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MANITOBA'S TOP EMPLOYERS

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2017



ONE OF MANITOBA'S TOP EMPLOYERS ELEVEN YEARS IN A ROW

Boeing Winnipeg is one of Manitoba's 2018 Top Employers. Growing to more than 1,400 employees over the last 46 years, Boeing Winnipeg offers employees an exceptional place to work and grow with benefits like tuition support and training programs. As a longstanding partner of Canada, Boeing is committed to a bright future in Manitoba and the community.





SLOW, STEADY EVOLUTION FOR MANITOBA'S TOP EMPLOYERS

Manitoba's Top Employers can be considered the cream of the crop for best practices in the workplace — and the great news is that more local companies are earning recognition this year for their efforts.

BY JENNIFER MCFEE

For the first time, Manitoba's Top Employers list has expanded to 30 noteworthy organizations, jumping up from 25 top spots in previous years.

In each part of the country, the best workplaces earn acknowledgement through regional Top Employers lists, which form part of *Canada's Top 100 Employers* project by MediaCorp Canada.

For Richard Yerema, managing editor for *Canada's Top 100 Employers*, the expansion of Manitoba's list signifies a positive situation for the province.

"Each regional list has started and grown in small steps, so whenever one does make a step up, it's always a nice thing. We're pretty conservative in how we grow the list and we need to hear from a threshold of good employers before we move up," he says.

"This year, the addition of five spots is a reflection of greater interest from applicants. It's a positive sign and a pleasant surprise since the lists generally reflect economic realities. Manitoba probably has the highest reapplication rate for the Top Employers list in the entire country. I think it reaffirms that Manitoba is a remarkably stable province."

Applicants are evaluated using eight criteria: physical workplace; work atmosphere and social; health, financial and family benefits; vacation and time off; employee communications; performance management; training and skills development; and community involvement.

"Manitoba presents a nice diversity of

industry, and in the world of employment, that's opportunity," Yerema says.

"There's a little bit of everything including aerospace, sports, finance, agriculture, insurance, public sector, education. It's a stable and also a mature employment landscape with a variety of industry."

"There's a little bit of everything including aerospace, sports, finance, agriculture, insurance, public sector, education. It's a stable and also a mature employment landscape with a variety of industry."

And for Manitobans, there is plenty to be confident about when it comes to employment opportunities.

"Manitoba is the bridge, the hub. It's that nice place in the centre of the country, and

there's something unique in that," Yerema says.

"From our perspective on the project, it has presented a high reapplication rate and it has always painted this picture of stability for us. In Manitoba, you know what you're looking at and the growth is a nice, steady step, which really does define the province in other ways too."

In contrast, Yerema is based near Toronto, where change occurs at a dizzying pace.

"We celebrate that change as vibrant but it's also very disruptive. One can certainly appreciate a steady state of growth that is measured, responsible and easier to manage. Such does imply stability versus the inherent chaos that comes with exponential growth," he says.

"Good urban and economic development has everything moving in sync with each other, so the services and infrastructure can develop with the businesses and personnel that are there. That way, it all goes together in a much easier voyage. Through the prism of this project, Manitoba's slow, steady state of evolution is nice to see."



Manitoba's Top Employers for 2018

ABORIGINAL PEOPLES TELEVISION NETWORK
 ACCESS CREDIT UNION
 ARCTIC CO-OPERATIVES LIMITED
 ARTIS REIT
 ASSINIBOINE CREDIT UNION
 BIRCHWOOD AUTOMOTIVE GROUP
 BOEING WINNIPEG
 CANAD INNS
 CARGILL LIMITED
 CERIDIAN CANADA
 GRANNY'S POULTRY COOPERATIVE
 LOUIS RIEL SCHOOL DIVISION
 MAGELLAN AEROSPACE, WINNIPEG
 MANITOBA AGRICULTURAL SERVICES CORPORATION
 MANITOBA BLUE CROSS
 MANITOBA HYDRO
 MANITOBA LIQUOR & LOTTERIES
 MANITOBA PUBLIC INSURANCE
 NATIONAL LEASING GROUP
 PROVINCE OF MANITOBA
 RED RIVER COLLEGE
 ST.AMANT
 ST. JOHN'S-RAVENSCOURT SCHOOL
 SEVEN OAKS GENERAL HOSPITAL
 STANDARDAERO
 TRUE NORTH SPORTS + ENTERTAINMENT
 UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA
 WESTMAN COMMUNICATIONS GROUP
 WINNIPEG AIRPORTS AUTHORITY
 WORKERS COMPENSATION BOARD OF MANITOBA

RECOGNIZING EMPLOYEES WHO DO WELL

Strong employee recognition has always been critical to the Canada's Top 100 Employers project, including the Manitoba's Top Employers competition — and now employees are doing it too.

BY BERTON WOODWARD

Margaret Cichosz is a Talent Acquisition Partner at the global information company Thomson Reuters, where she is working intensely to set up the firm's new Toronto Technology Centre. Already the count of new hires is nearing 200, just in the first year. Eventually, the unit will have 1,500 people, most of them software developers and other technologists.

The demand for such tech people is huge across Canada at the moment, and companies that employ them have a reputation for coming up with every possible kind of pampering to keep them happy. Yet Cichosz was surprised by what she found.

"I thought it might be a bit of an uphill battle recruiting some of the senior people we started with," she says. "But honestly, the uptake was just incredible. I think there are so many people in the Toronto marketplace who feel they are under-appreciated at work or are putting in long hours without recognition. When we opened up these positions, you could see the enthusiasm about what we are building here. Candidates were like deer in the headlights: 'Oh my god, when can I join?' Often these people were missing that sense of appreciation in their former workplace and were looking to get that here."

You can bet the companies these people came from aren't on the list of Canada's Top 100 Employers. Strong employee recognition has long been one of the hallmarks of the Top 100, notes Richard Yerema, Managing Editor for Mediacorp Canada, which compiles the list. "Individuals all want to be recognized for good work," he notes. "And Top 100 employers have always done this in a systematic way. What has changed is the suite of tools available."

Strong employee recognition has long been one of the hallmarks of the Top 100.

Indeed, today a great deal of employee recognition is done by the employees themselves, online. Using internal social media systems, they can send out public kudos to colleagues for helping them out, or, when the person has been a much bigger help, send out points that can be redeemed for cool stuff, from movie tickets to flat-screen TVs.

And that, in turn, has brought a mini-revolution to employers' thinking. It has been a long time since recognition programs were built around such quaint features as "employee of the month." But until quite recently, singling out staff for praise was still based

on a top-down approach, managers to subordinates, often through performance management programs, bonuses, incentives — or pampering.

Listen again to Margaret Cichosz at Thomson Reuters, which has an employee appreciation system in place, complete with redeemable points ("It's pretty much like Costco shopping online," she jokes). "A lot of these new tech hires didn't come from that system," she says. "They came from startups where you get your free catered lunch, you get your dry-cleaning done, you get your pet walked — you get all these things for individuals. But you don't get something that helps you recognize somebody else. And people want to feel appreciated, especially when they're working as a team."

"Here, it's crazy how people react to the points system," says Cichosz, who joined the company a year ago from a post at the University of Waterloo. "I'm new to it myself, and I like a lot. I'm working with teams in New York and other locations, and even though you're not talking to these people face to face, you communicate with them on a daily basis. So the points system allows you to say, 'Hey, I really appreciate what you're doing and here's something for it.' It has really taken off."

Some of the names of the points systems tell the story. At Samsung Electronics Canada, they call it "U r Awesome." At Air Canada, it is "Shine." And the payoff can be lucrative. Last year, Leon Sang Wook Nam, Manager, Supply Chain Planning for IT at Samsung, took home \$1,000 worth of gift cards, just for being Awesome.

Paul Brannen, Samsung's Chief Operating Officer, is well aware of how much of a difference this peer-to-peer recognition can make. "In today's business world, we're moving at a thousand miles an hour," he says. "And sometimes we don't take the opportunity to stop and celebrate the little successes that really allow you to achieve the greater overall success of the organization. With U r Awesome, I can even do it on my phone — send out instantaneous appreciation. It allows us to create more engaged employees because of that recognition."

Indeed, managers and leaders like Brannen send out recognition, too — usually their quota of points is higher than the average employee's. But at Thomson Reuters Canada, they go to the next level — recognition for the recognizers. "You often hear that people leave managers, they don't leave companies," says Neil Sternthal, Managing Director for Legal and Tax Divisions. "We've put in place a leader board among managers. It identifies who's doing the best job at supporting appreciation and promoting a culture of recognition. Because if people don't feel valued at work, they won't have 100 per cent conviction and enthusiasm for what they do."

Take note, non-top employers.

APTN A TRUE REFLECTION OF COMMUNITY IT SERVES

BY JIM TIMLICK

While Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) has received numerous accolades for its work in front of the cameras, CEO Jean La Rose is just as proud of what the network has accomplished behind the scenes.

When the network was launched in 1999 it had just 20 employees. Today, it has a team of more than 160 full-time, part-time and casual employees across the country. More importantly, that team has become a true reflection of the communities it serves. Overall, 65 per cent of APTN staff are of Aboriginal descent while 100 per cent of its senior management team is Aboriginal.

It was a far different story when the network began broadcasting. Back then, there were far fewer Aboriginal People with television experience, especially at the middle- or upper-management level. As a result, the network hired non-Aboriginal people to train and mentor new employees. Those efforts helped create a new talent pool that has been critical to the success of the network.

"It's a huge source of pride for us," La Rose says. "When you look at areas like news and current affairs... we've built solid investigative news teams that are pretty much exclusively Aboriginal. All of our programming executives and managers are all Aboriginal."

"What it says to our communities and the Aboriginal production community is that they are dealing with people who have an understanding of what their stories are, how they need to be told and what are the proper ways to approach telling those stories."

Those stories have earned APTN numerous honours including the CAJ Charles Bury Award, the highest award the Canadian Association of Journalists can give, an Amnesty Canada Media Award, two Gemini Awards, and nine Gemini and Canadian Screen award nominations for the series.

The network's efforts behind the scenes haven't gone unnoticed, either. This year marks the 10th year in a row APTN has been chosen as one of the province's top 30 employers as part of the Manitoba's Top Employers competition that recognizes exceptional workplaces.

"I think what it tells me the most is what we try to create here within the organization is a culture that recognizes and lives on what our Elders tell us are the key principles that we need to act on towards each other which is love, respect, fairness... the seven teachings," La Rose says of being named one of the province's top employers. "When we look at things such as conditions at work, salary, benefits, and pensions and health benefits, we try to look at them in a broader sense."

That broader view is reflected by the fact APTN offers its employees benefits that are often not matched by other businesses.

For example, the network provides new mothers with maternity and parental leave top-up payments of 93 per cent of their salary for one week and 80 per cent of their salary for 16 weeks. It also extends parental leave payments to new fathers and adoptive parents to 80 per cent of their salary for up to 16 weeks. In addition, APTN employees are eligible to receive financial assistance for training and self-improvement opportunities.

Debbie Isaak, APTN's senior manager of human resources, says the network has made a deliberate effort to help employees achieve a better work-life balance. It provides 3.6 weeks of starting vacation allowance to employees and offers flexible hours, and a 35-hour work week with full pay.



It also actively involves employees in the decision-making process. An employee engagement committee canvasses staff for feedback, which has resulted in several initiatives including a healthy vending machine in the main kitchen of the network's offices. Employees also played a key role in helping design the workspace at APTN's downtown offices on Portage Avenue to reflect Aboriginal culture.

"Having that committee makes the employees feel much tighter, more bonded and more cohesive with each other," Isaak says.

For Isaak, one of the best measures of how the network is doing as an employer is the length of service of its employees. The average years of service among APTN employees is seven years and 53 per cent of current employees have been at the network for seven years or longer.

"One of the reasons people stay here is they know they are supported at APTN," says Isaak, who has been with APTN for 16 years. "We truly care about their health and their well-being and knowing that people have this solid foundation at work. It's like taking care of family."

THIS YEAR MARKS
THE 10TH YEAR IN A
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CHOSEN AS ONE OF
THE PROVINCE'S
TOP EMPLOYERS.
SUBMITTED PHOTO



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ACCESS CREDIT UNION EMBRACES TECHNOLOGY & EDUCATION

BY JENNIFER MCFEE

Access Credit Union remains an industry leader by adapting to the changing needs of its members — and its workforce.

Employees recognize the member experience is endlessly shifting in response to advancements in the industry. To keep on the cutting edge of these changes, Access Credit Union focuses on continued education for its staff.

"We fully support them financially in any education endeavour they're looking to take on. As an example, we probably have between 30 and 40 employees right now that are enrolled in post-secondary education. We had six employees over the past year complete their MBA with a further six presently enrolled," says Larry Davey, president and CEO.

"So the staff has embraced where we're going, and at the same time, they receive full support from our board of directors and management for the areas they want to focus on."

As credit union members continue to embrace new technology, the role of workers needs to adapt at the same time. Over the past few years, Access Credit Union has introduced an abundance of new technology, and now about 90 per cent of transactions are electronic.

"Our staff understands that interaction is becoming reduced on a face-to-face basis, so they have to be able to provide a knowledgeable and trusted service to our members in those times of communication. When we launched all the continuous education and training that we had in house for our staff, they were able to learn the best ways to help members," Davey says.

"The people we are hiring continue to be comfortable with a changing environment, and we're proud of the fact that our staff is embracing it. They realize the benefit to them, to the membership and to the organization, and we appreciate their efforts."

That appreciation is easy to see, since nearly 35 per cent of the company's 260 employees have earned promotions over the past four years.

"It's very exciting for them to see that the work people are doing is benefiting them as well," Davey says. "It's great to see this transition start to come to fruition."

With 18 locations throughout southeastern Manitoba, Access Credit Union also offers flexible work options for its employees whenever possible.

"When Access amalgamated, seven credit unions came together and a corporate office was formed with a lot of the administrative staff. However, those people had to travel from their communities to the corporate office," Davey says.

"To make it easier for them, people can continue to work out of their branch for a certain number of days a week and technology easily facilitates that."

In addition to creating an optimal atmosphere for its employees, Access Credit Union believes in giving back to the communities it serves.

"One of our main pillars for the organization is community support, and we contribute in the vicinity of \$600,000 to \$700,000 a year to our communities," Davey says. "This year, we committed to STARS Air Ambulance \$250,000 over a five-year period."

Similarly, staff members also stand behind initiatives to help the community. For example, through a Jeans for Charity initiative, they can pay \$2 per week to wear jeans on Friday and then Access Credit Union matches the donation. At the end of the year, each location chooses which organization they'd like to support in the local community.

"This year, Jeans for Charity raised about \$54,000. In addition to that, our staff volunteers 9,000 to 10,000 hours per year of their time," Davey says.

"So it's part of our mission statement to help our communities remain sustainable, and this is part of doing that. It's important and it's appreciated."



(TOP) BRITTANY FEHR AND WESLEY NGWENYA COLLABORATE ON A WORK PROJECT.
(BOTTOM) JOAN KROEKER TRAINS EMPLOYEES ON ACCESS CREDIT UNION'S INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY.
PHOTOS BY DARCY FINLEY



ARCTIC CO-OPS: EMPOWERED, ENGAGED & INCLUSIVE

BY RHEA BARTSCH & LACEY CHYZ

At Arctic Co-operatives Limited, service and accountability to independent Co-op businesses in Nunavut, Northwest Territories and Yukon is the very foundation of every team member's role in the organization.

Their commitment to fostering a diverse workforce to better serve a unique customer-base in the Arctic has put them on the map as one of Manitoba's Top Employers for the second consecutive year.

The annual competition recognizes 30 leading Manitoba employers for their efforts to create exceptional workplaces.

No matter the job, or length of career, the universal theme at Arctic Co-operatives is passion for the work that's being done. "You feel good coming to work. Every day you provide service to Co-ops in a part of the world where they must work extremely hard to provide goods and services to their communities. You get that feel-good feeling that you are providing something worthwhile and beneficial," says Estelle Moore, VP of Human Resources.

Incorporated in 1972, Arctic Co-ops is a service federation governed by and designed for 32 community-owned, democratically-controlled businesses in the Arctic. The federation allows Co-ops to consolidate their business purchasing power, and maximize the value they can offer their own local Members in communities like Old Crow, Yukon, to places like Sanikiluaq and Qikiqtarjuaq, Nunavut.

To boost their reach, Arctic Co-operatives recently launched Facebook and Instagram pages. A social media pilot project has also taken flight, as Co-ops across Canada's Arctic are leveraging platforms that have become an essential communication tool and resource for Members who live in remote, isolated communities.

"We are excited to continue sharing who we are and what we do. The recognition as a Top Employer helps us show passionate people the rewarding careers available through the Co-

op System in the Arctic," Moore says.

Arctic Co-ops' home office in the Inkster Industrial Park in Winnipeg employs about 100 people. The organization also has subsidiary operations including a restaurant, convenience store and gift shop in the newly renovated Iqaluit airport. Northern Images, which markets authentic Inuit and Dene artwork to people all around the world, employs another ten people from locations in Yellowknife, N.W.T., Iqaluit, Nunavut, and Mississauga, Ont.

In early 2017, an employee engagement survey received 100 per cent participation by all home office employees with diversity in the workplace ranking highest with 91 per cent.

CEO Rod Wilson says, "Arctic Co-ops makes a conscious effort to create a workplace environment where employees feel empowered and engaged. That includes providing self-development opportunities and promoting the strength in diversity."

Maintaining a strong employer and employee relationship can be the key to success for any organization. At Arctic Co-operatives, managers and supervisors have an open-door policy that encourages employees to meet to exchange feedback, discuss goals and ensure their task list is manageable.

In September 2017, Arctic Co-operatives Limited was acknowledged for excellence in leadership by the Manitoba Tourism Education Council (MTEC). "We thank our employees who are interested in continuing education and growth within the Co-op System!" Moore says. "We also believe that when our employees are educated, equipped and healthy, they are better able to face any challenges ahead."

In addition to covering 100 per cent of health and dental premiums, the organization matches the six per cent employees contribute to a pension plan on a dollar-for-dollar basis. A

flex-scheduling option allows employees to begin their work day at a time that best suits their personal or family needs. To improve concentration and help find their chi, Arctic Co-operatives recently started yoga on Wednesday afternoons.

Moore says their home office has started incorporating more team-building exercises and after-hours events for their employees. Folklorama and Winnipeg Blue Bomber games have become a tradition with a Staff Council playing a large role in the event co-ordination.

Even with the addition of wellness speakers, training, education and much more, Arctic Co-operatives Limited continues to explore new initiatives. The workplace encourages innovation when supporting the 32 community-owned co-operative businesses in the Arctic, and empowering the staff who support them from Winnipeg. For more information, please visit arcticco-op.com.

ARCTIC CO-OPERATIVES LIMITED STAFF COUNCIL, LEFT TO RIGHT, ARE JEREMY CHAN, DARLENE DOMINIQUE, KAREN LOUCKS, SCOTT GORDON, DENISE SPENCE, ANITA SHORTING AND AENA TEODOCIO. PHOTO BY RHEA BARTSCH



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ASSINIBOINE CREDIT UNION DIVES DEEP WITH EMPLOYEES

ASSINIBOINE CREDIT UNION EMPLOYEES BRENDAN REIMER (LEFT) AND KIM CHAMPION TAYLOR. KIM AND BRENDAN FACILITATE THE BEING ASSINIBOINE PROGRAM. SUBMITTED PHOTO

For the first few hours of the Assiniboine Credit Union "Being Assiniboine" workshop, no one talks about ACU.

In fact, ACU isn't on the agenda until everyone explores the kind of community they want their kids, grandkids and great, great grand kids to grow up in. And then, the values an organization needs to have to create that ideal community.

Amazingly the descriptions are very similar from one workshop to the next with words like "diverse, inclusive, voice, safety, sustainable, opportunity for all, healthy, accessible, innovative and ethical" written boldly on a white board at the front of the room.

Not surprisingly when you dive this deep, it can take a long time to get around to what makes your workplace tick. For ACU that's OK because their custom-designed "Being Assiniboine" workshop is three-days long and is intended to guide everyone through an exploration of how a financial institution can have impact on a community and how each employee owns a piece of that impact while working at ACU.

The workshop includes field trips out of the office and into the organizations that ACU partners with or has supported in some way.

Staff who have only heard about ACU's support for places like the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCOM), actually get to hear first-hand from the professionals who directly support newcomers who arrive in Winnipeg with a few personal belongings and a large immigrant loan to repay.

They walk Selkirk Avenue and talk about the

importance of supporting Merchant's Corner community education campus and Urban Circle's Indigenous training centre — all powerful community organizations in Winnipeg's North End that share in ACU's vision of an ideal community. Then there might be a stop at the Social Enterprise Centre, to hear from like-minded organizations like BUILD, a contractor and a training program for people who face significant barriers to employment.

Staff who have only heard about ACU's support for places like the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCOM), actually get to hear first-hand from the professionals who directly support newcomers who arrive in Winnipeg with a few personal belongings and a large immigrant loan to repay.

With 450 employees, it will take several months for each of them to cycle through "Being Assiniboine" workshops, but the investment is well worth it, says Kim Champion Taylor, ACU's Vice-President, People Solutions.

"Working at ACU is a choice we all make every

day. These three days provide everyone with an opportunity to reconnect with ACU's vision and mission — remarkably, we all want the same things in our community. The workshop provides everyone the chance to examine how they themselves play a role in creating that ideal community every day at work," says Champion Taylor who co-leads the workshop with Brendan Reimer, ACU's Strategic Partner, Values-Based Banking.

This kind of commitment to deep and meaningful engagement with staff comes directly from the ACU board of directors and executive leadership. Everyone from the executive team to new employees will take part in the workshop, says ACU President and CEO Kevin Sitka.

"For me it was a powerful experience. Who we are at ACU really matters to the people who work here, the members we serve and the communities we impact. I left the three-day session feeling inspired about our purpose, proud of the impact we already create and excited about the future," says Sitka.

"It really isn't a program as much as a journey that aligns us with a common purpose, being clear about the role that each one of us plays, and creating consistent expectations to which we hold each other accountable — this is about all of us committing to Being Assiniboine."



What does a rewarding career mean to you?

To our employees, it's all about having engaging and meaningful work. It means being able to use their talents fully, while being recognized for the work they do. They're proud of their role in making ACU what it is; an important part of the community providing vital services to our members, all guided by the principles of 'values-based banking'.

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BIRCHWOOD AUTOMOTIVE
GROUP STAFF TAKE PART IN
THE 2017 UNITED WAY KICK
OFF. SUBMITTED PHOTOS

BIRCHWOOD BELIEVES IN ITS PEOPLE

BY GEOFF KIRBYSON

Steve Chipman wants to sell as many cars as possible but he knows that goal is just a pipe dream unless his employees are happy, feel empowered and enjoy working at Birchwood Automotive Group.

That's why the president and Birchwood CEO gets just as much satisfaction from being named one of Manitoba's Top Employers as he does from excellent sales report. The two are directly correlated.

"We want to make sure we're treating our people properly," he said of the the Winnipeg-based auto dealer, which has more than a dozen dealerships and 1,100 employees.

Chipman ensures the company has its finger — and not its elbow — on the pulse of employees by conducting regular internal surveys and then acting accordingly.

"We canvass all of our employees to get a temperature of how things are going in our stores. We're active in the community, we promote our people's involvement in the United Way and we have a good benefits program," he said.

Birchwood is also taking a leading role with its efforts to increase the number of women on its payroll, no easy task in an industry long dominated by men. It launched its "Women In Automotive Leadership" program a little more than a year ago with the goal of nurturing its female employees and fostering further recruitment.

"I think we need to have a representative and diverse workplace. We should look like our customers. A lot of our female staff are very good at selling cars and managing people. If we shut the door to women, we shut out half of the population. That wouldn't make any sense," he said.

"We are trying to open the gate for woman to see the automotive industry as an industry of choice. They haven't thought a lot about us, but we have opportunities."

While most of Birchwood's employees are paid on commission, the company offers referral bonuses to every staff member who can recruit a friend or relative to come work for the company. Many of the company's best people have arrived this way.

"We believe our people are the richest source of new strong candidate referrals. They know the place better than anybody. They know they're treated fairly and respectfully. They're our best ambassadors. People like to work with their friends and like-minded people. They also know what success looks like. They really know the work and the opportunities," he said.

Opportunities for growth and advancement often come from Birchwood's own internal training program — called Birchwood University — an eight-month leadership course that's accredited by the University of Winnipeg.

"We have a big graduation and really celebrate people's development," he said.

And that development is on display through Birchwood's own intranet — essentially an in-house LinkedIn — where every employee builds their own online profile, including pictures, work experience, education and training programs. The site also features profiles of high-performers who have risen up through the ranks, such as a car detailer who

went on to become a sales manager.

The average Birchwood employee is 32 years old and on average stays with the company for five years. Chipman wants to minimize the impact of the inevitable turnover. That's why the company makes a big push every year to recruit young people in high schools, colleges and universities. It had 15 summer interns this year who did everything from studying lean manufacturing and performing analytics to selling cars.

"We've had interns for 20 years. Some of them have transitioned into management at our company," Chipman said.

At least a few former interns will be involved in a soon-to-be-launched program called "reverse mentoring" where Birchwood's young people will pass on their high-tech knowledge and other know-how to veteran employees. Birchwood also encourages more traditional mentoring, too.

"We've got people who are willing to share their knowledge and deep experience in the industry that isn't written down in a book. They can nurture those people along to success," he said.

Birchwood's culture is a reflection of its late founder, R.M. (Bob) Chipman, Steve's father. The elder Chipman started out with a single car dealership — Birchwood Pontiac Buick Ltd. — in 1963 which has now grown into the largest network of car dealerships in Winnipeg. One of his early initiatives was to provide academic scholarships for employees' children and tuition subsidies for employees who take job-related courses and programs.

"It's a reward for the people who work for us. It gives them some pride in their workplace," he said.

"We canvass all of our employees to get a temperature of how things are going in our stores. We're active in the community, we promote our people's involvement in the United Way and we have a good benefits program."

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CANAD INNS TAKES PRIDE IN COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

BY JENNIFER MCFEE

As a leader in the hospitality industry, Canad Inns is an expert at making people feel extra special, including its own employees.

Today, Canad Inns employs more than 3,500 people and serves nine million customers each year. As the largest food and beverage operator in the province, Canad Inns has more than 37,000 seats in its restaurants, pubs, banquet facilities and clubs.

The family business began in the 1940s with its first hotel in Poplarfield. Since then, the Manitoba-born and bred company has expanded to include 15 facilities throughout Winnipeg, Brandon, Portage la Prairie and Grand Forks, N.D.

Today, Canad Inns employs more than 3,500 people and serves nine million customers each year. As the largest food and beverage operator in the province, Canad Inns has more than 37,000 seats in its restaurants, pubs, banquet facilities and clubs. Its well-known establishments include the Radisson Winnipeg Downtown, Tavern United, The Metropolitan Entertainment Centre and many more popular destinations.

"We're here to provide exceptional service to our guests, and we can't do that without our employees," says CEO Dan Lussier.

"As the old saying goes, happy employees make happy guests, so we need to make sure we treat our employees fairly and well."

In particular, employees take pride in the company's commitment to community involvement.

"One of the things that really stands out is that we get involved in the communities that we operate in," Lussier says.

"We're big supporters of those communities, and I think that makes people proud to be associated with a company that supports the communities that they live in."

As an example, Canad Inns has hosted Family

Fun Day on July 1 at Assiniboine Park for the past 17 years.

"We're the ones that actually put everything together, so it's not just a sponsorship. We're organizing, paying for everything, running the entire day," Lussier says.

"We rely on hundreds of our committed Canad Inns family members to volunteer their day for that, and we've had hundreds of thousands of people attend."

In addition to its community endeavours, Canad Inns offers competitive salaries and benefits to its employees, including subsidized meals, discounted hotel stays and other incentives.

"We also focus on providing opportunities for career development, so we can actually become a part of your career development plan. We can offer positions in so many different areas including management, accounting, sales and human resources," Lussier says.

"We've got many employees who've got decades of experience of tenure with Canad Inns. Some of them started as dishwashers and have grown to become members of our executive team — and you can do all that without having to move, which is the nice part. You can stay right here in Manitoba."

All of these efforts have earned the company a multitude of awards over the decades, including a spot on this year's Top Employers list.



CANAD INNS FAMILY MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN THE ANNUAL SANTA CLAUS PARADE. SUBMITTED PHOTO

"We've been named one of Canada Best Managed Companies every year since 1997. In 2003, they created a different category called the Platinum Club, and we've been a member of that ever since then," Lussier says.

"In addition to that, we won the Manitoba Hotel Association Impact Award in 2016. The same year, we also won the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce award for Outstanding Large Business. We're humble but we're proud of our achievements."

These achievements continue to draw attention to Canad Inns from job seekers who are looking for a fabulous place to work.

"We're one of those companies that people like to work for and they seek us out because we're one of the best-managed companies. That's important because it gives stability to people," Lussier says.

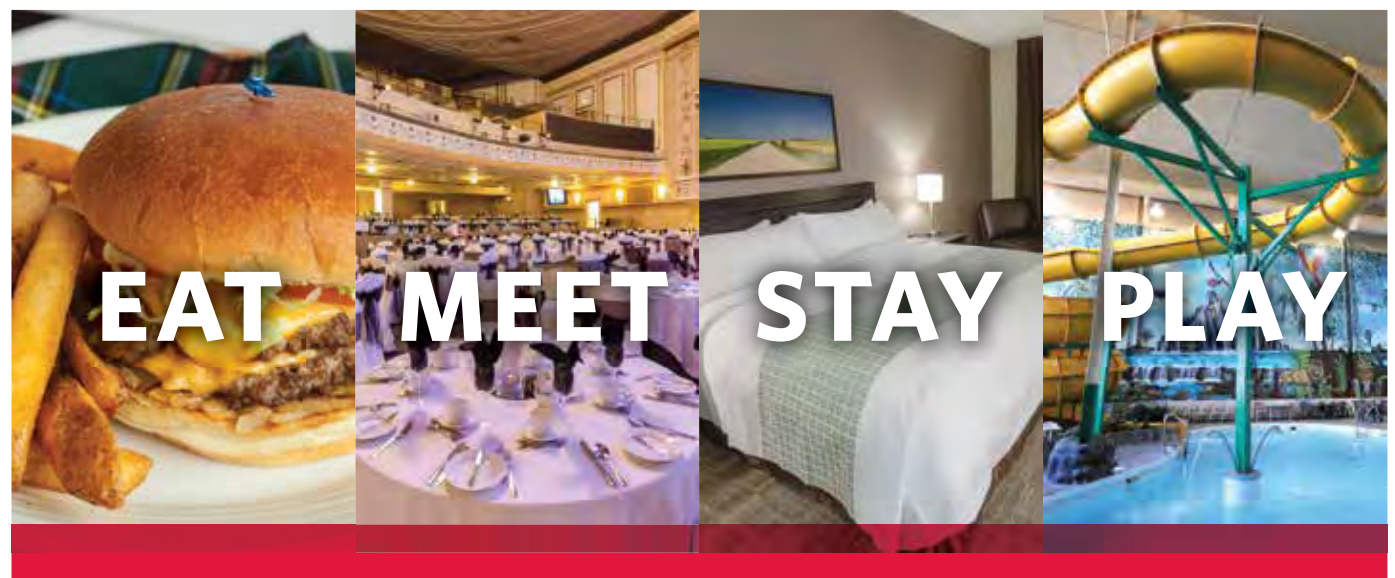
"We're always looking for good people, so people are always encouraged to apply for positions at all levels. We're Manitoba owned, Manitoba grown and Manitoba proud — and we're very grateful to have received the Top Employers award."



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TEAM SPIRIT DRIVES CERIDIAN

The same spirit of service and innovation that has made Ceridian an industry leader in human capital management continues to inspire a working environment thoughtfully designed to attract and retain quality employees that are key to the organization's success.

Recognized as one of Manitoba's Top Employers for 2018, Ceridian Canada employs approximately 1,700 people in nine offices across the country, including Winnipeg, Toronto, Mississauga, Markham, Ottawa, Montreal, Halifax and Charlottetown, as well as virtually. The company's worldwide employee base numbers about 4,200, with staff in the U.S., Europe, Mauritius and Australia.

"Over the past several years, Ceridian has evolved from a traditional payroll company to an innovative, cloud-based human capital management technology organization. Through this transformation came renewed vision, clear direction and a unified brand," says Laura Kotowicz-Kimball, Employee Experience Consultant in the company's Winnipeg office. "Our organization is comprised of a community of diverse and knowledgeable individuals that works towards common goals and who live Ceridian's 'Our Way' values of customer focus, transparency, diligence, optimism and agility."

Building that talented community means striving to get the right people in the right places at the right times.

"We look for fun, intelligent, team players — people who we enjoy working with," says Kotowicz-Kimball. "We seek people who are eager to learn and who do so quickly. Technical skills are important, but they can be taught. Most of all, we need people who are strong team players, who can add to our culture and who recognize that we are able to accomplish more together."

At Ceridian, business success is not an all-work-no-play proposition for staff. The company prides itself on providing an effective work-life balance for employees, along with an interesting slate of activities that promote socialization and team building. Its Fun at Work program has given

At Ceridian, business success is not an all-work-no-play proposition for staff. The company prides itself on providing an effective work-life balance for employees, along with an interesting slate of activities that promote socialization and team building.

Winnipeg staff the opportunity to participate in a variety of outings, including Family Day at Deer Meadow Farms, Night at the Races at Assiniboia Downs, the first annual Fun at Work golf tournament, and a Canada Day barbecue. An onsite Live Well, Work Well Wellness Room provides space for individual and group fitness activities, encouraging fitness and stress management, throughout the year.

"Ceridian's culture is empowering," says Kotowicz-Kimball. "We truly believe in making work life better for our people. To do so, we offer flexible work schedules, the ability to work from home, and innovative People and Culture programs."

One of the newest programs is Take2, a program which allows employees to take up to two hours off once a day, any day without prior manager approval, to accommodate appointments, family responsibilities or just time to relax. Introduced this summer, Take2 was so well-received by staff that it has since become a permanent program. Ceridian employees can also take one paid day off each calendar year, to spend doing volunteer work on behalf of their favourite charity.

Committed to the communities where their staff live and work, the company created its own charity — Ceridian Cares — to support worthy local causes.



Launched in September 2013, Ceridian Cares has already raised and donated more than \$1 million to help individuals and families in need.

"Employee volunteerism is at the forefront of the Ceridian Cares model," says Kotowicz-Kimball. "Local granting committees are run solely by employee volunteers, allowing them to have a say in how funds are allocated within their community. Ceridian absorbs all of the administrative overhead costs of running the charity, so that 100 per cent of employee donations go directly to those in need."

Making a positive difference is certainly a guiding principle driving not only the company's charitable efforts, but extending through its business operations, customer service — and workplace culture.

"Ceridian is truly a people organization," says Kotowicz-Kimball. "From our learning and development programs focused on career growth and leadership, to our advocacy for diversity and inclusion in the workplace, Ceridian actively and publicly champions women and men to contribute to their communities and advance their careers with the organization."

FUN AT WORK AT
CERIDIAN IN WINNIPEG.
SUBMITTED PHOTO

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CRAIG EVANS IS CEO OF GRANNY'S POULTRY.
PHOTO BY DARCY FINLEY

GRANNY'S POULTRY COOPERATIVE CELEBRATES EMPLOYEES' SUCCESS

BY JENNIFER MCFEE

Granny's Poultry Cooperative is enjoying a birds-eye view from its perch on Manitoba's Top Employers list.



"We work to create an environment that supports an employee's ability to do the best job they can for our company and our customers."

The farmer-owned poultry co-operative has been based in Manitoba for more than five decades and is now the largest chicken and turkey processor in the province.

"We started more than 50 years ago with a group of rural Manitoba farmers who wanted to ensure they were raising high-quality product and getting fair pricing for the poultry they raised. Today, we employ 585 people and have 185 farmer owners. We're proud to be the largest employer in the RM of Hanover," says CEO Craig Evans.

"Our head office and hatchery are based in Winnipeg and our main processing plant is in Blumenort, where we just finished investing over \$40 million to sustain us for the future. We were able to keep operating while we completed the expansion and renovation, which was a real testament to the dedication and commitment of our staff out there."

The organization produces over 10 million chicks per year and processes approximately 16 million chickens and 2.1 million turkeys — roughly 38 million kilograms of poultry annually. With over \$160 million per year in sales, Granny's Poultry represents two per cent of the chicken produced in Canada and seven per cent of the turkey.

"I think one of the things that has contributed to our success is our commitment to providing a safe, inclusive workplace for our employees. When you look at our workforce, half of our employees are women and we have a lot of people who are

new to Canada. We do a lot to ensure that new workers are oriented and integrated properly into the organization," he says.

"We've put a lot of effort into workplace training and safe operating procedures. We instituted an employee mentor program, which has resulted in a safer work environment. When you look at our organization, we have one of the lowest incident rates for injuries in Manitoba."

For Evans, it's essential to empower people and support teamwork at all levels.

"We work to create an environment that supports an employee's ability to do the best job they can for our company and our customers," he says.

"We offer flexible working hours because we understand everyone has commitments outside of the organization. We also offer flexible benefits, so all of our employees can pick and choose from a menu of benefits that best suits their family situation."

In addition, Granny's Poultry provides ongoing training and recognition for its employees.

"We try to celebrate successes and accomplishments through both formal and informal recognition programs. Once a year, we recognize people for their service to the organization," Evans says.

"We also have perfect attendance awards, and well over 10 per cent of our employees have perfect attendance — and that's been growing every year. We even have some people who haven't missed a shift in over five years."

Employees look forward to communications through the Granny's News Network, or GNN, which is shown on TV monitors in cafeterias and other locations.

"It's fun to see people reading the GNN information, whether it's trivia about our organization or recipes or birthdays or accomplishments," Evans says. "It's replaced our employee newsletter and it's something people look forward to, so that's really helped us."

Expanding its view outside the organization, the company remains committed to contributing back to the community.

"We do a lot of work with charities under a theme of health, hunger and hope," Evans says. "We try very hard to be good, responsible corporate citizens."

All of these efforts have helped Granny's Poultry earn a position as a top employer in the province.

"We work very hard to attract and retain staff that can really make a difference in a very competitive marketplace," Evans says.

"Our employees are the people that make us successful. We want them to look forward to coming to work by giving them a sense of purpose, treating them respectfully and ensuring that the workplace is a safe and fun environment."

PROUD TO BE RECOGNIZED AS ONE OF
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SHARED VISION AT LOUIS RIEL SCHOOL DIVISION

Louis Riel School Division's (LRSD) commitment to creating a great place to work has won them a place as one of Manitoba's Top Employers.

LRSD is a Winnipeg school division that offers French and English education from kindergarten to Grade 12. They serve over 15,000 students at 40 schools and are committed to excellence for students and staff.

LRSD employs 3,431 people, including teachers, principals, educational assistants, clerical, custodial, administrative staff and others at 43 locations. The division is proud of their high staff retention rate, diverse workforce, supportive work environments and competitive benefit packages and salaries.

This is reflected in the name of the department formerly known as "Personnel"—now proudly changed to "People Services."

Changing the department name gave LRSD an opportunity to look at our organization and address how we can be better for all staff to do their jobs and have fulfilled lives.

"Our people are more than resources, they are people working and living their lives. We need to ask ourselves what can we do to help them become successful," explains Duane Brothers, superintendent for LRSD.

"The importance of my job is to create an environment in which people can create a shared vision, and then create new realities," says Brothers.

LRSD shows what happens when you take care of your staff — your organization thrives and those receiving your services benefit. The division is proud of their high graduation rate at 86 per cent.

The division is also dedicated to offering services to Indigenous youth and incorporate Indigenous traditions. Brothers says the division wants to address historic and structural barriers that have held back some Indigenous people, so that everyone can receive equal opportunity.

And it's working. Two years ago, the division held its first graduation powwow and honoured 30 graduating students. Last year, we honoured nearly 100 graduating students, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, in a traditional way.

This all starts with staff. LRSD employees

receive an enviable health benefits package and an employee assistance program fully paid for by the employer.

LRSD also takes the extra step of caring for overall employee wellbeing. The board office offers an on-site fitness room and fitness classes, while employees and their families benefit from discounted memberships at various facilities.

Salaries are competitive and include pensions, short- and long-term disability coverage, life insurance, general and retirement savings plans and even corporate discounts on select computers, software and data plan providers.

Some employees at the Board Office can access flexible working options, including temporary or permanent reduction of work hours for partial or full-time leave of absence. Flex work start times and end times are an option for Board Office employees.

"People are more productive because of this. Staff are incredibly appreciative," says Brothers.

Vacation time varies according to position. Teaching staff receive discretionary leave time during the school year, and salaries are averaged over the 12-month period so they receive income during the summer.

Non-teaching staff receive 13 paid holidays after one year and increased time with accumulated service.

LRSD offers education, training and mentorship programs for employees. They put special emphasis on helping new teachers, who enjoy a year-long program including workshops even a "mentor" to help them succeed, and become excellent educators.

Teacher Savannah Olson praises these opportunities, saying, "LRSD has been very supportive, offering me several professional development opportunities and mentoring as a first-year teacher."

LRSD believes in connecting with their community too, so they created RIEL-EVATE, a separate entity from LRSD, that is a registered charity supporting families, students and community

members within the division. LRSD also provides opportunities for staff to volunteer with charities.

It can be difficult to foster good working relationships in large organizations, but LRSD encourages staff to socialize and support each other.

The board office boasts an employee-funded social committee which organizes potlucks, games and fund raisers for charities. The division also holds an annual banquet to recognize retiring staff and those who have reached milestone service years, and an annual staff appreciation social.

The warm atmosphere encourages individual friendships too. Michelle Linton, an administrative secretary in the board office, shares that staff members from various departments meet on coffee breaks to go walking together.

"The friendships that we've fostered over these breaks provide support and encouragement, and there is a real sense of community in this office," says Linton.

LRSD is proof that caring for employees leads to positive outcomes.

LRSD shows what happens when you take care of your staff — your organization thrives and those receiving your services benefit. The division is proud of their high graduation rate at 86 per cent.

AN IN-HOUSE TECHNOLOGY TRAINING SESSION IN PROGRESS AT THE LOUIS RIEL SCHOOL DIVISION. SUBMITTED PHOTO



MAGELLAN AEROSPACE, WINNIPEG – A PART OF YOUR COMMUNITY

MAGELLAN ORGANIZES AN ANNUAL CHARITY DRIVE AND STAFF MEMBERS ALSO PARTICIPATE IN LOCAL EVENTS THAT SUPPORT CHARITABLE GIVING LIKE HEART AND STROKE'S BIG BIKE. SUBMITTED PHOTO

Magellan Aerospace, Winnipeg, a division of Magellan Aerospace Limited, manufactures complex aeroengine components, advanced aerostructure assemblies, and proprietary products for customers in the commercial aircraft, defence and space sectors. It employs 650 people in three facilities — the main manufacturing facility in Winnipeg, a plant north of the city, and a space engineering office in Ottawa.

Magellan has a legacy of demonstrated support for Manitoba and for the people who live here. Magellan has been a part of the Winnipeg business community for 87 years. The company supports a range of local organizations that include Ducks Unlimited Canada, Stony Mountain Community Association, the Royal Aviation Museum of Western Canada, Women in Science and Engineering (WISE), and the United Way, just to name a few.

Magellan enjoys a close working relationship with our local military community and has a long-term relationship with the Military Family Resource Centre. Magellan has been a sponsor of their major fundraising initiative, the Yellow Ribbon Gala, since its inception and also supports the annual Air Force Run, organized by 17 Wing. Every year Magellan is pleased to host various classes from Southport and from the Canadian Forces School of Aerospace Studies.

Internally, Magellan has an organized annual charity drive and also participates in local events that support charitable giving. The Heart and Stroke's Big Bike, National Denim Day, the Manitoba Marathon, TELUS Ride for Dad, Manitoba Lung Association Tulip Days, and Canadian Cancer Society Daffodil month are a few of the events that Magellan employees participate in every year.

Magellan's employee-driven Social and Welfare Association plans two festive holiday parties; one for the adults and one for children. They also organize an annual summer picnic at Tinkertown for employees and their families and new this year, a curling bonspiel and a Blue Bombers football game.

"The Social and Welfare Association provides great opportunities to get our employees involved in activities," says Julie Robichaud, Chair of the Social and Welfare Association. "As well as providing wedding and baby gifts, or benevolent assistance,

the association also plans several subsidized events throughout the year. It's great to get co-workers out into the community, supporting local companies, and vendors they may have never thought to venture out to support on their own. We have had first-time Tinkertown participants this year, and new Bomber fans created."

Magellan supports and has strong involvement in the local aerospace community, as a member of Manitoba Aerospace, Inc. Manitoba Aerospace has two main fundraising events a year, a dinner in November and a golf tournament in September, and all net proceeds raised go into an endowment fund. This fund provides a monetary award and industry recognition to the future of local aerospace excellence.

Magellan Aerospace looks forward to supporting Manitoba Aerospace's annual Aviation and Aerospace in Manitoba (AAiM) Day. AAiM Day is an opportunity for Grade 6 students to try hands-on activities which focus on different aspects within the aerospace and aviation industries. The event is hosted by local companies and educational institutions to raise awareness of aerospace and aviation in the province of Manitoba. Every year, AAiM Day runs at full capacity, which means about 750 students get the chance to experience the event.

"Magellan is a great company to work for," says Robichaud. "There are a lot of opportunities to give back to the community through volunteering opportunities, donating through payroll deduction or participating at AAiM Day and other events throughout Winnipeg. At Magellan, you get to be a part of the larger picture for a better tomorrow. Our commitment to community is what makes Winnipeg, and Manitoba, a better place."



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MANITOBA BLUE CROSS EXCELS IN AREAS OF EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

BY JENNIFER MCFEE

Manitoba Blue Cross continues to be an industry leader when it comes to promoting health and wellness — including for its own employees.

So it comes as no surprise that the local not-for-profit organization continues to earn accolades for its efforts.

"We are the local, not-for-profit choice for comprehensive health coverage. We have been providing quality benefits to Manitobans for over 40 years," says Mark Nesar, Chair of the Manitoba Blue Cross Board of Directors.

"I feel like what we're doing is working. I'm proud to represent an organization that ranks very high on employee satisfaction and happiness."

Last month, Manitoba Blue Cross won five awards at the 2017 Manitoba Excellence in Customer Contact Awards, including the employee satisfaction award.

These awards serve as yet another testament to the company's strong workplace culture, adds Nesar.

"We take ongoing measures to evaluate what our employees need out of their workplace, recognizing that those needs will continue to evolve," he says.

Last year, the company launched its total rewards committee, aimed at reviewing various components of employee satisfaction — including training and development, work-life balance, vacation and compensation. So far, it's proven to be a great resource for fine-tuning even more initiatives.

"Since its inception, we have been able to gather invaluable feedback company-wide and have already begun to move forward with a number of incentives," Nesar says.

With approximately 300 employees, Manitoba Blue Cross focuses on creating an environment that prioritizes workplace wellness, which remains an intrinsic part of what makes the company stand out as one of Manitoba's Top Employers.

"Our building itself was designed with employee wellness in mind," Nesar says. "Our work stations,

seating and lighting were all planned in consultation with an ergonomic and musculoskeletal expert."

The forward-thinking company also offers work-life balance solutions for its employees, such as flexible hours, formal earned days off and compressed workweek options.

"Employees can access the gym, yoga and fitness classes onsite and get healthy snacks at Blue Café, a cafeteria located in our staff lounge."

"Employees can access the gym, yoga and fitness classes onsite and get healthy snacks at Blue Café, a cafeteria located in our staff lounge," Nesar explains.

"We also offer career development opportunities, competitive compensation, a company-matched pension plan and of course a superior benefits package — all of which play into a rewarding work environment."

All of these details aim to keep the workforce healthy, happy and functioning to the best of their abilities.

"People spend such a significant amount of their lives at work. Enjoying that time is important," Nesar says.

"The people at Manitoba Blue Cross make the company. We are fortunate to have a talented and hard-working team and it is essential to us that we offer a healthy, rewarding environment."

FROM TOP: THE STAFF LOUNGE, WEIGHT ROOM AND A MEDITATION CLASS AT MANITOBA BLUE CROSS. PHOTOS BY DARCY FINLEY



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CHANGE BRINGS OPPORTUNITY AT MANITOBA HYDRO

As one of the largest employers in the province, Manitoba Hydro offers new and existing employees something not so common in today's job market — the chance to find a lasting career with a company that's dedicated to working with staff to make sure they're reaching their highest potential.

MANITOBA HYDRO STAFF AT THE UNITED WAY PLANE PULL IN SEPTEMBER. MANITOBA HYDRO IS ONE OF UNITED WAY'S TOP 50 WORKPLACES WHICH ALLOWS THE CROWN UTILITY TO COMPETE IN THE ANNUAL PLANE PULL THAT RAISES MONEY AND AWARENESS FOR THE UNITED WAY OF WINNIPEG. SUBMITTED PHOTO

And while Manitoba Hydro is in the middle of finding efficiencies to make sure the Crown corporation runs as smoothly and effectively as possible, Hydro's Director of Human Resources and Workplace Safety and Health, Paul Desorcy, says that doesn't mean there isn't career advancement.

"While we have a large number of employees who will be leaving via our voluntary departure program, there are a lot of people who are going to see opportunity in that," explains Desorcy.

"Even though the organization is going through a period of transition, I can't emphasize enough that there continues to be opportunity for employee growth, development, job-enrichment and career changes. There are many areas in the organization where we are going to need skilled and experienced employees."

With just shy of 6,000 employees, Manitoba Hydro has employees working in nearly every corner of the province. And the types of jobs

available through Hydro are just as wide-ranging as the communities they serve, says Desorcy.

"I'd say there are over 200 different types of jobs at Manitoba Hydro — everything from engineers, electricians and crane operators, to information writers, lawyers and accountants — it's very diverse," he says, adding Hydro's in-house training programs mean employees have the chance to get the education needed to further their careers. "There are a number of opportunities in Manitoba Hydro to move between different areas and advance within the organization."

With just shy of 6,000 employees, Manitoba Hydro has employees working in nearly every corner of the province. And the types of jobs available through Hydro are just as wide-ranging as the communities they serve.

Hydro offers a tuition rebate program that sees the company pay up to \$8,000 for employees to help cover the costs of improving their post-secondary education where this in turn benefits the organization. Manitoba Hydro offers a number of internal professional development opportunities and also has its own 38,000-square-foot technical training centre, which features a variety of training programs, classrooms, technical shops, and indoor and outdoor training areas.

"It's a world-class facility where we have training equipment for various technical trades to ensure work is done safely — our No. 1 priority," explains Desorcy. "We have poles erected for line trades training and the facility provides for a combination of outdoor and indoor training. Our trades are technical and this facility has sophisticated equipment that our trainees can learn on."

"The training includes classroom time followed by paid on-the-job training."

Hydro has developed special training programs to increase and enhance the diversity of their workforce.

"The Aboriginal Line Trades Pre-placement Program provides Indigenous candidates with academic upgrading and on-the-job training, which is required to enter the Line Trades training program," Desorcy says.

The Disability Access Program creates opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities to work at Hydro, giving candidates paid work experience, on-the-job training and coaching, he says.

Hydro has also partnered with SCE LifeWorks to take part in the community organization's Project SEARCH Winnipeg program. "It's an employment transition program for high school students with developmental disabilities to give them an opportunity to learn employability and job skills while participating in worksite rotations with the goal of competitive employment," Desorcy says.

Hydro also offers competitive benefit programs for employees, including three weeks of vacation to start and flexible hours where possible.

Desorcy says Hydro also helps employees support charities close to their hearts through payroll deductions. The company also maintains an Employee Fund to provide financial assistance and support to employees in need.

"Manitoba Hydro is the type of organization that really appreciates the dedication of its employees," he says. "You can imagine, when nasty weather occurs, we have employees who have to go out and repair the electrical system so people have power and there's a certain amount of dedication to be climbing a tower in minus 30 degree weather when there's a storm going on."



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Manitoba
Hydro

FOCUS ON DIVERSITY, OPPORTUNITY AT LIQUOR & LOTTERIES

Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries has a wide range of career options available for Manitobans looking for part-time employment and those looking to start a career. These jobs span the province from Churchill to Winkler with 63 Liquor Marts, two casinos, distribution centres for liquor and lottery products and offices in Winnipeg, Brandon and Morris.

That means the Crown corporation has a need for a diverse workforce with a wide array of skills, says Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries' vice-president of human resources, Rob Campbell.

"One of the great things about our organization is there's an incredibly wide range of opportunities that we provide, from the customer service positions in the casinos and the Liquor Marts, to the support positions that range from electricians and housekeeping, food and beverage, to maintenance, human resources and finance to name a few," says Campbell. "It's just a great balance of opportunities for people once they enter the organization as to where they could possibly move to and have a career."

Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries currently employs approximately 3,000 employees, and the Crown corporation boasts an extremely high retention rate among its workforce, says Campbell.

"People like to stay with the organization," he says, adding the company works hard to make sure employees have the chance to work their way into new positions and new career opportunities through training and development.

"One of the things we're really proud of is that we're constantly reassessing our operations to make sure that we're as efficient as possible and always keep improving."

Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries offers employees competitive benefits, including maternity leave top-up payments and flexible options for disability, health and life insurance.

The company is also committed to diversity in their workforce, says Campbell.

As part of the organization's focus on diversity and inclusion, Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries has a

Joint Diversity Network to discuss related programs, and an Accessibility Working Group to make sure the Crown corporation is in compliance with the Accessibility for Manitobans Act.

"One of the things we're really proud of is that we're constantly reassessing our operations to make sure that we're as efficient as possible and always keep improving."

The focus on diversity led to the creation of a program that aims to teach staff about the ongoing effects of the residential school system, says Campbell. In line with the Circles of Reconciliation program, we added something different and staff had the opportunity to see a special viewing of Gord Downie's *The Secret Path* and take part in a CBC panel discussion about the issues around reconciliation earlier this year.

"It's a different way of educating and reminding our employees about something that's very important," explains Campbell. "We try to provide all the right tools to train and educate people about the diverse cultures in our province and within our workforce."

"That allows us to understand our customers better and provide services in a better way."

And customer service is what it's all about for Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries, says Campbell.

"We take great pride in our customer survey results and the feedback we receive from Manitobans on the service we provide," he says.



"But we still focus on trying to re-invent ourselves and do things differently to try and enhance those services. We're constantly looking for new ways to train our employees and build on those already strong customer service skills."

Giving back to the community is also a big part of the culture of Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries, says Campbell.

Employees help pick the organization's "Charity of Choice" and are encouraged to support other initiatives in the community through the volunteer program, where every hour volunteered contributes to a corporate goal, which in turn results in a donation to the chosen organization.

The combined charitable and volunteer efforts of Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries and its employees contribute in a meaningful way to our province – helping to improve the quality of life for Manitobans, says Campbell.

"People here constantly want to be part of it all, volunteering thousands of hours of their personal time to help out," he says.

For more information on the career opportunities available with Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries, visit mbll.ca.

MANITOBA LIQUOR & LOTTERIES IS COMMITTED TO A WORKFORCE THAT IS DIVERSE, INCLUSIVE, AND REFLECTIVE OF THE MANITOBA POPULATION. SUBMITTED PHOTO

PROUD TO BE RECOGNIZED AS
ONE OF MANITOBA'S TOP 30 EMPLOYERS

ENGAGEMENT, INCLUSION & DEVELOPMENT AT MPI

BY TODD LEWYS

Manitoba Public Insurance (MPI)'s customers expect the best from the province's provider of universal automobile coverage and driver licensing services.

The public looks to the non-profit Crown Corporation and its 1,800 staff members to provide the highest level of customer service possible through every interaction while they work with Manitobans to reduce risk on the road.

And one crucial way that MPI delivers on this promise is through a culture of employee engagement, says Satvir Tkachuk, MPI's Acting Vice-President, Human Resources, and Chief Human Resources Officer.

MPI has focused on three major initiatives to continually provide an inspiring environment for employees to flourish in — engagement, inclusion and development.

"Employee engagement is very important to our success. Engaged teams are motivated to contribute to organizational success, and willing to go the extra mile in achieving organizational goals," says Tkachuk.

Turns out, employees also appreciate inclusion.

"Manitoba's population is diverse and our workforce is representative of the customers we serve," says Tkachuk. "As a result, we have many programs that promote diversity. These programs go beyond recognizing diversity related to race and gender. We promote, recognize and leverage our diverse team to create a positive work atmosphere that promotes equality and delivers results."

From encouraging employee resource groups, and community volunteerism to offering Truth and Reconciliation education and awareness training to nearly 95 per cent of employees, the corporation is dedicated to appreciating the benefits diversity can bring to the workplace.

"At MPI, we appreciate and value everyone's background and experience," Tkachuk says.



As for employee development, she notes a hands-on approach has made an impact.

"To perform to their full potential and blossom, employees need to feel supported and understand the role they play in achieving corporate goals. With that in mind, our president, Dan Guimond, visits all MPI locations to ask employees what's working, and how we can work with them to make things better," she says. "He not only communicates directly with them, but is transparent with them. The more you share, the more they will care."

At MPI, it's all about creating a culture that's consistently characterized by innovation, accountability and collaboration.

"Our management team emphasizes the fact that we're all in it together, working side-by-side to make the workplace better," Tkachuk says. "Our employees really appreciate that approach."

Moving forward, MPI will continue to do what they can to create a work environment in which they attract top talent and provide an environment that employees can thrive in.

At MPI, it's all about creating a culture that's consistently characterized by innovation, accountability and collaboration.

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NATIONAL LEASING CELEBRATES 40 YEARS OF SUCCESS

NATIONAL LEASING
EMPLOYEES TAKE A STAND
TO HONOUR COLLEAGUES
AND THEIR FAMILIES
FACING CANCER AT
CHALLENGE FOR LIFE.
SUBMITTED PHOTO

BY JENNIFER MCFEE

National Leasing is marking a milestone this year as it celebrates its 40th anniversary, made possible through a dedicated approach to employees and clients alike.

For Grant Shaw, vice-president of strategy and culture, he's watched the number of employees more than double during his two decades with the equipment-leasing company.

Today, National Leasing employs approximately 370 people, with nearly 300 of them based out of the head office in Winnipeg.

"We're proud to be among the top employers of Manitoba. It's a great honour," Shaw says.

"We're always looking for ways to improve and to give our employees new opportunities and experiences. We like to give people the chance to build their careers and see how their contribution makes an impact."

The booming business got its start in 1977 when the McGill-Stephenson Company began to lease equipment as part of its vehicle leasing operations. Due to exponential growth, National Equipment Leasing was incorporated in 1988 as a separate profit centre. Seven years later, the company's legal name changed to National Leasing Group, as it's known today.

"We started just with Western Canada and eventually moved right across the country. Today, we have a sales force of about 60 people across Canada," Shaw says.

"We just completed our fiscal year and we've

done about \$900 million in business."

As the company continues to grow, it maintains a steadfast focus on the overall well-being of its talented team of employees.

"We aim to do a lot of things that appeal to both work and personal lives. For example, we have a National Leasing basketball team, and we support them by contributing to their league registration fees," Shaw says.

"Then on the flipside, if someone is raising money for charitable organizations, we'll support them to a certain level in those efforts as well."

About a year and a half ago, National Leasing launched an initiative called Take a Stand, which focuses on employees' work and personal lives along with their community or charitable interests. In addition, the company participates in a program called Not Myself Today, which focuses on mental health awareness and support.

"We have been making sure that we have the foundational pieces to support staff. We have a top-of-class benefit plan and we definitely support continuing education. As well, we provide an outlet for physical well-being with our gym and various wellness activities," Shaw says.

"We've got active participation, so it's working because we have good engagement." At the same

time, another key component of the company is its commitment to creating a culture of innovation.

"We believe that we're a very entrepreneurial company and we have that spirit about the organization. We give the employees an opportunity to bring forward their ideas — and not in a typical suggestion box kind of way," Shaw says.

"More recently, we've taken a systems approach to innovation and we're engaging staff on a number of new levels. It's all about using that collective power of the entire organization to innovate and come up with new ideas."

At all levels of the organization, National Leasing values the contributions of its employees.

"We don't have a product that we sell because we're providing the financing for the equipment leasing, so we're really a relationship company. Our business is about building great relationships with our customers and our employees while also enabling their success," Shaw says.

"Employees become our brand since they're the voices and faces of National Leasing. If we treat them well, we believe it will transfer to our customers. So if employees are given opportunities to build their careers, they can see that their actions are making an impact. They're going to be more engaged and happier as well."

"We aim to do a lot of things that appeal to both work and personal lives. For example, we have a National Leasing basketball team, and we support them by contributing to their league registration fees."

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SUPPORT & APPRECIATION FOR STAFF, STUDENTS AT RED RIVER COLLEGE



RED RIVER COLLEGE
EMPLOYEES TAKE PART
IN THE ANNUAL STAFF
APPRECIATION BARBECUE
IN SEPTEMBER.
SUBMITTED PHOTO

BY TODD LEWIS

When someone experiences emotional difficulties, or in contrast, when a staff member goes above and beyond their call of duty, it can be all too easy to go unrecognized and fall through the cracks.

With that in mind, Red River College (RRC) has undertaken a series of initiatives aimed at increasing support and appreciation for both staff and students across its campuses.

Three of those initiatives are: the wellness initiative known as Healthy Minds, Healthy College, peer-to-peer recognition and a day-long professional development event called RED Forum.

Healthy Minds, Healthy College — which was originally aimed at students — has also been well-received by RRC staff, says Laureen Janzen, RRC's Manager of Counselling and Accessibility Services.

"The assessment phase of the initiative started

in 2014," she reports. "Basically, the idea was to look at what RRC needed to do to become a solid, health-promoting college community. It started with the students. Then we said, 'Why not extend it to RRC employees, as well?'"

The first step involved creating a partnership with the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) and creating an advisory group comprised of a cross-section of employees and students.

"We knew there would be diverse needs, and wanted to hear from as many people as possible," says Janzen.

Ultimately, a list of recommendations was arrived at. One of the main recommendations was to develop a Mental Health Co-ordinator position.

"It's a big job that deserves a designated position, as the person in the position would be solely responsible for co-ordinating mental health strategies," she notes. "Eventually someone with a background ideal for the position — Breanna Sawatzky — was chosen."

Sawatzky started her tenure in October 2016. Since then, she's organized successful and engaging events like Thrive Week, a college-wide week of programming in which staff and students were able to access speakers and therapy dogs, and take part in painting and music therapy to help strengthen their mental health.

"One of the speakers this year was Indigenous actor Kyle Nobess, who spoke about his past battle with substance abuse," Janzen says. "His message, as well as the messages delivered by other speakers, was very impactful. That openness really helped people talk about mental issues in a normal way."

Sawatzky has also incorporated programs such as The Working Mind (for managers) by the Mental Health Commission, which encourages managers and employees to support each other in times of mental crisis, and offers a suicide alertness training program. She also writes a weekly blog that staff can read at any time.

"Our employees — and students — are thrilled to see all this happening — the education, activities and conversation. They know help is available, and the conversation creates a greater

feeling of normalcy," Janzen says. The employee/student advisory group (plus a steering committee populated by the WRHA, Mount Carmel Clinic and the Canadian Mental Health Association) also advise Breanna on how to implement strategies.

RRC's Peer-to-Peer Recognition program has also been a huge hit.

"If a staff member goes out of their way to do something special, other staff — including managers — can fill out a Cheers card report. Managers receive a carbon copy of the card," says Lindsay Allan, Acting Director, Human Resource Services at RRC.

The staff member who went above and beyond is recognized, and gathers points to use towards rewards.

"We have different tiers of what we call homegrown awards," adds Debbie Sullivan, Human Resource Consultant at RRC. "Not only does the staff member get recognized, but they get to pick their reward."

All RRC employees are invited to the Notre Dame Campus in April to participate in RED Forum, a one-day professional development event.

"RED stands for Relationships, Education and Direction," says Allan. "There are usually around 30 professional development sessions to choose from, and staff really appreciate that."

These initiatives, matched with a comprehensive benefits program, professional development support — for example, financial assistance to attaining Bachelor's and Master's degrees and Doctorates — and management's openness to employees coming forward with feedback on any issue, creates an ideal work environment that engages staff and reminds them their role is valued and an important part of the College's mission and values.

Which is why RRC — with its innovative approach to creating the best workplace possible for its staff — is once again one of Manitoba's Top Employers.

Red River College is Manitoba's largest institute of applied learning, with nine campuses and more than 200 full- and part-time programs — which encompass 22,000 full- and part-time students, and 2,300 full- and part-time staff.



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COLLEGIALITY & COMMUNITY AT SJR

BY KIRK PENTON

The hot streak continues at St. John's-Ravenscourt School, which finds itself on Manitoba's Top Employers list for the 10th consecutive year.

"It's a fantastic achievement," Head of School Jim Keefe says. "It really is a testament to the commitment and the effort of the team here. As an organization it reflects the value that we place on our faculty and staff, and the importance in the role they play."

The independent Winnipeg day and boarding school, which educates co-ed students between kindergarten and Grade 12, has a wide range of attractive traits that help retain staff members, but Keefe believes it's the family atmosphere that takes it to another level.

"The success for our students requires input from parents, from the team here in terms of faculty and staff, and obviously the students," he says. "When you get three different constituent groups working together with a common goal, that's a very, very powerful thing."

"That's why we invest so heavily in recruiting and retaining the best quality staff to ensure that we've

got a team of people who are going to nurture those things that we believe are so important."

That group effort is something Keefe noticed when he moved from England to Winnipeg in 2014 to take the Head of School position.

"The biggest positive of my experience in moving to Canada and SJR in particular is the sense of community," Keefe says. "The warmth of welcome you receive, whether you are a new member of staff, student or parent, makes you feel immediately part of the SJR family. People genuinely are concerned about your welfare, and they want you to succeed. If that's the foundation and cornerstone of everything you do, it's a really powerful starting point."

St. John's-Ravenscourt, which is located on 23 acres at the tip of a Red River oxbow in Winnipeg's Wildwood neighbourhood, doesn't stop there when it comes to attracting and retaining staff, of which there are 135 full-time members. Employees

have access to the onsite cafeteria, which features healthy and special diet menus, to the recently built fitness facility, to the international-sized indoor skating rink and to outdoor cross-country ski trails in the winter months.

The school also has a rewarding parental leave policy. It supports new moms with maternity and parental leave top-up payments to 90 per cent of salary for 27 weeks, and it also offers new dads and adoptive parents parental leave top-up payments to 90 per cent of salary for 10 weeks. Employees may also extend their leaves into unpaid absences.

Although faculty and staff rarely want to leave — one teacher recently concluded more than 40 years of service — retirement comes calling for everyone eventually. St. John's-Ravenscourt prepares its employees for that important stage of life with a defined benefit pension plan, a retirement planning assistant and phased-in work options for those nearing the end of their working lives.

There are also travel options for faculty members, as last year a school group ventured to Ecuador to work on a community development project; this year it was a journey to South Africa for a student conference.

After rattling off all of those visible features, Keefe still goes back to the one key intangible when asked for the No. 1 reason why it's great to work at St. John's-Ravenscourt.

"It's the quality of the relationships, the collegiality that exists with their colleagues and with the student community," Keefe says.

As for the future, planning has already started for the school's 200th anniversary in 2020. It was founded in 1820 to serve the children of the Selkirk settlers.

"We're going to have a raft of events," Keefe says, "to celebrate the tremendous history and tradition the school has, and the impact the students of this school have had on the province and on Canada and the world generally."

Retirement comes calling for everyone eventually. St. John's-Ravenscourt prepares its employees for that important stage of life with a defined benefit pension plan, a retirement planning assistant and phased-in work options for those nearing the end of their working lives.

ST. JOHN'S-RAVENS COURT SCHOOL INVESTS HEAVILY IN RECRUITING AND RETAINING THE BEST STAFF. SUBMITTED PHOTO



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PEOPLE ARE AT THE HEART OF ST.AMANT



ST.AMANT BEGAN A PILOT PROGRAM WHERE KEY STAFF LIKE MARTINE LEBRON (FROM LEFT), LOVLEEN PAUL AND LINDA TETREAU, RECEIVED TRAINING TO BECOME MINDFUL PRACTICE ADVOCATES. THESE ADVOCATES ACKNOWLEDGE AND ENCOURAGE THE MINDFUL BEHAVIOURS AND ACTIONS THAT THEY NOTICE IN THEIR CO-WORKERS, AS WELL AS SHARE INFORMATION, OR MINDFUL MOMENTS AT SHIFT CHANGES OR STAFF MEETINGS.
PHOTO BY DARCY FINLEY

As St.Amant approaches a milestone with their 60th anniversary in 2019, the organization continues to be a leader in service delivery for people with developmental disabilities and autism. St.Amant now has over 1,800 staff and offers services in over 100 locations in Manitoba. With a spirit of innovation and a strong desire to carry on the mission of the Grey Nuns, St.Amant is evolving to fill unmet needs in our community.

The organization has initiated the development of their next five-year strategic plan. To ensure the plan is relevant and that St.Amant is indeed

meeting the needs of its community and heading in the right direction, their strategic planning process involves wide stakeholder consultation with families, funders, partners and their staff.

"Our staff are the ones delivering services every day and in a person- and family-centred way. We need their input to ensure that as we move forward we're not only meeting our community's needs, but taking into account how we best meet the needs of the people we're already serving. We know that relationships and involvement in the community are important to everyone and our staff are the ones that help facilitate friendships, meaningful work, volunteer opportunities and quality recreation. The input from staff is a critical piece of our planning," said John Leggat, President and CEO.

St.Amant's role in the community goes beyond just service provision. As one of the largest disability agencies in the province, they also believe they have a duty and role to advocate for positive change in our province. That means working with other agencies and stakeholders to look at training standards for their staff and how agencies measure success. A person-centred approach means that success is achieved when the people they are supporting are able to reach the goals they set out for themselves. This can be a challenge when our community hasn't quite learned how to fully include people with developmental disabilities.

"There are people we support who can get all kinds of volunteer work, but what they really want is paid employment. Helping them find employment can be more challenging. Loneliness is also a challenge for people with disabilities. We need skilled staff that can help people with communication challenges make meaningful friendships," said Leggat.

Employment opportunities abound at this ever-growing organization in all kinds of roles. From clinical staff in the areas of psychology and social work, to nurses and administrative positions, there are always opportunities to join the team. The most common opportunities are in direct support, a role where you work hands-on with people with

disabilities to ensure that they are participating in life in a meaningful way. This job lets staff build relationships in the community, with family members and most important, with the people they are supporting. This is a great job for people who are motivated by supporting and encouraging choice and independence and are rewarded by seeing people achieve their goals.

As clichéd as it may sound, the employees really are the biggest asset at this people-focused organization. Knowing that, St.Amant works hard to offer excellent support to its staff. Staff have access to excellent training and development opportunities. Some are formal and required for their role and many are self-directed. The organization hosts an on-site Toastmasters group, English at Work for newcomers, many health and wellness benefits, such as a low cost gym, mediation and mindfulness activities and encourages staff to work together to come up with new and innovative ideas.

St.Amant employees are generous and definitely care about the people they support. In fact, St.Amant has one of the highest staff engagement rates in fundraising to support the St.Amant Foundation. Every year, staff volunteer at the St.Amant Foundation's signature fundraising event, the Free the Spirit Festival.

"Staff see the benefits of their donations and volunteer efforts. From new connections made through the St.Amant Leisure Guide, to new customized wheelchairs and equipment, proceeds raised at the Free the Spirit Festival have lasting effects all year long," said Juliette Mucha, Director, St.Amant Foundation.

Staff are truly part of the community and also support other local charities such as the Christmas Cheer Board, Winnipeg Harvest, Manitoba Marathon, Dragon Boat Festival and the Movement Centre Bike Race.

St.Amant is proud of their work environment and corporate culture making them one of Manitoba's Top Employers for the seventh year.



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STANDARDAERO EXCELS IN DIVERSITY & ENGAGEMENT

BY JENNIFER MCFEE

StandardAero soars to great heights to provide a stellar work environment for more than 1,200 employees.

Diversity is a key component of the 106-year-old company, which specializes in gas turbine engine maintenance, repair and overhaul services for the international aerospace industry.

For example, through its own employment equity committee, the company focuses on recruitment of Aboriginal workers in partnership with Neeginan College of Applied Technology. In conjunction with Manitoba Aerospace and the Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development, the students go through a technical training program to prepare them for working in the industry.

"We provide some of their work experience training throughout their 12 months of training and at the tail-end of their program," explains Stacey Mutton, Senior Human Resources Generalist. "Should they be successful through the program, we look for opportunities to place them into full-

time technical positions at StandardAero."

Another successful initiative stemmed from a pilot project with SCE Lifeworks, an organization that supports job creation for people living with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

"We partnered with them for the first time to bring in an individual to provide them with work experience," Mutton says. "It was so successful that we hired the individual full time."

With a focus on gender equity, StandardAero also embarks on ongoing initiatives to highlight women in engineering.

"We've developed a relationship with Girls in Aviation Day with the Women in Aviation International chapter and Women in Science and Engineering, which is an outreach group from the University of Manitoba to educate and encourage young girls to enter into exciting careers in

engineering and science. Many of our female engineers have volunteered their time mentoring young girls and attending events to promote careers in engineering and in aerospace," says Mutton, adding that a StandardAero engineer, Izabela Witkowska (P.Eng) recently was presented the 2017 Judith Weiszmann Women in Engineering Champion Award and the National Women of Aviation Award for her outstanding efforts as champion, role model and mentor to women in engineering.

Another main focus at the longstanding company is to create and maintain a strong sense of employee engagement.

"It's really all about bringing fun back into the workplace," Mutton says. "We have our own recreation and wellness committee, who put on a lot of events ranging from nutritional lunch-and-learn events to subsidized recreation activities and sports leagues. Lately, fitness boot camps have been very popular, and we also recently did a paint night."

In May, the company hosted its fourth annual Wellness Expo. Employees had the chance to browse exhibits and talk to experts from across the province about everything from financial planning to blood pressure testing.

Adding to the excitement, the company hosted a tug-of-war championship this year with business units battling each other during the lunch hour. The tug-of-war championships took place in September during an annual Employee Appreciation Day, which also featured a lunch served by StandardAero's executives. This event is held annually to recognize and thank employees for all of their efforts.

Through StandardAero's seven main locations and multiple business units, the company draws on the ingenuity and enthusiasm of employees from across the board.

"Everyone has their own ideas," Mutton says, "and that's how we share best practices that we all can enjoy and learn from each other."

With a focus on gender equity, StandardAero also embarks on ongoing initiatives to highlight women in engineering.



STANDARDAERO
EMPLOYEES COMPETE
IN THE COMPANY'S
ANNUAL TUG-OF-WAR
COMPETITION.
SUBMITTED PHOTO

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StandardAero



TRUE NORTH GROWING TOGETHER

Much like the passion of Manitoba's hockey fans, True North Sports + Entertainment cannot be held back. Whether through visible expansion, like venue renovations and the rising of True North Square's towers, or internal growth of teams and programs, True North strives to continuously improve and develop. Opportunities to enhance the patron experience and bring pride to the organization and to the city are all in stride with True North's path forward.

"Looking back, I don't think we could have envisioned just how diverse and far-reaching True North's portfolio would become. Perhaps our growth is not surprising given the vision and mission that guides our organization and what we desire to bring to our community," says John Olfert, Executive Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer. "We are not growing at the expense of our values, we are growing because of them."

Established in 1999 to operate the Manitoba Moose and to formally pursue a multi-purpose

downtown sports and entertainment venue, True North has led the way in revitalizing Winnipeg's downtown, one city block at a time. Today's portfolio includes two professional hockey teams, five Jets Gear retail stores, a world-class 15,200-seat arena in Bell MTS Place, the Burton Cummings Theatre, Bell MTS Iceplex, the True North Youth Foundation (Winnipeg Jets Hockey Academy, Project 11 and Camp Manitou), True North Real Estate Development, and on the marketing side, 17 websites and more than 45 social accounts with a reach of more than 1.33 million fans. A new division for 2017 is True North Touring, an extension of concert and entertainment promotion beyond the Winnipeg market.

"Change is constant and the bar continues to be set higher, but through culture and engagement, our organization and our people are willing and able to push forward, grow, and meet these new challenges and expectations," says Dawn Haus, Vice-President of Human Resources, who works with the team that leads the many training and culture initiatives for the growing workforce of more than 250 full-time and 1,200 part-time employees.

Last year alone, True North created more than 1.4 million patron experiences at 285 sports and entertainment events. Nearly 350 teams, and countless others, enjoyed 12,000 hours of ice time at Bell MTS Iceplex as part of regular season and tournament play. More than 18,000 underserved youth and their families benefited from the True North Youth Foundation's programs. And none

TRUE NORTH SPORTS + ENTERTAINMENT HAS A GROWING WORKFORCE OF MORE THAN 250 FULL-TIME AND 1,200 PART-TIME EMPLOYEES. SUBMITTED PHOTO

of this would be possible without inspired and committed employee teams.

Being named one of Manitoba's Top Employers for an 11th consecutive year means that True North is doing something right. So much so, that doing the right thing is one of the organization's four core values.

"We have to remember what got us to this point, what drives our every day and, invariably, that is our people," says Haus. "The events that we put on, the programs we run, none of that could happen without our people, and True North's culture values the importance of our people."

True North expresses appreciation through perks like the annual holiday skate at Bell MTS Place, team building events like Camp Day and employee hockey, the opportunity to ride on the Jets float as part of the Santa Claus parade, event tickets, and discounts at Jets Gear stores. Accomplishments and milestones are recognized at organization-wide luncheons. Employees are served healthy hot meals on game and event days. Opportunities for learning and development are offered and encouraged, including through initiatives like the principle-based Franklin Covey's Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. An employee health and wellness program, onsite gym access, and fully paid health and dental benefits and a matched retirement savings plan are also provided.

New this year, True North has piloted Synergy Sessions to help keep employees informed of and engaged in the different areas of business across the organization. These sessions are among the communication tools that help everyone to keep pace in True North's very dynamic environment.

Opportunities to volunteer for the foundation and other charitable initiatives also give employees more chances to engage in the organization outside of their own departments, and it is this internal support that fuels many of True North's key events and campaigns.

Amid the rapid change and growth, True North stays true by living their values every day, at all levels of the organization, by keeping their mission and vision in close sight, and by operating as one.

"At the end of the day, no matter what direction our growth takes us, we are True North and we will get there together," says Olfert.

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TrueNorth
SPORTS + ENTERTAINMENT

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UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA: BUILDING COMMUNITY

Greg Juliano loves the story about the caretaker at NASA who was asked what he did for a living.

"I helped put a man on the moon," the caretaker replied.

Juliano, who serves as the University of Manitoba's associate vice-president of human resources, believes that same spirit of working towards a common goal exists in spades at the province's largest post-secondary institution.

"It's a unique employer in the sense that you really feel like you're working for a purpose," Juliano says. "The education and research missions of the University are so important for our young people and for the economic health of the province. What we try to do is create an atmosphere where everyone — from professor to caretaker — truly feels like they are contributing to that mission in some way."

That is just one of the reasons why the University of Manitoba has landed on Manitoba's Top Employers list. The institution — celebrating its 140th anniversary this year as the oldest university in western Canada — places great priority on ensuring its faculty and staff are not only challenged and satisfied professionally, but healthy as well. It's no wonder there are so many long-term employees like Sandra Woloschuk, associate director of learning and organizational development, who recently celebrated her 20th anniversary at the University.

"One of the advantages of working in such a large and complex organization is that you have the opportunity to advance to different positions," Woloschuk says. "It's an opportunity to learn a new job but also learn more about the organization. I have been here 20 years and I'm in my fourth role."

The University supports employees through programs like Live Well @ Work, which was created to acknowledge the 'whole selves' that staff and faculty bring to work each day. It focuses on mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health, and it has its own dedicated week of activities on both the Fort Garry and Bannatyne campuses.

In addition to supporting the health of over

9,000 staff members, the University continually seeks to improve resources for their families. "We have very good employee and family assistance programs that cover everything from nutritional counselling to legal help," says Juliano, who has worked at the University for 11 years. The U of M has an on-site pharmacy, dental centre and childcare services. This past October, the campus daycare broke new ground for an expansion that will

Committed to providing education and development opportunities for staff, more than 125 workshops are available for professional development — 10 of which are included in the Leaders Learning Program.

provide an additional 52 spaces when completed.

Committed to providing education and development opportunities for staff, more than 125 workshops are available for professional development — 10 of which are included in the Leaders Learning Program.

"It was developed to provide a collegial space for our leaders to continue to learn and develop their interpersonal skills," Woloschuk says. "We cover emotional intelligence, social intelligence, building resiliency and leading high performance teams — and even how to coach others through change."

The concept of celebrating the 'whole selves' of employees is reflected in many of these resources, as well as the University's commitment to diversity, inclusion and community engagement. Recognized with a 2017 Canada's Best Diversity Employers award, the University is also a leading partner in national Indigenous reconciliation efforts.



This November, the U of M hosted the annual Building Reconciliation forum, which brings together leaders from universities, colleges and Indigenous communities to take action on reconciliation and create lasting change. Working with partners and communities to advance Indigenous achievement, the University also offers many Indigenous-focused programs and opportunities, such as the BMO Financial Group Indigenous Leaders of Tomorrow scholarship.

Peter Pomart, who is the program director of the Indigenous Business Education Partners (IBEP) in the Asper School of Business, is seeing positive results.

"I see the role of the work we do being able to help foster reconciliation," Pomart says — noting how Indigenous-focused programs such as the IBEP strengthen both the University community and bridge connections with the community-at-large.

For Woloschuk, this only reinforces the U of M's commitment to creating an outstanding learning and working environment for its entire community of students, faculty and staff.

"I have really enjoyed my time in the organization," she says. "I hope to spend the rest of my career here."

DURING LIVE WELL @ WORK WEEK THIS PAST JUNE, FACULTY AND STAFF ATTEND A MEDICINE WHEEL TEACHINGS WORKSHOP LED BY UNIVERSITY ELDER-IN-RESIDENCE NORMAN MEADE OUTSIDE MIGIZII AGAMIK - BALD EAGLE LODGE. SUBMITTED PHOTO

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UNIVERSITY
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WESTMAN COMMUNICATIONS GROUP: INNOVATIVE & FORWARD-THINKING



WESTMAN COMMUNICATIONS GROUP'S TEAM EMBODIES INNOVATION, DIVERSITY AND FORWARD THINKING. SUBMITTED PHOTO

By Geoff Kirbyson

You don't need a high-speed Internet connection to get a feel for Westman Communications Group in southwestern Manitoba, but it'll help.

That's because it's hard to go into the nearly 40 communities served by the Brandon-based telecommunications company without seeing its name on a building, sponsoring a curling bonspiel or one of its people presenting high school scholarships.

"Westman is a co-operative that believes in its staff but also in its community," said Sonia Cole, Westman's human resources manager. "We have a tremendous team of people who embody innovation, diversity and forward thinking, want to see (western Manitoba) do well and are willing to go above and beyond."

Westman has been named one of Manitoba's Top Employers, recognition that will not only make its current employers walk a little taller but should

also facilitate bringing new members on board in the future.

"It's incredible," she said. "It's testament to our staff and the company for encouraging us to be innovative and forward-thinking and enabling a sense of community," she said.

Westman has a diversified business of both old school and new school offerings. On the traditional side, it runs a pair of radio stations, Q Country, which plays — you guessed it — country music, and 94.7 Star FM, which spins adult contemporary tunes.

As a cable operator, it offers landline phones for residential and business markets, digital television and it's also an Internet service provider.

When Westman was established in 1977, its original line of business was cable television to the city of Brandon. It didn't take long to start spreading its reach, though. The very next year, it brought cable TV to Carberry, and it's been expanding ever since.

Today, the company's footprint extends to the Swan River area in the north, to Killarney and Boissevain in the south, Virden to the west and Carberry to the east. It has 140 employees, 110 of whom work for the Internet provider side with the remaining 30 at the two radio stations.

Westman also has one of the more diversified ownership structures you'll find. As a co-operative, its customers earn equity in the business which can be cashed in if they move out of the service area.

"We still have an executive leadership team with a CEO (David Baxter) and a board of directors," Cole is quick to note. "When you're operating in a community, you have community input, you're employing local individuals and you're more in touch with customers," she said.

The company does its best to stay in touch with its own people, too. For example, Westman encourages its employees to lead healthy lifestyles and it's willing to put its money where its mouth is. It has an extensive list of items and activities, such as gym memberships, kids' hockey fees, swimming passes, green fees and fitness equipment such as treadmills, stationary bikes and weights, that it will

reimburse up to \$250 per employee per year.

"It's important in this day and age when we're more sedentary to have a program that helps us to be more active and allows our children to go into sports. That's truly a family-oriented benefit," she said.

Some staff members even developed a software program that enabled their coworkers to log their steps taken over the course of the day or kilometres cycled during a workout.

Westman has a culture of perpetual skill development so it has internal experts who train new staff in their specialty areas and it also encourages team members to attend conferences and other education-driven events.

Westman has a culture of perpetual skill development so it has internal experts who train new staff in their specialty areas and it also encourages team members to attend conferences and other education-driven events.

"We want them to be forward-thinking and to look at where they want to go in the future. We have lots of internal promotions because they see there are opportunities to grow within the company," Cole said.

Indeed, there are more than a few people who have been with the company since its inception.

Volunteerism runs throughout the company with the annual United Way and Dreams for Kids campaigns among the most popular, as well as Big Brothers and Big Sisters.

"We try to give back to as many organizations and charities as we can. For example, we provide free Wi-Fi services in Dauphin's Recreation Complex," she said.

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THE WORKERS COMPENSATION BOARD IS A STRONG SUPPORTER OF THE UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN, AND ENCOURAGES STAFF TO GET INVOLVED IN VARIOUS ACTIVITIES, LIKE THE ANNUAL PLANE PULL. SUBMITTED PHOTO

CULTURE OF DIVERSITY AND COLLABORATION AT THE WCB

At the Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba, there is a strong commitment and value placed on creating a diverse and inclusive culture within the organization.

We are focused on building a culture that values diverse ideas, encourages collaboration, and empowers people at all levels to take initiative and feel supported to achieve their full potential.

When Analyn Chaneco, a Human Resources Assistant at the Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba, moved to Canada from the Philippines several years ago, she and her family battled challenges common among many newcomers: language barriers, job uncertainty and fears of the unknown.

"It was overwhelming to leave my comfort zone, but our life back home had its hardships," she says. "Now that I'm in Canada — and especially here at the WCB — I have this strong sense of security. I feel like I belong."

Analyn's is a story shared by other WCB staff who are new to the country.

Embracing and promoting diversity is an important part of the WCB's workplace culture, according to WCB President and CEO Winston Maharaj.

"Our workplace strives to be an environment that is safe, welcoming and inclusive," says Maharaj. "We recognize the positive outcomes that a diverse workforce offers and want to be reflective of the community we serve."

In addition to having a joint committee that's dedicated to integrating equity into the workplace, the WCB promotes diversity through many offerings to staff. Some of these include cultural awareness workshops, respectful workplace training, leadership

education and support of community agencies.

Another fundamental offering that the WCB prides itself in is their ongoing support of staff in their professional growth and development.

"We are committed to the continuous growth and development of our staff. As an organization, we are proud of the support we provide to our employees to help them contribute to their fullest potential and achieve their personal and professional career goals," says Shannon Earle, Vice President, Human Resources and Strategy. "By investing in our people, we're ultimately investing in our organization and the broader community as a whole."

The WCB offers a range of services to help staff carve out their own career paths. Developmental training programs are one offering, which help staff to further develop their skills and progress in their careers. Through the WCB's job shadowing program, staff can also take advantage of getting a realistic glimpse into a "day in the life of" another position — and the skills they may need to pursue it.

"We recognize that our people are our greatest asset, and by supporting them, we're able to more effectively serve our customers and stakeholders," says Maharaj.

Earlier this year, Lanre Ajibola, a newcomer from Nigeria, honed his skills — both professionally and culturally — as part of the WCB's internship program.

"Staff at the WCB have such a positive, warm attitude and welcomed me with open arms," he says.

Lanre's leader, Compliance Services Director

Brad Janzen, adds that providing Lanre with an internship opportunity was beneficial to his department as well. "It allowed our own staff to better understand the challenges faced by new Canadians in the workforce."

It's that type of community outreach and social responsibility that remain a fundamental part of the WCB's corporate strategic framework.

"One of our core values is compassion. We understand and care about the diverse needs of both our customers and our staff," says Maharaj.

Each year, the WCB supports a variety of organizations — through formal partnerships, outreach services and sponsorships — to help make a positive contribution to the community.

Those efforts span a range of organizations, such as Connect Employment Services, The Heart and Stroke Foundation, and the Manitoba Aboriginal Youth Achievement Awards. The WCB is also a strong supporter of the United Way campaign, and encourages staff to get involved in various United Way activities, including the annual Plane Pull, Day of Caring and sponsored executive program.

"Being recognized as one of Manitoba's top employers for the seventh year in a row acknowledges we have created a workplace where our staff can thrive and succeed," says Maharaj. "As an organization, we are proud of our people, the commitment and the passion that they bring to the job each and every day."

"We recognize that our people are our greatest asset, and by supporting them, we're able to more effectively serve our customers and stakeholders."

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