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Nova Scotia's Top Employers 2015

Custom Content



2015
Nova Scotia's
Top Employers

The Nova Scotia's Top Employer's list was selected from applicants to the national Canada's Top 100 Employers competition. To develop this year's list, editors at MediCorp Canada Inc. examined the recruitment histories of over 80,000 employers across Canada that it tracks for its popular job search site, Eluta.ca. From this initial group, MediCorp editors invited 35,000 active employers that created new jobs in the past year. Employers completed an extensive application process that included a detailed review of their operations and HR practices. Over 3,250 employers started this year's application process nationally. The final applicant pool was up 7% over last year's total, which was also a record.

MediCorp editors graded each of the applicants on eight key areas: (1) Physical Workplace; (2) Work Atmosphere & Social; (3) Health, Financial & Family Benefits; (4) Vacation & Time Off; (5) Employee Communications; (6) Performance Management; (7) Training & Skills Development; and (8) Community Involvement. These criteria have remained consistent since the inception of the national competition, now in its 14th year. MediCorp editors also publish detailed reasons explaining why each of the winning employers was selected on their job search site, Eluta.ca, where they can be read free of charge.

Admiral Insurance Services Inc.

Admiral Insurance Services Inc. is a provider of automobile insurance products and services.

Halifax, NS

- new employees start at three weeks of paid vacation allowance and can schedule additional time off through a formal earned days off program
- encourages employees to develop their skills with generous tuition subsidies for job-related courses (to \$5,000), a variety of in-house and online training programs, and subsidies for professional accreditation
- lets everyone share in the company's success with a profit-sharing plan, available to all employees
- helps employees save for retirement with contributions to a defined contribution pension plan
- supports employees who are new mothers with maternity leave top-up payments (to 100% of salary for 15 weeks) and offers parental top-up to new fathers and adoptive parents (to 100% of salary for 7 weeks)

Cape Breton District Health Authority / CBDHA

Cape Breton District Health Authority provides primary, secondary and tertiary care through eight hospital locations across Cape Breton Island.

Sydney, NS

- encourages employees to keep fit with an onsite fitness facility (with employee-led fitness fundraising activities) and a unique online healthy eating cookbook for employees to download
- along with the full-service cafeteria (complete with piano for hospital choir practice) employees can take advantage of onsite Tim Hortons and Subway restaurants
- supports employees who are new moms with maternity leave top-up payments (to 93% of salary for 15 weeks) as well as extended health benefits coverage during their leave
- and provides parental leave top-up to employees who are new fathers or adoptive parents, to 93% of salary for 10 weeks
- helps employees save for the future with generous contributions to a defined benefit pension plan
- encourages employees to achieve work-life balance through alternative work options including flexible hours, telecommuting and reduced summer hours
- also offers young talent opportunities to gain on-the-job experience through paid internships, co-op programs and summer student positions

Capital District Health Authority / CDHA

CDHA is a provider of health services to residents in the Halifax Regional Municipality and western Hants County.

Halifax, NS

- encourages employees to achieve work-life balance through a variety of alternative work arrangements, including flexible hours, telecommuting, and shortened and compressed work weeks
- invests in ongoing employee education with tuition subsidies for job-related courses, a number of in-house and online training programs, including apprenticeship opportunities, and subsidies for professional accreditation

- helps employees prepare for the longer term with retirement planning assistance and contributions to a defined benefit pension plan
- supports employees who are mothers with maternity leave top-up payments (to 93% of salary for 15 weeks) and offers parental top-up for new fathers and adoptive parents (to 93% of salary for 10 weeks)
- the hospital's "Fun Crew" organizes a variety of social events and celebrations each year, including a musical harbour cruise, family day event at Ross Farm, staff appreciation barbecues, and family skating at The Oval

CBCL Limited

CBCL Limited is an employee-owned consulting engineering firm that operates in Atlantic Canada.

Halifax, NS

- provides maternity leave top-up payments to employees who are new mothers (to 80% of salary for 17 weeks) and offers the option to extend their leave into an unpaid leave of absence
- encourages employees to balance work and their personal commitments with flexible hours, a telecommuting option, and shortened work weeks
- lets everyone share in the company's success with profit-sharing, and offers a full suite of financial benefits including signing bonuses for some employees, year-end bonuses for all, and referral bonuses (to \$1,000) for employees who successfully refer a candidate
- helps employees plan for the longer term with contributions to a defined contribution pension plan and health benefits that extend to retirees
- supports ongoing employee development through a variety of in-house and online training programs, tuition subsidies for job-related courses, and subsidies for professional accreditation
- also reaches out to the next generation and provides opportunities for students and new grads to gain on-the-job experience with paid internships, co-op placements, and summer student roles

CROMBIE Real Estate Investment Trust

CROMBIE Real Estate Investment Trust is a commercial real estate owner and developer in Atlantic Canada.

Stellarton, NS

- lets everyone share in the company's success with year-end bonuses and a profit-sharing plan, available to all employees
- helps employees prepare for retirement with contributions to a defined contribution pension plan and health benefits that extend to retirees
- supports employees who are new mothers, fathers, or adoptive parents with maternity and parental leave top-up payments (to 70% of salary for 26 weeks) and offers the option to extend their leave into an unpaid leave of absence
- encourages employees to develop their skills through a variety of in-house and online training programs and subsidies for tuition and professional accreditation
- head office employees can stay in shape by taking advantage of the onsite fitness facility, with state-of-the-art exercise equipment, instructor-led classes such as yoga and kick-boxing, and shower facilities

Dalhousie University

Dalhousie University is a leading post-secondary academic institution serving over 16,500 full and part-time students.

Halifax, NS

- helps new mothers and fathers, including adoptive parents, with maternity and parental leave top-up payments, with the amount dependent upon employee group and length of service
- encourages ongoing employee development with free tuition for employees (up to two credits each year) and generous tuition subsidies for employees' immediate family members
- offers phased-in retirement work options along with the stability of a defined benefit pension plan as well as a health benefits plan that extends into their retirement, with no age limit
- retired employees can also stay active through the Association of Dalhousie Retirees and Pensioners (ADRP), which organizes social events and represents retiree interests on the University's pension and benefits committees
- encourages employees and retirees (along with their spouses) to stay healthy with subsidized memberships to the Dalplex fitness centre, which includes a fully-equipped gymnasium, swimming, racquetball and squash and instructor-led fitness classes
- offers a great work location in one of the country's leading university campuses, situated on 79 acres of landscaped grounds located within walking distance to historic downtown Halifax and a wide selection of restaurants and shops

Health Association Nova Scotia

Health Association Nova Scotia is an association of health and community services organizations.

Bedford, NS

- helps employees plan for the longer term with contributions to a defined benefit pension plan and health benefits that extend to retirees
- new employees start at three weeks of paid vacation allowance and can schedule additional time off with paid personal days off and a formal earned days off program
- provides maternity and parental leave top-up payments for employees who are new mothers, fathers, or adoptive parents with (to 93% of salary for 15 weeks) and also offers an option to extend their leave into an unpaid leave of absence
- encourages employees to achieve work-life balance through a variety of alternative work arrangements, including flexible hours, shortened and compressed work weeks, telecommuting, and reduced summer hours
- invests in ongoing employee development with subsidies for tuition and professional accreditation, career planning services and a range of in-house and online training programs



POLYCELLO IS PROUD TO BE ONE OF NOVA SCOTIA'S TOP EMPLOYERS FOR 2015!

By Jennifer Taplin

PolyCello offers superior flexible packaging to its clients, and a first-rate workplace for its employees.

Established in 1956 by PG Emmerson, PolyCello is a premier flexible packaging manufacturer in North America, servicing customers in Canada and across the U.S. Today, PolyCello has grown to include a state-of-the-art plant in Amherst, Nova Scotia and a second facility in Belleville, Ontario. Between the two locations, there are 400 people in the PolyCello family.



Under the third generation guidance of Stephen Emmerson, President and CEO since 2004, PolyCello continues to step up with an unparalleled dedication to quality and craftsmanship, outstanding in-house capabilities, superior customer service and a pro-active commitment to sustainability initiatives.

PolyCello is one of Canada's Best Managed Companies at the Gold Standard level. In 2014 PolyCello was named a Top Employer for both Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada. "We believe that hiring the best people results in superior products and stronger relationships with our customers so we go that extra mile to provide an outstanding facility, superior benefits, profit sharing, top performance awards and a pension plan," Emmerson said. For the health and well-being of employees PolyCello has a full-service cafeteria, an on-site

fitness facility, and we support employees' fitness goals with a fitness reimbursement program. Children of employees are eligible for three \$2,500 scholarships. In addition, each child that applies for the scholarship is awarded a \$1,500 interest-free loan. If the student has a successful year, the loan is completely forgiven. PolyCello has a very active social committee, which is funded through weekly payroll deductions of \$1, which is matched by PolyCello. Social committee events in the past year include a bowling night, a billiards night, a monthly BBQ series through the summer, a children's Christmas party, an adult Christmas party, a curling tournament, a golf tournament and a movie night at a nearby cinema. PolyCello believes in celebrating our employees and their achievements. There is an annual employee appreciation day with breakfast, games, a dinner and gifts for each employee. Awards such as Canada's Best Managed Company – Gold Standard and Top Employer awards are celebrated with a two-day, pancake breakfast where employees were given bottles of pure maple syrup as gifts. At PolyCello, it is important to be a part of the local community. Each month, a draw is held to choose an employee who decides upon a registered charity to which PolyCello donates \$1,000. If the employee decides to make a personal donation to that charity, PolyCello will match their donation to a maximum of \$500. In the words of one of PolyCello's employees, "I work for a company that not only values me as an employee, but as a person as well. The company grows and evolves, but their core values remain. *Honesty... check. Integrity... check. Work/life balance... check.*"



NTT DATA

By Jennifer Taplin

NTT DATA Canada, Inc., has been part of the top Canadian employer's list for a decade, and for good reason, and is currently, one of Nova Scotia's top employer's for 2014/2015.

For 17 years, NTT DATA's Halifax location has offered technology-enabled services and solutions to clients around the world, operating in approximately 40 countries. We provide consulting, managed services, projects, outsourcing, and cloud-based solutions to mid-sized and large enterprises in all major industries," said Pam Johnson, VP of Human Resources

"Our reputation helps to attract employees," said Lianne Landry, HR director. "We're an active employer in campus recruitment and we attract a young audience but also an international audience because of the type of work we do. We're a Global IT Innovator and one of the top six world-wide."

With currently 725 employees at our Halifax office, we hire the best people and we have a lot to offer them, including flexible work arrangement options, employer paid health and dental plans for employees and their families starting on day one, and a wellness reimbursement program. Employees can also take advantage of tuition reimbursement for certificates and certifications worth \$5,250 annually.

"Additionally, we offer the opportunity for employees to do challenging work in a variety of industries as our clients span a variety of services and industries," Landry said.

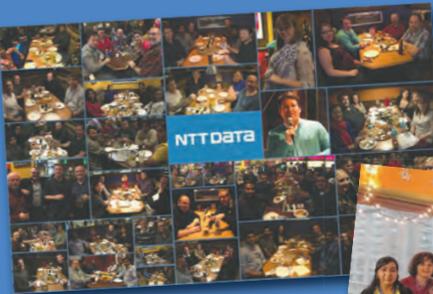
"Just the reputations of our clients alone are an attractor for some of our employees."

Employees enjoy a diverse work environment. There's a Cultural Awareness Committee, prayer rooms, and resources available for people new to Canada and Halifax. We foster a team and family atmosphere at NTT DATA Canada, Inc. The Social Committee sponsors several events a year long, such as Treat days, pancake breakfasts, and subsidize movies at Cineplex Theatres ahead of release dates.

"We strive for a very vibrant and accepting culture. We celebrate Diwali and Chinese New Year, for example, and enter a team in the annual Dragon Boat Festival," Landry said.

There's also significant opportunity for career advancement with NTT DATA Canada, Inc. People starting their careers can learn and advance quickly. The average tenure is five and a half years, but a large majority of people have been at the company for well over 10 years.

"It speaks to the focus on career advancement, which they get as a junior developer, programmer, tester, etc., and advancing through the organization with the opportunity to work for and experience different clients and industries," she said. "They can grow their skill set and their industry knowledge base while they stay with the same employer."



Staff at NTT DATA celebrated a year-end party recently.



Employees at NTT DATA celebrated Diwali in November



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High Liner Foods Incorporated

High Liner Foods Incorporated processes and markets value-added frozen seafood products, including the popular High Liner, Fisher Boy, Mirabel, Sea Cuisine, FPI, Viking, Icelandic Seafood, Samband of Iceland, Seastar and Seaside brands.

Lunenburg, NS

- invests in ongoing employee development with in-house training programs, including apprenticeship opportunities, tuition subsidies for courses taken at outside institutions, and subsidies for professional accreditation
- also supports the education of the next generation through an academic scholarship program for children of employees who are interested in pursuing post-secondary studies (to \$2,400 per child)
- depending on their position, some employees may take advantage of a flexible health benefits plan, allowing them to customize levels of coverage to suit their personal needs
- supports employees who are new mothers, fathers or adoptive parents with maternity and parental leave top-up payments (to 95% of salary for 12 weeks)
- helps employees prepare for life after work with retirement planning assistance, phased-in work options and contributions to a defined contribution pension plan
- is committed to sourcing seafood sustainably and established a corporate sustainability council, which is comprised of employees from Canada and the United States

IMP Group Limited

IMP Group Limited is a privately owned group of companies operating in a range of industries, including: aerospace, aviation, airline, healthcare, industrial marine, information technology, hospitality and property development.

Halifax, NS

- supports ongoing employee development with in-house and online training programs, including apprenticeship opportunities, formal mentoring, and subsidies for professional accreditation
- also invests in the education of the future generation and manages an academic scholarship program for children of employees who pursue post-secondary studies (to \$1,500 per child)
- encourages employees to achieve work-life balance through a variety of alternative work arrangements, including flexible hours, telecommuting, and shortened and compressed work weeks
- helps employees save for the future with contributions to a matching RSP plan
- manages the IMP Community Grant Program, which provides donations to charitable organizations with which employees volunteer over 20 hours per year

Jazz Aviation LP

Jazz Aviation LP is a regional airline serving over 80 destination across Canada and in the United States.

Dartmouth, NS

- supports ongoing employee development with formal mentoring, a number of in-house and online training options, including apprenticeship opportunities, and subsidies for professional accreditation
- encourages employees to prepare for the future with retirement planning assistance and contributions to a defined benefit or defined contribution pension plan, depending on their position
- cultivates an ownership culture through a share purchase plan, available to all employees

- helps employees balance work and their personal commitments with a variety of alternative work arrangements (depending on position), including flexible hours, telecommuting, and shortened and compressed work weeks
- employees can also schedule additional time off through a formal earned days off program

Northwood Group of Companies

Northwood Group of Companies is a long term care, independent living and community outreach organization.

Halifax, NS

- offers maternity and parental leave top-up payments to employees who are new mothers, fathers, or adoptive parents (depending on their position) as well as an option to extend their leave into an unpaid leave of absence
- employees working at the organization's main location can take advantage of a variety of onsite amenities, including an employee lounge, quiet room for meditation and relaxation, and fitness facility, with exercise equipment and shower facilities
- employees can save for the future with contributions to a defined benefit or defined contribution pension plan, depending on employee group
- helps students and new grads gain on-the-job experience through paid internships, co-op placements, and summer student roles

NTT Data Canada, Inc.

NTT Data Canada, Inc. is a leading information technology firm that provides application, infrastructure and business process outsourcing services.

Halifax, NS

- supports employees who are new mothers with maternity leave top-up payments (to 75% of salary for 6 weeks) and offers an option to extend their leave into an unpaid leave of absence
- provides generous referral bonuses as an incentive for employees to help recruit friends, up to \$5,000 for candidates that are successfully hired by the organization
- helps employees prepare for the future with retirement planning assistance and employer contributions to a matching RSP plan
- encourages employees to maintain healthy, active lifestyles with employee-led sports teams and a health club subsidy to help cover the costs of gym membership
- invests in ongoing employee development with a range of in-house and online training programs, formal mentoring and tuition subsidies for courses taken at outside institutions (to \$5,250)
- in an effort to help newcomers gain Canadian work experience, participates in a work placement program offered by Immigrant Settlement & Integration Services and provides partially paid work terms for up to 6 weeks for unemployed new Canadians

PolyCello

Established in 1956, PolyCello is a provider of packaging services for brands in the frozen food, pet food, tissue, lawn and garden, and food service industries.

Amherst, NS

- lets everyone share in the company's success through a profit-sharing plan available to all employees
- supports ongoing employee education with tuition subsidies for job-related courses, and also provides subsidies for professional accreditation

- even invests in the education of the next generation and manages an academic scholarship program for children of employees who pursue post-secondary studies, up to \$2,500 per child
- encourages all employees to save for the future with contributions to a defined benefit or defined contribution pension plan, depending on employee group

SportsDirect Inc.

SportsDirect Inc. provides up-to-date sports content and cross-platform solutions to major publishers, websites, newspapers, television, radio and other media organizations worldwide, including Thomson Reuters, USA Today, Chicago Tribune and the Covers Media Group

Halifax, NS

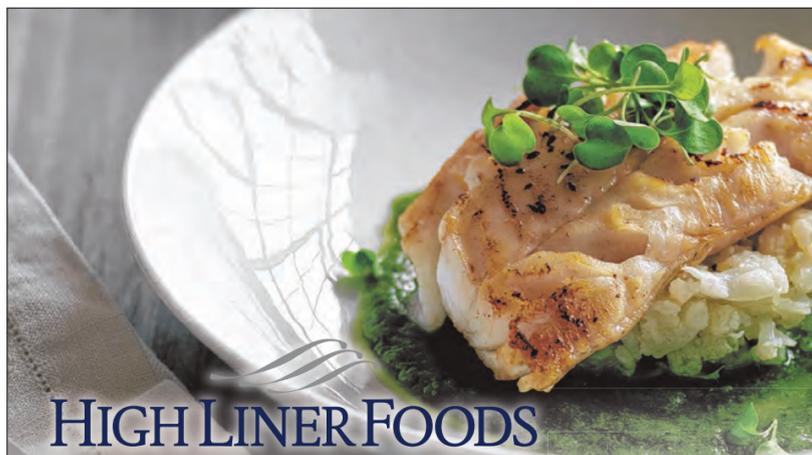
- head office employees can maintain active lifestyles by taking advantage of the onsite fitness facility, complete with treadmills, stationary bikes, stair masters, weights and shower facilities
- provides employees maternity leave top-up payments to employees who are new mothers (to 75% of salary for 17 weeks) as well as flexible hours when they are ready to return to work
- supports ongoing employee development through a variety of in-house and online training programs as well as subsidies for professional accreditation and job-related courses
- encourages employees to save for the future with contributions to a defined contribution pension plan
- offers compassionate leave top-up payments for employees who are called upon to care for a loved one (to 75% of salary for 17 weeks)

Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia

Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia (WCB) promotes safe work practices and the provision of fair benefits to workers.

Halifax, NS

- employees can plan securely for the future with a defined benefit pension plan and health benefits that extend to retirement
- in addition to three weeks of paid vacation allowance, new employees receive personal paid days off, which can be scheduled throughout the year
- provides maternity leave top-up payments to employees who are new mothers (to 93% of salary for 17 weeks) and also offers parental leave top-up to new fathers and adoptive parents, to 93% of salary for 10 weeks
- invests in the education of the next generation through an academic scholarship program for children of employees who pursue post-secondary studies



HIGH LINER FOODS
is proud to be recognized
as a Top Employer in
Nova Scotia for 2015.

By Jennifer Taplin

High Liner Foods has grown exponentially since it was founded in Lunenburg in 1899, but one thing hasn't changed: a commitment to employees.

High Liner considers employees the secret to success. They believe in building a high-performance organization by investing in people and developing future leaders from within. At High Liner, the focus is on fostering an individual's capacity for leadership with personalized training and development plans for all employees.

And the employees are proud of the products – quality and food safety are never compromised. Employees are proud to serve High Liner products to their family and friends.

"At High Liner we live by our core values, customer focused, innovative, and responsible and people buy into that," said Joanne Brown, executive vice president of human resources.

"Our leaders understand these three things must always be a factor when making decisions. As well, our passion about our people, our products, our focus on sustainability and social responsibility is a source of pride for our employees."

High Liner Foods is recognized as one of Nova Scotia's Top Employers because they offer exciting and challenging career opportunities with a competitive compensation package. But more importantly, High Liner Foods is built on core values and guiding principles that serve as a compass to guide decision making and how they do business.

High Liner considers respect for people and integrity as pillars of their corporate culture. Employees enjoy a friendly, collaborative and team-based environment where they can be challenged and rewarded as everyone strives for excellence.

What makes a happy employee is a great manager. High Liner expects managers to be leaders and coaches to their people. Meaningful work makes employees

happy. High Liner offers a variety of career opportunities and prefer to promote from within the organization whenever possible. Succession planning is a strategic goal of the organization.

High Liner is North America's largest marketer of frozen value-added seafood products. Globally, High Liner employs approximately 1,540 employees including 327 in Nova Scotia. There is a lot of longevity and very low voluntary turnover within the organization.



The longest serving employee has worked at High Liner for 47 years.

They are also passionate about the environment and they don't consider sustainability merely an option, but the answer. High Liner feels a profound responsibility to the oceans and the planet. It is critical for our future that fisheries are managed responsibly. When it comes to seafood, sustainable development means the product customers are buying has been caught in a manner that ensures the long-term viability of our environment and our oceans.

High Liner is recognized as a global leader in driving best practice improvements in wild fisheries and aquaculture and have achieved 99 per cent of their strategic goal to sustainably source all of our seafood.



Northwood
SETTING STANDARDS



By John Verlinden

For over 50 years, Northwood has been an important part of Nova Scotia's response to an aging population. What began as a community response to the plight of seniors living alone in Halifax, has evolved into a multi-faceted organization offering a wide range of programs and services designed to help people age with dignity and respect. Built on a foundation of innovation and leadership, Northwood is a vibrant and diverse community enriched by our partnerships, by the people served and the people who serve.

Today, Northwood serves over 6,000 clients throughout Nova Scotia. It employs over 1,600 staff who provide support, work at one of our facilities or visit the homes of clients in the community. They are the face of Northwood and the reason it enjoys such a good reputation for care.

Northwood believes its employees are its greatest asset. It shows. Employees are encouraged to continue their professional development with formal mentoring, a variety of in-house and online training programs and leadership training for high potential individuals. They support staff to be active members of their community, encouraging them to participate in local, national and international charitable initiatives. They also help staff prepare for retirement with phased-in work options and contributions to a defined benefit or defined contribution pension plan, depending on the employee group. Northwood invests in our youth as well

by helping students and new grads gain on-the-job experience through co-op programs, summer student roles and paid internship opportunities. These initiatives have garnered significant recognition. For the second year running, Northwood has been recognized as one of Nova Scotia's top employers.

Northwood believes its employees are its greatest asset.

"It's an important honour," says Janet Simm, President and CEO of Northwood. The application called for detailed information on a broad range of subjects, programs and initiatives geared to staff. "To be recognized two years in a row is quite an achievement. It speaks volumes about what we have in place to support our staff."

With increased competition for resources, being recognized as a great place to work is an important recruitment tool. Employees also tend to stay with an organization that is committed to them as well. The average length of service is about seven years with many having worked for Northwood 25 years or more.

