job fair was delivered in partnership with PeopleWorx, Community Inc., VANSDA, APTEC, and ISANS. The event welcomed over **150 job seekers** and featured **38 employers** representing a range of sectors.

The event created strong opportunities for direct employer-candidate engagement, with several service providers also in attendance to support job seekers with training pathways, funding programs, and employment services.

## AVRCE Recruitment Event – Annapolis Royal

**Date:** May 1, 2025



**Annapolis Valley**  
Regional Centre for Education

**JOB FAIR**

Interested in working with the AVRCE?  
Stop by to find out more about current opportunities including:

- Bus Driver •
- Custodian/Janitor •

↓ Bring your resume and questions ↓

**ANNOPOUS VALLEY ROYAL**  
Thursday  
May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025  
11:00 am - 2:00 pm

Nova Scotia Works  
253 St. George Street, Annapolis Royal

---

NOVA SCOTIA WORKS Canada NOVA SCOTIA PeopleWork

Nova Scotia Works partnered with the Annapolis Valley Regional Centre for Education (AVRCE) to support targeted recruitment for custodial and bus driver positions. Staff provided on-site support to assist job seekers with applications and navigating AVRCE's online systems.

While attendance was modest, the event resulted in **at least two confirmed hires**, demonstrating strong outcomes and reinforcing the value of targeted recruitment efforts in rural communities.

## Strengthening Rural Workforces – Employer Event

**Date:** May 20, 2025

**Location:** NSCC Middleton Campus

In collaboration with NSCC, ISANS, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), Inclusion Nova Scotia, the Native Council of Nova Scotia, APTEC, and the Valley Regional Enterprise Network (Valley REN), Nova Scotia Works organized and hosted a **regional employer-focused event** aimed at strengthening rural workforce capacity.

The event brought together over **50 attendees**, including **32 employers and businesses**, and featured a podcast-style panel discussion addressing key workforce challenges such as recruitment, retention, and immigration. Panelists shared practical strategies focused on

cultural competency, inclusive hiring practices, and workforce development supports, while also highlighting underutilized programs available to employers.

The session encouraged strong engagement through discussion and Q&A, while also creating valuable networking opportunities among employers and service providers. This event demonstrated the impact of collaborative, multi-partner approaches in addressing regional labour market needs and supporting employers in building sustainable workforces.

## Meet the Strengthening Rural Workforces Collaboration Team



Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada



### STRENGTHENING RURAL WORKFORCES

HOSTED AT  
NSCC ANnapolis VALLEY CAMPUS  
295 COMMERCIAL ST.  
MIDDLETON



## RCMP Recruitment Information Sessions

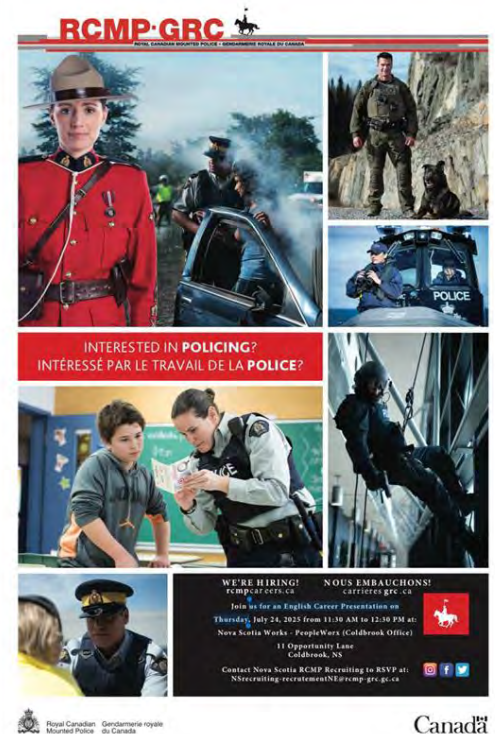
**Date:** July 24, 2025

**Locations:** Nova Scotia Works Centres - Middleton and Coldbrook

Nova Scotia Works hosted two Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Recruitment Information Sessions on the same day at both the Middleton and Coldbrook locations, ensuring accessibility for job seekers across the Annapolis Valley.

Each session provided participants with detailed information on RCMP career opportunities, including the application process, training requirements, and career pathways within the organization. Attendees had the opportunity to engage directly with an RCMP recruiter, ask questions, and gain insight into careers in policing.

By offering sessions in both communities, Nova Scotia Works increased regional reach and participation while strengthening partnerships with national employers.



## Fall Forward into a New Career Job Fair

**Date:** October 15, 2025

**Location:** NSCC Kingstec Campus, Kentville

Delivered in partnership with PeopleWorx, Community Inc., VANSDA, and ISANS, this annual fall job fair was successfully relocated to NSCC Kingstec following unexpected disruptions during wildfire season.

The event saw strong participation, with over **250 job seekers and students** in attendance and **42 employers and service providers** represented. Employers reported high satisfaction not only with attendance numbers but also with the quality and preparedness of candidates.

Despite the last-minute venue change, strong collaboration with NSCC and partner organizations ensured the event proceeded seamlessly, minimizing disruptions and

maintaining momentum. This event highlighted both the adaptability of the Nova Scotia Works network and the continued demand for in-person recruitment opportunities.



## Nova Scotia Works / NSCC Career Fair

**Date:** March 4, 2026

**Location:** NSCC Annapolis Valley Campus, Middleton



In partnership with NSCC, Nova Scotia Works hosted a career fair connecting students, alumni, and community job seekers with local employers.

The event welcomed approximately **100 job seekers** and featured **31 employers and service providers**, offering a strong mix of employment opportunities and career resources. The fair provided a valuable platform for employers to promote current openings and engage directly with candidates, while job seekers were able to explore career pathways and

access employment supports.

This event also supported ongoing regional recruitment efforts by promoting upcoming opportunities, including the **Spring Forward into a New Career Job Fair**, further strengthening continuity across Nova Scotia Works programming.



## Skilled Trades Employer Engagement – Lunch and Learn

**Date:** March 18, 2026

**Location:** Old Orchard Inn, Wolfville

Nova Scotia Works participated in a Skilled Trades Employer Lunch and Learn, bringing together employers to learn more about apprenticeship pathways, hiring supports, and available funding programs.

In partnership with the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency and other organizations, this event strengthened employer awareness of supports available to build and retain a skilled workforce.




---

## Northeast Kings Education Centre Career Exploration Event

**Date:** March 31, 2026

Nova Scotia Works participated in this targeted high school event, engaging students in career exploration and increasing awareness of employment services and supports available as they transition from school to work. This event was organized and planned by our School Liaison and school team at NEKEC.



## Summary and Impact

Across the 2025-2026 reporting period, Nova Scotia Works supported a diverse mix of recruitment events, employer engagement sessions, and career exploration activities.

Key themes included:

- Strong employer participation across sectors
- Continued demand for in-person recruitment opportunities
- Increased collaboration with education and training partners
- Early engagement with youth to support school-to-work transitions
- Targeted employer supports, including public service and skilled trades sectors
- **Demonstrated outcomes from targeted recruitment efforts, including confirmed hires and meaningful employer connections, even in smaller-scale events**

These efforts strengthened connections between job seekers and employers while reinforcing Nova Scotia Works' role as a key partner in workforce development across the Annapolis Valley.

## PeopleWorx Sunshine Committee (2025-2026)

The Sunshine Committee had a fun and engaging year, bringing staff together through a variety of events that boosted morale in the workplace. In addition to the activities, the Committee presented gifts to staff members who left PeopleWorx, had a death in their immediate family, got married, had a child, or had extended medical leave. The Sunshine Committee became one person smaller in January



2026 when Janet's position was discontinued due to loss of funding for AVWC. We really miss the enthusiasm and creative energy that Janet brought to the Sunshine Committee. We wish her all the best. Melanie has graciously volunteered to take over the Staff Birthday greeting notifications. Thank you, Melanie!

### Scavenger Hunt".

In the summer, the Sunshine Committee hosted "**Salsa by the Sea**", providing a little a refreshing break from the July heat. Staff were invited to make a snack with nachos and a salsa bar followed by some creative rock painting. The rocks will be displayed outside by the new gazebo

In April 2025 there was an "**Easter**



The beginning of the Holiday Season began with a festive "**Very Merry Mingle.**" The "mingle" brought people together over seasonally inspired snacks and warm holiday drinks.

The annual "**Drop the Plow**" added some friendly competition with Peter Campbell coming out the winner with the best guess.

During the staff potluck, the Sunshine Committee offered a series of fun activities to participate in.

In **March 2026 St. Patrick's Day "Dressed in Green" Draw**, was won by Regina. The committee wrapped up the year with the **March 2026 Easter Chocolate Bunny Delivery** to staff.



Overall, the Sunshine Committee's intention is to create a positive, connected workplace. We hope each activity played a part in making the year more enjoyable for everyone. Thank you to all the staff and management who participated and helped make the activities of this past year happen.



-The Sunshine Committee - Helen, Janet & Jacquie

# PEOPLEWORX IN ACTION



PeopleWorx programs are designed to respond to identified employment related needs throughout the Annapolis Valley. PeopleWorx programs in 2025–2026 included:

- ◆ Nova Scotia Works Centres
- ◆ Annapolis Valley Work Centre
- ◆ Continuing Care Assistant Program



## Nova Scotia Works Centres

April 1, 2025 - March 31, 2026

### Nova Scotia Works Services



PeopleWorx Nova Scotia Works Centres assist unemployed and underemployed residents in Kings and Annapolis Counties to meet their full employment potential, support employers in finding the employees they need to prosper, and contribute to the development of balanced and sustainable local labour markets.

Various services to individuals are offered, including one-on-one résumé and cover letter development, interview preparation, workshops, career decision-making, career/employment counselling, employment maintenance, job coaching, and employment-related certification courses such as WHMIS/OHS, First Aid/CPR, Food Handlers, and sector-specific training supports.

Services are delivered through office-based programming, outreach locations, virtual platforms, and coordinated community partnerships to ensure accessibility across rural communities.

From April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026, the Nova Scotia Works Centre provided services to a total of **445 new clients**, **331** of whom developed **Return to Work Action Plans**, and offered continued support to **an additional 232 individuals** who started receiving services in the previous year. Across the three locations (Coldbrook, Middleton and Annapolis Royal), staff supported **196** individuals in becoming employed. More than **65%** of the clients **self-identified** as having a **disability**.

Through one-on-one support, Career Practitioners assisted clients in accessing various funding programs to support skill and business development. Over the past year, CPs case-managed 941 new interventions, including **6 Skills Development Programs**, **13 START Programs**, and **10 Self Employment Programs** were accessed by individuals.

Information and Resource Specialists continued to play a key role in front-line service delivery throughout the year. They supported client intake, assisted individuals in navigating Nova Scotia Works Online, and provided access to labour market information, tools, and resources to support informed employment decisions.

They delivered workshops, résumé and cover letter support, interview preparation, and job search assistance. They also contributed to outreach efforts by supporting services in community locations and participating in information sessions delivered both in person and virtually.

Collaboration remained central to their work, as Information and Resource Specialists worked closely with internal staff and community partners to ensure coordinated, accessible services for a wide range of clients.

Career Practitioners with Nova Scotia Works continued to provide individualized employment support, assisting clients in identifying and working toward their career and training goals. This included supporting job seekers with skills development, labour market information, and effective job search strategies.

They also supported clients in accessing funding for employment-related equipment, clothing, and training certification courses where no other funding source was available. In addition, they provided one-on-one support with résumé and cover letter development, interview preparation, and job search assistance to help clients build confidence and improve employment outcomes.

The School Liaison continued to provide a range of employment services for West Kings District High School, Northeast Kings Education Centre, and Middleton Regional High School. School Liaisons provide students with access to Labour Market Information, career-planning supports, employment opportunities for youth, and workshops and sessions on career exploration and employability skills, delivered both in person and virtually.

**More than 100 sessions with more than a thousand students participating in various sessions.**

The Employer Engagement Specialists worked with **171 Employers** during this reporting period. The EES supports employer needs by assisting directly or indirectly with referrals to community partners, industry and sector associations, funding and workplace training programs, job fairs and information sessions, and other government departments.

Employer supports included assistance with job descriptions and postings, attraction, hiring and retention challenges, HR support, diversity and inclusion resources, and referrals to programs such as the HR Toolkit, Workplace Education, Innovation and Productivity, Welcoming Workplace, Inspired to Hire, and Industry Sector Councils.

### **Community Outreach and Collaboration Highlights**

Throughout 2025-2026, Nova Scotia Works / PeopleWorx maintained a strong community presence across the Annapolis Valley through ongoing outreach efforts. These activities brought career services directly into public spaces, increasing visibility and reducing barriers to access—particularly for individuals in rural or underserved communities.

Outreach activities were held in community hubs such as Berwick Library, Lawrencetown Community Market, Kingston, Middleton, Wolfville, Kentville, Greenwood, and Annapolis Royal. Participation in local events further strengthened connections with job seekers, employers, and the broader community.

Collaboration remained central to service delivery during this period. Nova Scotia Works / PeopleWorx maintained active relationships with partners across education, industry, government, and community sectors. Staff contributed to collaborative tables, workforce support initiatives, business response efforts, and case conferencing alongside organizations such as OSD, AVWC, and ISANS.

Partnership development continued to support priority populations and sector needs, including newcomer and disability employment initiatives. Ongoing collaboration with organizations such as ISANS, Inclusion Nova Scotia, Geo Nova Scotia, and other community and sector-based partners helped ensure coordinated and inclusive service delivery.

## 14 Wing Greenwood Rexpo Participation



In September 2025, PeopleWorx continued its annual participation in the 14 Wing Greenwood Rexpo, held at the Greenwood Community Centre. This well-attended event provides an opportunity to welcome new military families to the Annapolis Valley while connecting them with local services, organizations, and community supports.


14 Wing Greenwood  
Wing Welcome  
**Saturday, October 18**  
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Bienvenue à la  
14e Escadre Greenwood  
**Samedi 18 octobre**  
10 h à 13 h

# Rexpo

Clubs, sections, organizations, community non-profit organizations are invited to showcase their programs, as 14 Wing welcomes new families and old friends to the Valley.

14 Wing Greenwood Community Centre, Church Street | 902-765-1494 local 568-5341  
For info on booking a table, contact **Jill Jackson**, Jackson.Jill@cfmws.com  
Or **Lindsay McCormack**, McCormack.Lindsay@cfmws.com  
**Deadline to register October 10**



www.facebook.com/14WingWelcome

Les clubs, sections, organisations et organismes communautaires à but non lucratif sont invités à présenter leurs programmes, alors que la 14e Escadre accueille les nouvelles familles et les anciens amis dans la vallée.  
Centre communautaire de la 14e Escadre Greenwood, rue Church | 902-765-1494 poste 568-5341  
Pour obtenir des renseignements sur la réservation d'une table, veuillez communiquer avec **Jill Jackson**, Jackson.Jill@cfmws.com AU **Lindsay McCormack**, McCormack.Lindsay@cfmws.com  
**Date limite d'inscription : le 10 octobre**

Our team hosted an information booth, engaging directly with attendees to share information about employment services, job search supports, training opportunities, and available

programs through Nova Scotia Works. Staff also connected with local organizations and employers to strengthen partnerships and promote workforce development initiatives within the region.

Ongoing participation in Rexpo reflects PeopleWorx's commitment to supporting military members, veterans, and their families, while reinforcing our role as a key partner in helping individuals successfully transition, connect, and thrive within the local community.

## Participation in CAF Transition Seminar / Expo

In June and November 2025, PeopleWorx and Nova Scotia Works participated in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) Transition Seminars/Expos held at 14 Wing Greenwood. These events supported continued partnership with CAF transition services and provided a valuable opportunity to connect directly with transitioning members, veterans, and their families.

Our team maintained an information booth at both events and participated in presentation opportunities where available. These presentations highlighted local labour market information, employment services, and targeted supports available through Nova Scotia Works to assist individuals transitioning from military to civilian careers.

This ongoing participation strengthened collaboration with CAF transition staff and community partners, while increasing awareness of available workforce development resources and reinforcing established referral pathways across the region.



## Participation in DEIA Resource Fairs (Atlantic Home Building & Renovation Sector Council)

In April 2025, we participated in the Atlantic Home Building & Renovation Sector Council's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Resource Fairs held in Nova Scotia. These events provided an opportunity to connect with sector partners, community organizations, and workforce development stakeholders, and to share information on available DEIA-related

programs and resources, including supports through Nova Scotia Works and related provincial initiatives.

Our participation focused on promoting accessible employment supports, sharing HR toolkits, and strengthening awareness of inclusive workplace practices within the housing construction sector.



### Participation in Kingston Steer BBQ Vendor Market

In July 2025, PeopleWorx participated in the annual Kingston Steer BBQ Vendor Market held at Centennial Park in Kingston. This long-standing community event provided an opportunity to engage with residents, local employers, and community organizations in an informal setting while promoting awareness of Nova Scotia Works programs and employment services.

Our participation included an information booth where we shared resources related to job search supports, training opportunities, and local labour market information. Staff engaged

directly with attendees to increase awareness of available services and strengthen community connections within the region.

Ongoing participation in this annual event continues to support community outreach efforts and reinforces PeopleWorx's presence as an accessible employment support service within the Annapolis Valley.



## Valley Farmers Market Outreach

  
**EMPLOYMENT SERVICES OUTREACH  
AT YOUR VALLEY FARMERS MARKET**

As part of this community outreach, youth, job seekers, and employers alike can connect with a **Career Practitioner** and **Employer Engagement Specialist** during these markets.

**Come talk to us to get support with:**

- Resumes
- Cover Letters
- Job Searches
- Workshops
- Funding Information
- HR Support for Employers
- Wage Subsidy Programs for Employers

**Your Valley Farmers Market**

570 Main St, Lawrencetown, NS  
Annapolis Valley Exhibition Grounds

**Mandays from**  
**4:00PM - 7:00PM**

July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025  
July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**For more information, call 902-825-3118  
or email [wmcnullin@peopleworx.ca](mailto:wmcnullin@peopleworx.ca)**









In the Summer of 2025, PeopleWorx delivered employment services outreach at the Valley Farmers Market in Lawrencetown, held at the Annapolis Valley Exhibition Grounds. This community-based initiative created an opportunity to connect directly with residents, job seekers, youth, and local employers in an accessible and informal setting while promoting awareness of Nova Scotia Works programs and services.

Our outreach included on-site support from a Career Practitioner and an Employer Engagement Specialist, offering guidance on resumes, cover letters, and job search strategies, as well as access to training and funding opportunities. Staff also provided information and support to employers, including HR guidance and wage subsidy programs, thereby strengthening connections within the local labour market.

Participation in the Valley Farmers Market outreach continues to support PeopleWorx's commitment to community engagement and reinforces our role as an accessible employment service provider across the Annapolis Valley.

## Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Equity and inclusion were central themes in outreach, reflected in participation in initiatives such as Disability Employment Awareness Month, Pride Month, Red Dress Day, Mi'kmaq History Month, and other awareness events.

## National Indigenous Peoples Day Celebration (2025)

In June 2025, PeopleWorx proudly supported APTEC and the Native Council of Nova Scotia in hosting a National Indigenous Peoples Day celebration at our Coldbrook location. This event provided an opportunity to honour and celebrate Indigenous culture, traditions, and community in a welcoming and inclusive environment.

The celebration featured a variety of activities, bringing together community members, partners, and families for cultural experiences and shared learning. Staff were present to support the event and engage with attendees, while also promoting awareness of available employment services and community supports.

Participation in this event reflects PeopleWorx's ongoing commitment to building strong community partnerships and supporting inclusive, culturally responsive services across the Annapolis Valley.



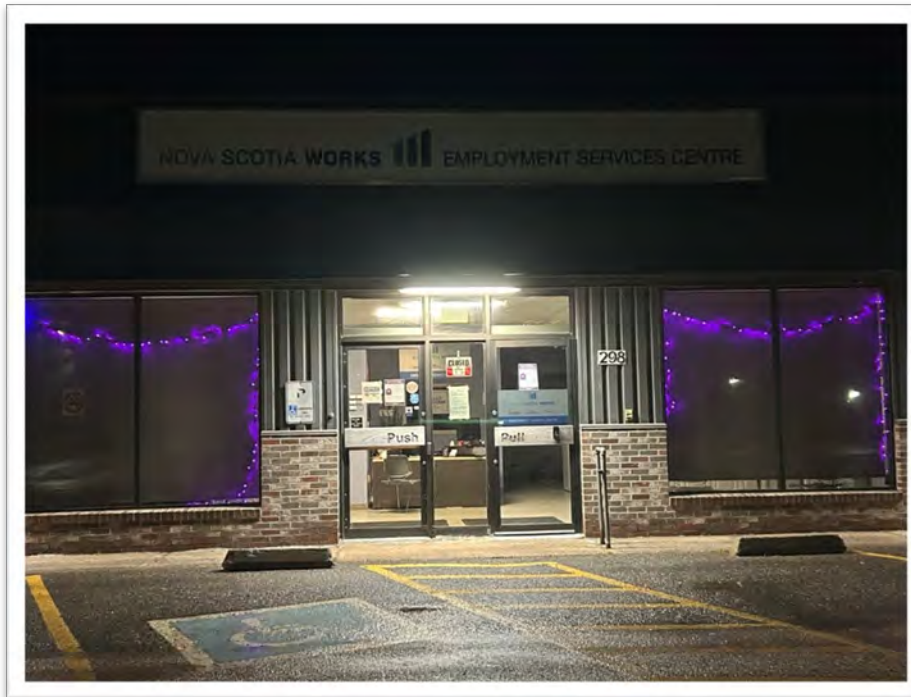


### Light It Up! for NDEAM (2025)

In October 2025, PeopleWorx participated in *Light It Up! for National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM)*, a nationwide initiative held annually on the third Thursday of October to raise awareness about disability employment and promote inclusive hiring practices.

All three PeopleWorx locations in Annapolis Royal, Middleton, and Coldbrook took part by lighting up their spaces on Thursday, October 16, demonstrating a shared commitment to accessibility, inclusion, and equitable employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. In addition, lights were distributed to inclusive employer partners to support their participation and encourage broader community involvement in raising awareness.

Through this initiative, PeopleWorx helped highlight the importance of inclusive workplaces while promoting the supports and services available to both job seekers and employers. Participation in Light It Up! reinforces our ongoing commitment to fostering an inclusive workforce across the Annapolis Valley.



## Strawberry Mawio'mi Community Presence (2025)



In October 2025, PeopleWorx supported the Annapolis Valley First Nation Strawberry Mawio'mi through our presence at the event, recognizing the importance of community connection and cultural awareness.

This gathering brought together community members, vendors, and organizations to celebrate Indigenous culture and traditions. A small number of staff attended on behalf of PeopleWorx, taking part in the event and engaging informally with attendees and community partners.

Maintaining a presence at events such as the Strawberry Mawio'mi reflects PeopleWorx's commitment to being present in the community, building relationships, and supporting inclusive and respectful engagement across the Annapolis Valley.

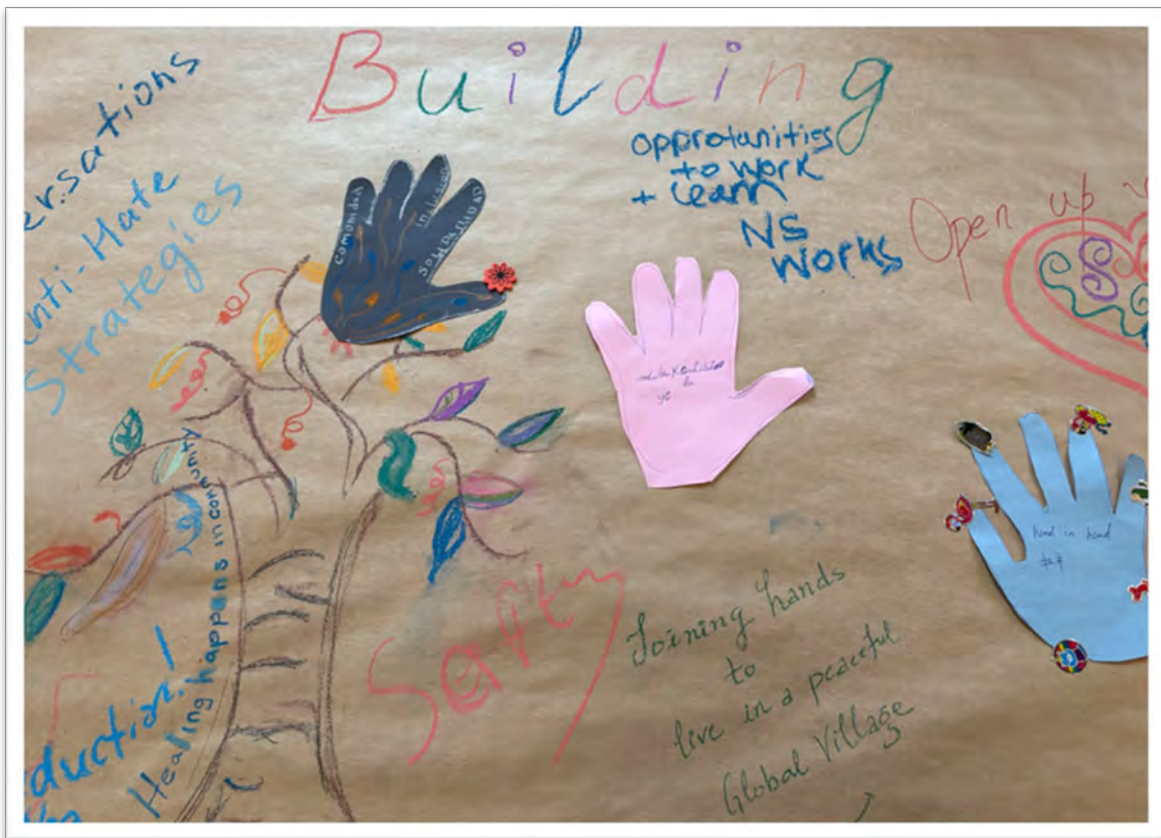


## ISANS Anti-Hate Community Engagement

In 2025, PeopleWorx participated in ISANS-led Anti-Hate Strategy community events held in both Kentville and Kingston. These gatherings brought together community members and partner organizations to promote inclusion, respect, and awareness, while creating space for dialogue and shared learning.

Staff attended both events, contributing to discussions and engaging with community partners and attendees. Participation focused on listening, learning, and supporting broader efforts to foster welcoming and inclusive communities across the Annapolis Valley.

Engagement in initiatives such as the ISANS Anti-Hate Strategy reflects PeopleWorx's ongoing commitment to inclusion, community connection, and supporting safe, respectful environments for all.





## Ability to Rise Event - International Day of Persons with Disabilities (2025)

In December 2025, PeopleWorx attended the *Ability to Rise* event in recognition of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. This event celebrates leadership in disability inclusion and highlights the importance of creating accessible and inclusive workplaces.

Staff were present to support the event and engage with community partners and employers committed to advancing inclusive employment practices. Our

Employer Engagement Specialist also contributed to the design and selection process for the Inclusive Employer Award, sponsored by Nova Scotia Works.



We are proud to share that a local employer, Vitis Vines Inc., was selected as the inaugural recipient of the Champions of Inclusion Award in the small business category, recognizing their leadership and commitment to inclusive hiring. This achievement highlights the strength of inclusive employers within our region and the impact of collaborative efforts to advance equitable employment.

Participation in the Ability to Rise event reflects PeopleWorx's continued commitment to promoting accessibility, supporting inclusive employers, and advancing inclusive workforce development across the Annapolis Valley.

## Immigration and Community Fair

In November 2025, PeopleWorx supported the organization and implementation of the second annual Immigration and Community Fair, held at Acadia University in partnership with the Valley Regional Enterprise Network and community partners. This event brought together employers, service providers, newcomers, and community members to share information, build connections, and support successful settlement and workforce integration.



PeopleWorx, Nova Scotia Works Centre

11 Opportunity Lane, Coldbrook

Tuesday January 20th, 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

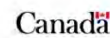
Thursday February 19th; 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Thursday, March 19th; 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

More Info: 1-866-609-9675

Email: [contact@peopleworx.ca](mailto:contact@peopleworx.ca)

Join us for one of our upcoming **Self-Employment Information Sessions** and explore how you can transition from unemployment to self-employment with expert guidance and support. You will learn about program eligibility, financial and advisory supports, and the steps to move from unemployment to entrepreneurship. Meet with representatives from Nova Scotia Works and CBDC Hants-Kings at our Coldbrook Nova Scotia Works Location.



PeopleWorx staff played an active role in both planning and on-site delivery, including presenting information on Nova Scotia Works programs and services. The event provided an opportunity to connect directly with newcomers and employers, increasing awareness of available supports related to employment, training, and workforce development.

Participation in the Immigration and Community Fair reflects PeopleWorx's ongoing commitment to collaborative partnerships, inclusive workforce development, and supporting newcomers in building meaningful connections within the Annapolis Valley.

## Information Sessions and Workshops

PeopleWorx continued to deliver a range of information sessions and workshops designed to increase access to employment supports, training opportunities, and career development resources across the Annapolis Valley. These sessions provided individuals with practical tools, guidance, and information to support their employment goals.

A key focus/example included targeted self-employment information sessions delivered in partnership with CBDC Hants-Kings. These workshops provided participants with an overview of the steps to starting a business, program eligibility, and available financial and advisory supports. By offering these sessions in an accessible and supportive environment, PeopleWorx

helped reduce barriers and increase awareness of entrepreneurship as a viable employment pathway.

Through ongoing delivery of workshops and information sessions, PeopleWorx continues to support informed decision-making, build confidence, and expand opportunities for job seekers and aspiring entrepreneurs within the region.

### *Summary*

The 2025-2026 fiscal year reflects a highly integrated, collaborative, and community-responsive Nova Scotia Works system across the Annapolis Valley.

Through expanded outreach, employer engagement, coordinated partnerships, and inclusive programming, PeopleWorx supported job seekers, youth, newcomers, and employers in navigating an evolving labour market.

## Nova Scotia Works School Liaison: Annual Review 2025-2026

Now in its fourth year, the Nova Scotia Works School Liaison role continues to provide vital youth-focused resources and career development mentorship to students at Middleton Regional High School, West Kings District High School, and Northeast Kings Education Centre. This year's success is anchored by our consistent weekly presence within the school buildings and our year-round availability. Being a steady, familiar fixture allows us to build deep trust with students and school colleagues alike. We also make ourselves available to families and caregivers to provide that same reliable labour market information and youth-focused resources, helping them support students' career journeys from home.

Our work focuses on helping students identify their transferable skills, helping them see how their current school activities are directly preparing them for the workforce. We combine this with practical 1:1 sessions and engaging group workshops related to resume-building, job search strategies and direct connections to employers, providing students with the tools and encouragement to navigate the local labour market with confidence. A major highlight of this year was our series of school-wide career exploration events. These offered students in grades 6-12 the opportunity to network with over 30 employers and industry representatives in the comfort of their own schools. To ensure no one was left out, we made the same information available virtually for staff and families to follow up on afterward.



A core priority remains reaching students who face barriers to employment. By maintaining strong connections with community organizations and using a strength-based approach, we have successfully engaged students with diverse learning profiles in meaningful career exploration. Supported by colleagues at each Nova Scotia Works Employment Service Centre, this role is firmly established and engaged as a positive and impactful bridge between our schools and the community.

**PEOPLEWORX - NOVA SCOTIA WORKS STAFF  
LOCATIONS: COLDBROOK, MIDDLETON, ANNAPOLIS ROYAL**

**Leadership (All Locations)**

- Kim Aker – Executive Director
- Julie Bibby-MacNabb – Operations Manager

**Annapolis Royal**

**Information & Resource Specialist (IRS)**

- Sue Cranton

**Career Practitioner**

- Chantelle Webb – Current (March 2026)
- Jane James – Until March 2026

**Employment Engagement Specialist (EES)**

- Meagan McCann – Started December 2025
- Deb Kendall – Retired (January 2026)
- Westin McMullin – EES (Until July 2025)

**Coldbrook**

**Information & Resource Specialist (IRS)**

- Sandra Martin
- Wendell MacKinnon
- Ronda Spears – (On secondment to Career Practitioner)
- Emilie Townsend – Part-Time Term Position (2025)
- Tina Blenkhorn – Part-Time Term Position (2025)

**Career Practitioner**

- Helen Carter
- Tanya McCullough (Jan 2026)
- Ronda Spears – Term Position (2025) (*On secondment from IRS*)

**Employment Engagement Specialist (EES)**

- Meagan McCann – Started December 2025
- Deb Kendall – Retired (January 2026)
- Westin McMullin – EES Until July 2025

**School Liaison**

- Melanie McCulloch – Schools: West Kings District High School, Middleton Regional High School, Northeast Kings Education Centre

**Summer Youth Staff (IRS)**

- Hannah Campbell – Summer (2025)

## **Middleton**

### **Information & Resource Specialist (IRS)**

- Emilie Townsend – Part-time

### **Career Practitioner**

- Gina Ripley – Current (Jan 2026)
- Westin McMullin – (Until July 2025)
- Tanya McCullough – Term Position (Until Dec 2025)

### **Employment Engagement Specialist (EES)**

- Meagan McCann – Started (December 2025)
- Deb Kendall – Retired (January 2026)
- Westin McMullin – (Until July 2025)

### **School Liaison**

- Melanie McCulloch – Schools: West Kings District High School, Middleton Regional High School, Northeast Kings Education Centre

### **Summer Youth Staff (IRS)**

- Makayla Anthony – Summer (2025)

### **RISE: Move to Work Project- Middleton (Non-Nova Scotia Works)**

- Meagan McCann – Project Facilitator (September-November 2025)

## Staff Professional Development Highlights 2025-2026

### LivingWorks ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training)

LivingWorks ASIST is a two-day, evidence-based training that equips participants with the skills and confidence to support individuals who may be at risk of suicide. Designed for anyone—not just mental health professionals—the program focuses on recognizing warning signs, engaging in direct and compassionate conversations, and connecting individuals to appropriate supports.



Through interactive learning, guided practice, and real-life scenarios, participants build the ability to listen without judgment, explore personal attitudes toward suicide, and develop collaborative safety plans. Delivered in a supportive group setting by certified trainers, the training emphasizes both individual action and community responsibility.

As a globally recognized program delivered in over 30 countries, LivingWorks ASIST contributes to building safer, more responsive communities by empowering people to intervene effectively when it matters most.

### Staff Impact

*The LivingWorks ASIST training directly strengthens my effectiveness in an Information and Resource Specialist role by equipping me with the confidence and practical skills to respond appropriately when someone may be at risk. Through its focus on recognizing warning signs and engaging in open, compassionate conversations, I am better prepared to create a safe and non-judgmental space for individuals seeking support. The interactive, scenario-based approach enhances my ability to actively listen, assess needs, and guide individuals toward appropriate resources while maintaining empathy and professionalism. Additionally, the emphasis on collaborative safety planning and community responsibility aligns closely with my role in connecting people to services, ensuring that I can respond thoughtfully, responsibly, and with greater awareness in high-risk situations*

**- Emilie Townsend, Information & Resource Specialist**



Join Us In Person—or Stream It Online!

Elevate: NSCDA Professional Development Series – September 11-12, 2025  
Membertou Trade & Convention Centre, Cape Breton

## Elevate: NSCDA Professional Development Series (September 11-12, 2025)

All NS Works staff participated virtually in the *Elevate: NSCDA Professional Development Series*, accessing livestreamed sessions from the September 12 programming. This online format enabled full team engagement while

supporting accessibility and flexibility.

The streamed sessions included *Storytelling for Career Success* with Terrence Taylor, which explored how storytelling can strengthen communication, confidence, and career development. *The Future of Disability Services* with Diana Poirier examined emerging trends and considerations shaping the sector. The keynote *Recognizing Prior Learning* with Jeremy McQuigge highlighted the importance of valuing lived experience and informal learning in workforce development and credential recognition.

### Staff Impact

*I participated in the sessions on storytelling, transforming the disability sector, and work-based learning, where I gained a well-rounded understanding of how to enhance client support in an evolving employment landscape.*

*Through storytelling training, I strengthened my ability to communicate effectively, build trust, and help clients articulate their strengths, goals, and lived experiences. Insights from the REMEDY Report and sector transformation session increased my awareness of policy, funding, and workforce changes, enabling more responsive, inclusive, and up-to-date service delivery. Additionally, learning about Work-Based Learning (WBL) provided me with practical strategies for recognizing and validating prior learning, connecting clients to experiential opportunities, and aligning employment pathways with industry needs.*

*Together, these learnings enhance my capacity to deliver person-centred, equitable, and forward-thinking employment support and case management. I feel that I am better equipped to foster meaningful client relationships, support mental well-being, and guide individuals toward sustainable and fulfilling career outcomes in a changing labour market.*     **- Tanya McCullough, Career Practitioner**

## EMPOWERED: The Portfolio Career (Winter 2026 Delivery)

One staff member participated in the *EMPOWERED: The Portfolio Career* program with a goal of supporting future facilitation within our Centres.


## EMPOWERED: *The Portfolio Career* Facilitator Training

**A reflective, skill-building program for career development practitioners.**

- Strengthen job search support
- Help clients name their competencies
- Support confident career transitions



**Live virtual + 1 in-person day - no fee**

Brought to you by 

This professional development is a structured program delivered over **approximately January to March 2026**, consisting of **8 sessions (both in-person and virtual)** along with an estimated **20 hours of group learning and 15-25 hours of independent portfolio work**.

The program focuses on identifying and articulating prior learning through a portfolio approach, supporting participants to recognize their skills, knowledge, and experience and translate them into structured learning narratives and evidence for career development.

Key areas of focus include reflective practice, trauma-informed and narrative learning approaches, skills identification, and exploring future career pathways. The program concludes with the development and presentation of a personal learning portfolio demonstrating competency and growth.

### Staff Impact

*The EMPOWERED: The Portfolio Career training through NSCDA gave me useful tools to help clients identify their transferable skills, including those gained outside of formal work experience. This is especially important, as I often hear clients say they “have no skills,” and the training provided new ways for me to support them in recognizing their strengths of their life experience. I found this perspective valuable and can see how it will improve my ability to have more meaningful conversations with clients about their skills and how these can apply to a range of opportunities.*

**- Ronda Spears, Information Resource Specialist.**



National Certification ensures career development professionals meet a recognized standard of practice, providing consistency across Canada. A Career Development Professional's (CDP) competence is qualified when their skills are demonstrated based on the National Competency Profile for Career

Development Professionals. This reflects their commitment to advancing knowledge in the field and ensures their understanding and skills align with industry best practices.

We're proud of our team's dedication to maintaining the highest professional standards and excited about the new opportunities this national recognition brings!

**Our CCDP Certified Staff for 2025-2026 Included the following:**

- Helen Carter
- Tanya McCullough
- Wendell MacKinnon
- Ronda Spears
- Julie Bibby-MacNabb
- Westin McMullin
- Gina Ripley

**Projects**

**PeopleWorx - RISE Program**

**Ready | Inspired | Skilled | Employed**

PeopleWorx successfully delivered a program that we designed, "RISE (Ready, Inspired, Skilled, Employed)" as part of the Move to Work initiative, supporting individuals referred through ESIA to build the skills, confidence, and connections needed to transition into employment.

The program received 25 referrals, with 15 individuals attending intake and 13 accepted. One participant did not attend, and two withdrew, leaving 10 participants who completed the 10-week program. Intake, curriculum, and supports were continuously adapted to meet participant needs.

## Program Overview

RISE provided structured, hands-on training in employment readiness, digital literacy, and personal development. Participants:

- Created professional emails and job search accounts (Nova Scotia Works, UpSkills)
- Developed tailored résumés and cover letters
- Learned job search strategies, interview techniques (STAR method), and workplace expectations
- Strengthened communication, teamwork, time management, and stress management skills
- Completed online modules focused on motivation, attitude, and assertiveness

## Barriers & Supports

Participants faced barriers including mental health challenges, transportation, childcare, and confidence. These were addressed through workshops and individualized coaching. Wraparound supports included one-on-one employment coaching, certification referrals (First Aid/CPR, WHMIS), and ongoing connection to Nova Scotia Works services.

## Employer Engagement

All participants attended the *“Fall Forward into a New Career” Job Fair*, connecting with 30-40 employers. Participants presented themselves professionally, submitted applications, and took part in on-site interviews, gaining valuable real-world experience.

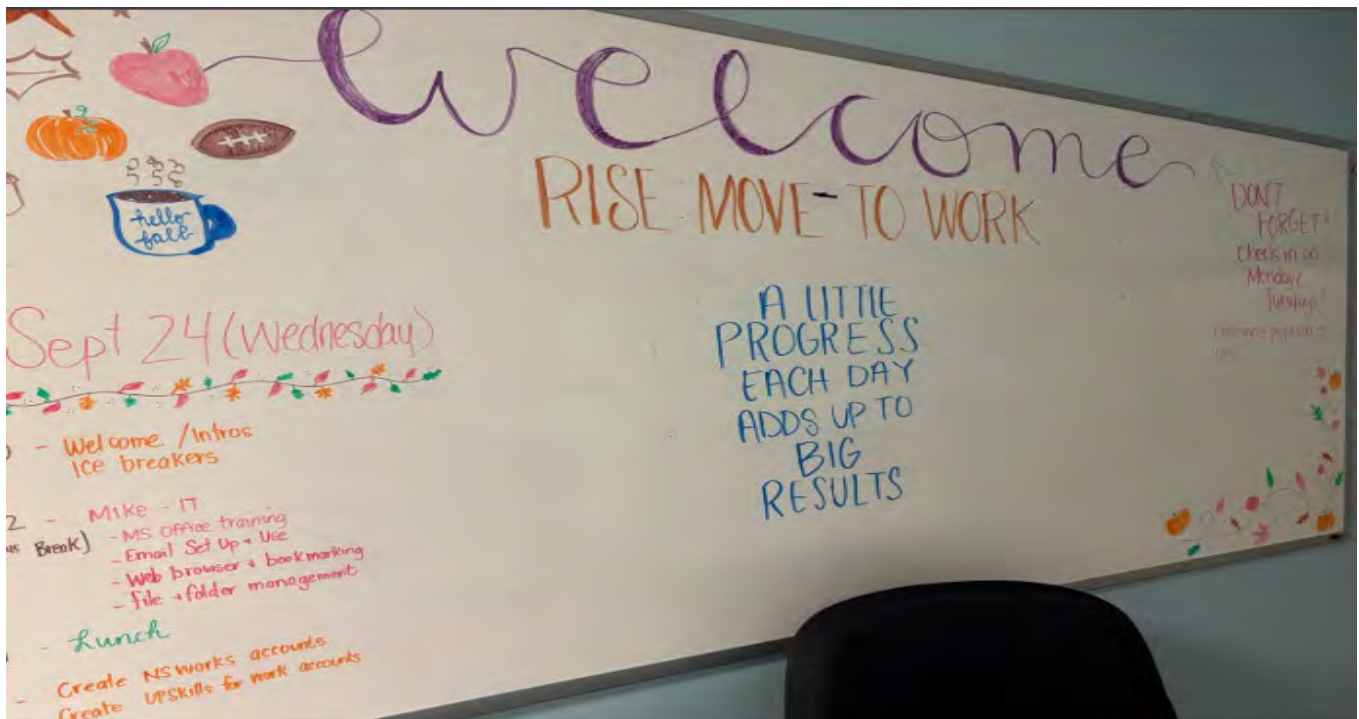
## Outcomes

The impact of RISE extended beyond immediate employment, reflecting meaningful progress in confidence, skills, and engagement with the labour market.

Participants achieved:

- **Successful completion by 10 participants**, demonstrating commitment and consistency
- **Employment outcomes**, including full-time, casual, and self-employment opportunities for some individuals.
- **Active engagement with employers**, including interviews, follow-ups, and ongoing hiring processes
- **Increased job search activity**, with participants confidently applying and pursuing opportunities
- **Completion of certifications** and online skills training
- **Significant growth in confidence, communication, and workplace readiness**
- **Improved ability to navigate barriers**, including anxiety, time management, and life stability
- **Increased readiness for the workforce**, and a clearer sense of career direction.

For many, the most meaningful outcome was a shift in mindset—from uncertainty to motivation and active participation in their employment journey. Graduates have transitioned to continued support services, ensuring sustained progress toward long-term employment success.



## Annapolis Valley Work Centre

The Annapolis Valley Work Centre has been making an impact for close to 40 years and 2025 was no different! Sadly, in April 2025 the Department of Opportunity and Social Development announced that they would cease to fund the six Work Activity Centres in the province as of December 31, 2025.

As a staff team, we remained committed to advocating for our clients. We worked closely with community businesses to provide various services, including free private counseling, free haircuts, reduced-cost dental services, and transportation for our participants. We also provided a breakfast cart and reasonably priced lunches daily which are supported through funding from our social enterprise and donations, most recently a generous donation from the Coldbrook Lion's Club. Our Grab and Go also provided a selection of clothing, often with 'spiffy' selections for those important job interviews. We are very grateful to our donors!

**One hundred and ninety-six people** reached out or were referred to the program to enhance, improve or develop skills that would help them become attached to the labour force, to pursue further education which would lead to careers and reach their professional and personal goals!

**Ninety-two** of those individuals engaged in the job readiness program, first completing a four-week assessment, with many continuing on by choice in one of the vocational focused areas of Food Services, Customer Service, Introduction to Construction and Basic Office Skills as well as employability essential skills, personal development and job development. We taught not only how to find a job but also how to keep a job!

Participants in the program along with our dedicated staff team members were always keeping their eyes open for job opportunities, doing active job searches. Some moved into employment early in their time with us, while others took advantage of a community placement to further hone their skills while continuing that job search. Our individualized and trauma informed approach reflects the pace most appropriate to our participants. The Job Developer worked with a network of employers to secure great matches between the job seekers and the employers resulting in many long-term employment relationships. The Job Developer also provided maintenance classes on Wednesday mornings to those who were still job searching after completing the program. During these sessions, participants were encouraged to update

their resumes, perform active job searches, or get additional Individualized help to maintain their current employment. They were also introduced to the services offered through NS Works. This concentrated time helped people to keep the momentum they experienced while attending the AVWC program.

The remaining **one hundred and four** referrals were provided tours, numerous telephone conversations and emails and networking opportunities, including referrals to other more appropriate community resources. Some also did not want to begin a program that could not continue for its usual term due to the cessation of funding. We maintained a close partnership with the local Opportunities and Social Development Department offices (OSD), formerly Department of Community Services offices, and the Nova Scotia Works offices in Coldbrook, Middleton, and Kentville, as each person entering our program also received case-management by a Nova Scotia Works Career Practitioner. Those not engaging with the program referred by OSD would have continued to work with their ESS/IA worker. We continue to receive inquiries from the public for the program and both NSW Case Managers and ESS/IA workers report having numerous individuals on their caseloads who would benefit from a Job Readiness program.

Graduation is always a rewarding celebration of achievements. Each person is recognized for their unique contributions and qualities, focusing on their abilities, which made this program special. Over the past 39 years we have held **159 graduations**, with **39 graduates** completing the program in December and **hundreds** before.

These remarkable successes happened with the support of long-term team members and experienced newer members of the staff team. In the past year the team exemplified their commitment to the participants by adjusting their plans to remain with the program until its closure in December 2025. The program continued to provide quality service through these transitions with the leadership of Vickie Petrie, Manager.



In closing, here are those committed team members and we want to thank them for the great work they have completed.

## AVWC – PeopleWorx Staff

Greg Saunders - Food Service Facilitator

Gina Ripley - Basic Office Skills Facilitator

Janet Ross - Customer Service Facilitator

Glenn Whitehead - Introduction to Construction Facilitator

Jennifer D'Aubin - Personal Development Facilitator and Coach

Tanya McCullough - Personal Development Facilitator and Coach

Rachel Eisener - Personal Development Facilitator and Coach (maternity leave)

Laura Fisher - Job Development Facilitator and Coach

Elika West- Essential Skills Facilitator

Sandra Martin - ½ time Administrative Assistant

Vickie Petrie - Manager, AVWC

Kim Aker - Executive Director



## AVWC Client Profile

### Success stories

**Naomi Hatt:** In Essential Skills, Naomi's scores indicated a solid foundation in language and communication. She also expressed a plan to continue academic upgrading in the future. Naomi wanted to improve her cooking skills. She had jobs before, but never in her desired area of food services. Naomi has strong skills in reading, vocabulary, comprehension and spelling. Naomi was extremely keen in PD class sharing personal experiences while remaining open to learning new strategies. She spoke highly of our program and encouraged others in the community to also register for our services. Naomi's strong values around inclusion and respect for others were often demonstrated in the classroom. Fairness and justice are some of her top values. When the opportunity came up for a job part way through her program, she stepped up to the plate, swung for the bleachers and hit a home run! Naomi is now working full-time as a cook at Wheelock Dining Hall at Acadia University. She has mastered the grill and, as a result, fills in where needed in various kitchen positions. Naomi, we are very proud of you and wish you all the best.

**Joel Crozier:** Joel's work reflected his solid academic abilities across all subjects, which were developed through previous post-secondary education. He demonstrated his attention to detail and ability to handle various tasks effectively in Essential Skills. Joel would often offer valuable insights that enhanced the learning experience for everyone involved. Joel was an integral part of building the gazebo deck as we battled through some very hot summer days out back. He was also a valuable team member, building and painting the deck chairs. Joel's confidence and skills grew remarkably over his time here, and it was a pleasure working with him. Joel was willing to step out of his comfort zone and use the skills he learned in the shop to increase his chances of employment. He studied for his beginner's exam and passed on the first try.



This was important to Joel, as most of the jobs he was exploring were not accessible by bus. Joel went for an interview with Chantelle to explore a work placement with Zag Trusses and was hired full-time on the spot. We are so proud of you and wish you all the best.

**Emily Irvin:** Emily was a joy to have in the program, consistently demonstrating a warm and friendly demeanour. Emily is a pleasant and respectful person. She understands that it is the little things which make life joyful. She showed an excellent work ethic in the Basic Office Skills (BOS) program and, while there, completed her “Tourism Rocks” certificate. Emily also had some part-time work and outside responsibilities to attend to while also attending here. She took a leave of absence to address these issues and, upon her return, decided to try Food Services. She is fantastic in the kitchen, and she knows that honing her skills will allow her to rise above the competition and secure that just-right position. Kind, compassionate, and capable come to mind when we think of Emily. Emily’s work ethic and wonderful demeanour will be an asset to any future employer, and she has just secured a position at Wolfville Elms. We are so happy for her and wish her all the best.

# EMPLOYMENT TRAINING PARTNERS

The following companies and organizations were job placement hosts and/or employers of participants at AVWC (March 31, 2025 - December 31, 2025)

Acadia University Library	Grandview Manor Berwick
Access NS	Green Diamond Equipment (Kentville Location)
Anderson Sinclair Law Office	Green Elephant Cafe
Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce	Greenwood Military Aviation Museum
Annapolis Valley Red Library	Heather's Independent Middleton
Annapolis Valley Regional Libraries	Hutchin's Pharmacy Annapolis Royal
Apple Valley	Indigo/ Coles New Minas
Bargain Harley's -Berwick	JAG trusses
Beavercreek Winery	Jeff's Independent Berwick
Bees Knees General Store	Kent and Duffet Accounting
Berwick Electric Commission	Kimball Law
Big Scoop Restaurant	Kings County Museum
Birdgetown Pharmasave	Kings Riverside Court
Black Cat Books	Kingston Library
Blomidon Park	Lawton's Drug Store New Minas
Bluenotes Greenwood	Liberty Lodge
Books Galore -Coldbrook	Lisa's Independent Grocer -Kentville
Cadance Academy	M. Hill Law Office and Mediation Services
Canadian Tire -New Minas	MacDonald Museum
Carl's Independent Wolfville	MacLarens Appliance
CINTAS	Maritime Express Cider
County of Annapolis	Market Between the Mountains -Berwick
Eden Valley Poultry	Mark's New Minas
Family First Medical	Massiah's Cleaning
Flyer Services	Michaels Craft Store
Foodland Middleton	Munro Construction
Frasers Kentville	Nayya Pizza & Grill
GameStop New Minas	New Minas Income Tax and Accounting
Gather Here Charcuterie	NSCC COGS
Giant Tiger	Oaken Barrel Pub

Parker's Tech Shop Coldbrook	The Odd Book
Pet Value	TMC Law Kentville
PetSmart	Town of Kentville for Visitor Information Centre
PLANK Industries	TRA Middleton
R D Chisholm Stationery-Books	Valley Regional Hospital -Food Services
Rainbow's End Bookstore	Valley Waste
Red Cross	Video World
Ricks Frame Art	Waterbury Newton
Riedner Construction	Watts Up
Rockin'Rogi Diner	Wheelhouse Coffee
Ross Creek Centre for the Arts	Wheelock Dining Hall
SC Contracting	Wickwire Place
Scotian Gold	Wilson's Pharmasave -Berwick
Serenity Funeral Home	Wolfville Legion
SKYLIT	
SPCA thrift store -New Minas	

The following organizations provided additional training and education to participants when they left AVWC: Kings County Adult High School; Nova Scotia Community College; NPower Canada

## Continuing Care Assistant Program 2025-2026



Operating as a private career college, the Continuing Care Assistant (CCA) program educates and trains targeted students with the necessary tools and skills to deliver appropriate, timely and respectful client-focused care. The new six month Curriculum and Standards 2025 were introduced and two cohorts with a total of 26 students completed and graduated in 2025-2026.



The program received support from the *One Journey Initiative* of Labour, Skills and Immigration and the Department of Seniors and Long-term Care. These graduates worked very diligently to achieve the required skills while adapting to the continuing challenges within the health care

and long-term care sectors. Twenty-three also achieved their provincial certification and the remaining three will be writing in 2026. Each is now contributing to the workforce. Congratulations! The graduation ceremonies were very well attended by proud family, friends and special guests.

The dedicated and experienced instructors adapted and pivoted as well and can take pride in delivering a quality program within the new Curriculum and Standards. A special thank you to Keely Hiltz, Primary instructor, who provided leadership and support with the new expectations to Lucas Dunham as the secondary instructor for the first cohort and then Monica Franey upon her return from maternity leave for the second cohort. Carrie Woodworth, PD Facilitator also played an integral role in contributing to the success of the students and introduction of the new expectations until December 2025. Jacquie's expertise in ensuring all the tests, exams, projects, CAT books and documentation expectations has been invaluable in the implementation of the new Curriculum and Standards. Jen D'Aubin joined the team as PD Facilitator in January 2026. Thank you, Keely, Lucas, Monica, Carrie, Jen and Jacquie!



## CCA Staff:

**Keely Hiltz, LPN Instructor**

**Monica Franey, RN Instructor (partial year)**

**Lucas Dunham, LPN Instructor (partial year)**

**Carrie Woodworth, Professional Development Facilitator/Instructor (partial year)**

**Jennifer D'Aubin, Professional Development Facilitator/Instructor (partial year)**

**Jacquie Dale, Exec Assistant/CCA Admin Support**

**Kim Aker, ED, Manager**

# CCA Program Student Profile

## Graduating Classes of 2025/2026



Back row left to right: S'ade Forrest, Kesley Young, Jeniffer Garcia, Samantha Connell, Noel Trevors, Cheri-Lyn Wiggins, Eli MacMillan  
 Front row left to right: Shubin Ettumkal, Charmaine Benjamin, Michelle Kerr, Jennifer Vallespin, Nicole Antoine, Amanda Pelton, Samantha Connell, Govinda Aryal



Back row left to right: Monica Franey (Instructor), Jessica Therriault, Melissa Gates, Shana Rogerson, Karen Bernard, Melissa Ferguson, Madeline Bowlby  
 Front row left to right: Jessica Boutilier, Carrie Woodworth (former PD Facilitator), Emma Carroll & daughter, Alyssa Thorpe, Aleigha Muise, Jen D'Aubin (PD Facilitator), Keely Hiltz (Instructor)

# EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

PeopleWorx engages with local businesses to provide opportunity seekers with a path to the hidden job market. The business supports are primarily focused on the recruitment, selection and retention of staff; however, the Employer Engagement Specialist also acts by connecting local businesses with all appropriate programs, agencies and supports. From April 2025 to March 2026, the Employer Engagement Specialist worked with the local businesses listed below. - [Deborah Kendall, Employer Engagement Specialist](#)

23 Papers Bookkeeping Services	Berwick Home Hardware Building Centre
A.W Construction Inc.	BIRDIES Clubhouse
Accessorize Yourself	Bistro 300
Annapolis Brewing Company Ltd	Bluenotes
Annapolis Collaborative Practice	Bonnie Baker Studio
Annapolis Golden Farms Inc	Brooks Levy Construction Ltd
Annapolis Valley Aquatics	Brown's Auto Salvage Ltd
Annapolis Valley Community College	Bruce Automotive Group NS Ltd
Annapolis Valley Exhibition Society	Burton's Towering Tree Services
Annapolis Valley Home Care Ltd	Callister's Country Kitchen Ltd
Annapolis Valley Luffa	Candance Academy
Annapolis Valley Macdonald Museum	Canning Cab
Annapolis Valley Montessori School	Cat's Meow Custom Graphics & Signs
Annapolis Valley Peat Moss Company Ltd	Cavendish Agri Services Limited
Annapolis Valley Regional Centre for Education	China Village Restaurant
Annapolis Valley Regional Library	Cleve's Source for Sports
AP Bookkeeping Services	COG Developments Inc
Aramark Canada	Comeau Comfort Systems
ArtCan Kitchen and Studios	Community Living Alternatives Society (CLAS)
Atlantic Automated Solutions Inc	Community Lumber
Atlantic Fabrics	Cotton Tale Café + Play
Atlantic Poultry Inc	CJ's Taxi Ltd
B & B Car Clinic	Coxy Corner Childcare
Baintons Tannery Outlet	DeCoste Kitchens
Bee's Knees General Store & Bakery	Del's Reiki Room
Beleaf Salon and Spa	Doherty Lime Spreading & Excavating
Berwick Heights Golf Course Ltd	Middleton Home Hardware
Earth Angels Homecare	Middleton Veterinary Services
Ed's Take Out	Moosah Foods Corp
Edelweiss Inn Nova Scotia	Mountains & Meadows Care Group
EFR Environmental	Municipality of The County Of Kings
Elite Trade Painting	Muwin Estate Wines Ltd
ER Tree Care	Nathanson Seaman Watts
Family Matters (Annapolis County Family Resource Centre)	New Minas Children's Centre
Fleetworx Inc	Newfound Mechanical Ltd
Fox Hill Cheese House Ltd	Northern Reflections
Garrison House Inn & Restaurant	Nova Millwrights Limited
	Nova Scotia Health Authority
	Nova Scotia Provincial Housing Agency

Gary Parker Excavating Ltd  
 Gaspereau Valley Fibres  
 Gates Insurance Agency Ltd  
 German Bakery Sachsen Cafe & Restaurant

Goucher's Farm and Market Ltd  
 Grand View Manor Continuing Care  
 Community  
 Greenfields Indoor Air Solutions  
 Harvest Wealth Management  
 H E Fancy Jewellery Ltd  
 Heather's Your Independent Grocer  
 Heritage Machining Services Limited  
 Jost Architects Ltd  
 Just Us! Coffee Roasters Co-Operative Ltd  
 Jus-Mar Investments Ltd  
 Kingston Before and After School Program  
 Kings County Family Resource Centre  
 Kings Point-To-Point Transit Society  
 Kings Regional Rehabilitation Centre  
 Kings Transit Authority  
 L J Robicheau & Son Fisheries Ltd  
 Lockett Farms Ltd  
 Macdonald Senior Home Care Ltd  
 Maple Valley Cabs Inc  
 Mary Browns Fried Chicken  
 Maxwell's Quality Footwear  
 Michael Gillespie Horticulture Services  
 Middleton Foodland  
 Nova Seven Arts Council  
 Nuvista Psychedelic Medicine Greenwood  
 Odessa Gifts and Home Decor  
 Open Arms Resource Centre Society  
 Osprey Angels Senior Living Inc.  
 Pamorama Cleaning and Care Inc  
 Perfect Berries  
 Perks Masonry & Chimney Services Ltd  
 Pet Valu Greenwood  
 Phinneys Clothing  
 Pizzeria Robust  
 Portal Youth Outreach Association  
 Prime Plumbing & Heating Inc  
 Province of Nova Scotia  
 R. C. Lawrie Enterprises Limited  
 RCS Construction Inc  
 Re/Max Banner Real Estate  
 Robert Sanford's Autobody  
 Roscoe Construction Ltd.  
 Route One Market & Butchery

Rupert & Son Plumbing  
 Safe Haven Supportive Care  
 Safety First Contracting (1995) Limited  
 Saltair Nordic Spa and Wellness  
 Sean Keddy Masonry & WETT Technician  
 ServiceMaster of the Valley  
 Shaw Group Ltd  
 Shay Tire Limited  
 Sights to Sea Landscaping  
 Sixty Six Queen Home Décor and Window  
 Fashions  
 Sobeys (Middleton Distribution Centre)  
 Spurr Brothers Farms Ltd  
 Standard Aero Ltd  
 Stay in the Valley Property Management  
 Stepping Stone Preschool and Child Care Centre  
 Steve Legge Construction  
 Summerland Plant Nursery  
 Sunken Escapes  
 Taproot Farms Inc  
 The Baxter Group  
 The Market - Groove Merchants  
 The Noodle Guy Inc  
 The Perky Loaf  
 The Social Pup Doggy Daycare  
 Thompson's Moving & Storage  
 Total Donut Solutions  
 Town of Kentville  
 Towzie's Developments  
 Tupperville School Museum  
 Valley Flaxflour Ltd  
 Valley Hearing Healthcare  
 Valley Hospice Foundation  
 Valley Region Solid Waste Authority  
 Valley Temp Labour Services  
 Van Meekeren Farms Limited  
 Versatile Home Solutions  
 Vermeulen Farms Ltd  
 Victorian Order of Nurses for Canada-NS Branch  
 Village of New Minas  
 Vitis Vines Inc  
 Wayne Aalders  
 West Dalhousie Forestry Crew  
 Willow Box Manufacturing Ltd  
 WN Law Firm Inc  
 Wolfville Tattoo and Piercings  
 Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park Camp-Resort  
 Zedex Theatre

# COMMUNITY PARTNERS

PeopleWorx values collaboration with individuals, businesses, and community organizations in order to help make programming and services available and accessible for the community. Together we can make a real difference in the lives of individuals and the wellbeing of the community. Thank you for your partnership and continued support and we look forward to renewing and revitalizing our events, activities, projects and collaborations!

Aboriginal Peoples Training and Employment Council	Horizons Achievement Centre
Annapolis Valley Regional Centre for Education	Immigration Settlement and Integration Services
Annapolis Ventures	Immigration Support Group
Association of Industry Sector Councils	Job Junction
Braveheart	Kings County Family Resource Centre
Canadian Red Cross	Wolfville - Mud Creek Rotary
Coldbrook Lion's Club	Municipality of the County of Kings
Commercial Safety College	Native Council of Nova Scotia
Community Business Development Corporation	Nova Scotia Career Development Association
Hants-Kings	Nova Scotia Community College
Community INC.	Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Committee
Continuing Care Assistant District Level Committee	Nova Scotia Works, Kentville and Windsor
Community Health Boards-Eastern Kings, Central Kings, Western Kings, Kingston/Greenwood, Annapolis Royal	NS Human Rights Commission
Department of Community Services	Open Arms
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	ROMAN 3
Department of Justice—Probation Services	Salvation Army Middleton
Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration	Shannex
Department of Advanced Education	Sheila Bower-Jacquard & Associates
Department of National Defence	Solutions Learning Centre
Department of Seniors and Long-term Care	South Shore Work Activity Program
Evergreen Home for Special Care	Statistics Canada
Flower Cart Industries	The Women's Place Resource Centre
FutureWorx	Town of Annapolis Royal
Grandview Manor	Town of Kentville
Greenwood Military Family Resource Centre	Valley African Nova Scotian Development Association
G&P Safety Training	Valley Community Learning Association
Grief Library/Valley Hospice Foundation	Valley REN
HANS - CCAPAC	Valley Restorative Justice
Heart of the Valley	Village of New Minas
	VON
	Windsor Elms Village

# NOTES