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Finalists announced for 2017 Nova Awards

The Timmins Chamber of Commerce has officially announced 45 local businesses, organizations and individuals as finalists for the 2016 Nova Business Excellence Awards, the region's biggest celebration of entrepreneurial achievement.

A panel of six independent community judges narrowed 130 nominations down to three finalists in each of 15 categories. Representing some of the best and brightest of Timmins' business community, these finalists will be celebrated at the Nova Awards' gala evening, to be held at the McIntyre Arena on May 11.

Now in its 15th year, the annual awards gala shares the success stories of Timmins businesses and highlights the positive impact they have on the community. The quality of the nominees for this year's awards is a testament to that strength and creativity, said Christine Bender, president of the Timmins Chamber of Commerce.

"The Nova Awards are designed to highlight the very best that our business community has to offer, and as always, we are in awe of the quality of the nominations we've received this year," said Bender.

"Timmins is recognized internationally for our knowledge and expertise, and when you look at our list of finalists, it's easy to see why. We're thrilled to be able to honour these amazing entrepreneurs through the Nova Awards, and we look forward to having Timmins join us in our celebration on May 11."

The theme for this year's gala evening will be "Where Business Fits Together," said Bender, with puzzle pieces being used as a visual motif to show how Timmins organizations and entrepreneurs work together to make Timmins a better place to live, work and play.

"When you step back and look at the larger picture of Timmins' economy, you can



Near North Video Productions, owned by Mark Rogers (center), was one of the Nova Awards finalists announced March 7. Finalists were notified in person by Chamber volunteers.

see countless businesses contributing to the community in ways big and small, each and every day. Our entrepreneurs are also our neighbors, and they strengthen our economy while funding scholarships, sponsoring sports teams, and providing jobs. The Nova Awards shine a light on some of this important work, and we're proud to do this for 15 remarkable years."

As in recent years, Eastlink news personalities will interview the event's finalists, organizers and community champions on the Nova Awards' own version of the red carpet. These segments will be broadcast live throughout the many flat-screen

televisions on display throughout the area, which serve to promote further conversation among attendees during the celebration.

Each of the finalists for the 2017 Nova Awards were hand-delivered their notices, as well as a commemorative gift, by Chamber representatives and volunteers on March 7. The day of notifications was sponsored by Eastlink, who also participated.

A full list of finalists, along with a photo gallery of finalists receiving their notifications, is available P6-7, or at <http://tinyurl.com/2017NovaFinalists>

Volunteers needed for Nova Awards

Help the Timmins Chamber of Commerce make the 2017 Nova Awards a success by volunteering an hour or two of your time.

As a major event catering to more than 600 people, the 2017 Nova Awards are only possible due to the tremendous dedication and passion of countless volunteers.

From setting up the decor, to working the event proper, to taking down and cleaning up afterwards, there are many tasks for which the Timmins Chamber relies on the generous assistance of those who choose to help celebrate the best of Timmins business.

As such, the Timmins Chamber is asking for volunteers at the following times:

- Tuesday, May 9: between 5 p.m. - 8 p.m. (hanging curtains, place tables/chairs)
- Wednesday, May 10: between 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. (set up tables, set up bars, hang décor)
- Thursday, May 11: between 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. (final set up)
- Thursday, May 11: between 5 p.m. - 11 p.m. (various duties)
- Thursday, May 11: between 10:30 p.m. - 1 a.m. (tear down, clean up)
- Friday, May 12: between 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. (tear down, clean up)

Interested individuals are asked to contact Carmen Swartz, Manager of Member Services at (705) 360-1900 or info@timminschamber.on.ca

Please note that high school students can receive official volunteer hours by contributing their time to this event.



A PERFECT BLEND

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Northeastern Ontario to see small rebound despite challenges: report

The economy of northeastern Ontario is projected to see a small rebound through 2018 despite ongoing challenges, according to Ontario Economic Report 2017, as issued by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) in partnership with the Timmins Chamber of Commerce.

As a new annual document designed to shape and inform public policy, the Ontario Economic Report (OER) features not only projections about the region's outlook – as conducted by Central 1 Credit Union – but also the results of a business confidence survey, as well as a business prosperity index. Combined, the data from these documents demonstrate broad challenges faced by Ontario's economy, businesses, and consumers in 2017.

The OER suggests that a positive outlook for forestry, construction, transportation and accommodation sectors will help offset negative factors such as continued outmigration, staffing challenges, and rising energy rates.

"Businesses in the northeast – and Timmins in particular – are seeing some cautious growth, despite their grave concerns about the regulatory burden in Ontario," says Christine Bender, president of the Timmins Chamber of Commerce.

"Our businesses face higher electricity costs and further distance to markets, and their success in face of these challenges certainly speaks to their resilience and their determination."

The OER points out that these successes are being achieved despite considerable challenges: increased costs associated with production of goods, as well as regulation and housing have resulted in weak



Gains in forestry will help to provide some strength to the northeastern Ontario economy in 2017, according to a new report.

market and labour force activity. As a result, the report says that many manufacturing businesses across Ontario are operating in a risk-averse environment in which they are disinclined to grow production by investing or hiring. Manufacturers in the Northeast region, however, are tentatively anticipating a positive year despite these challenges, according to the OER.

This is reflected by the broader economic outlook data, which further reveals the unemployment rate in the Northeast economic region will continue to drop, from 7.2 percent in 2016 to a projected 6.7 percent in 2017. This is the result of the rise in the labour force in the face of negative net migration, which is projected to be higher in the northeast than in any other economic region of Ontario.

The median residential price is also expected to jump 2.7 percent to \$193,000, though Timmins specifically is identified as having lower projected housing sales than other areas of the northeast.

"Our research shows that Ontario's economic climate is posing challenges to the businesses we represent and Ontarians more broadly," said Allan O'Dette, President and CEO of the OCC. "Investment is being held back because of a high perception of risk. We need immediate action in order for our province to continue to grow and prosper."

This is a trend that is felt by individual firms, according to the results of the OER's business confidence survey. While only 24 percent of businesses indicated any confidence in Ontario's economic outlook, nearly two-thirds were confident about their own organization's outlook. Of those, medium and large firms have higher rates of confidence than smaller businesses, of which only 41 percent anticipate increasing their revenue or workforce in 2017.

"For many years, the voice of Ontario business has cautioned that regulatory burdens, high input costs, and government policies not attuned to innovation have hampered

economic growth," added O'Dette. "The findings in the OER reinforce this, and indicate that there are also structural issues impeding our province's potential."

To address these issues, the OER also highlights specific policy issues that the Ontario Chambers intends to focus on in 2017 – namely workforce development, infrastructure, and health care. It will also place a major focus on energy rates, and has asked the Timmins Chamber of Commerce to partner with it as it examines the issue throughout the coming year.

As a starting point for our advocacy on this file in the coming year, the OCC submitted its recommendations for the 2017 Long-Term Energy Plan (LTEP). Within the submission, it called on government to ensure that future energy policies reflect the principles of affordability, transparency and flexibility. The OCC argued that a thoughtful balancing of these principles would promote economic prosperity, business competitiveness and strengthen ratepayer confidence in Ontario. One of the submission's top recommendations included a call for the adoption of a capacity market system which, if implemented, would provide a cost-effective solution for future energy procurement in Ontario.

To view the full Ontario Economic Report 2017, visit www.tinyurl.com/OER2017

To view the Economic Analysis of Ontario by Central 1 Credit Union, visit www.tinyurl.com/OER2017-Analysis

Federal budget a mixed bag for Timmins businesses, says Timmins Chamber

Investments in training marred by escalating costs

The 2017 federal budget's promises of investments in skills training, Indigenous education and duty to consult are somewhat marred by ongoing deficits and rising costs, according to the Timmins Chamber of Commerce.

Though there are causes for concern, Timmins businesses should see a positive impact from the following elements of the federal budget, as tabled on March 22 by Finance Minister Bill Morneau:

- \$3.1 million over three years to establish a secretariat to support the Working Group on the Review of Laws and Policies related to Indigenous Peoples, and \$24 million per year on an ongoing basis to support the timely resolution of specific land claims;
- 40 percent increase to FedNor's budget, Northern Ontario's regional development agency, from \$41 million to \$66 million over the next five years;
- \$90 million over two years to increase funding to support post-secondary student support programs for Indigenous Peoples;
- \$1.8 billion over six years to expand Employment Insurance training programs through Labour Market Development Agreements with the provinces;
- Another one-year extension of the 15-percent Mineral Exploration Tax Credit for flow-through share investors.

"While we take issue with some elements of the 2017 federal budget, it generally helps to make



Canada a more competitive environment, and it includes several items that could have a positive impact on Timmins businesses," said Timmins Chamber President Christine Bender.

"We're extremely pleased to see that our advocacy throughout the last year, including our successful push to have the Canadian Chamber network adopt our policies in November, have helped the federal government to prioritize the need to clarify resource industries' duty to consult with Indigenous communities. The lack of a clear framework on how businesses and Indigenous

communities should approach this process creates uncertainty for resource development projects, and the need for direction is crucial; as such, we're very happy to see that our efforts to push the federal government on this file have borne fruit."

Also of interest to Timmins business community is the 2017 budget's focus on staffing and skills training, given that these concerns continue to be a major priority for many Timmins businesses. With nearly \$5 billion across a range of programs, the budget also promises to help improve the timeliness of the Express Entry system for permanent residents, and to expand support under the Temporary Foreign Worker Program.

Timmins businesses should also be pleased to note the federal government's follow-through on its promise to not enact a tax on employer-sponsored health and dental benefits. Such a move could have led to as many as 50 percent of small businesses in Canada reducing coverage for their employees. Following vocal opposition by the Timmins Chamber and others within the chamber network, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau suggested in February that it would be omitted from the final 2017 budget -- a promise that has thankfully been kept, said Bender.

However, the federal budget also contains some items of concern for the Timmins Chamber. Positive news about Employment Insurance (EI) – unemployed workers will be able to seek training without losing benefits – was offset by the news that EI premiums are set to rise by 3 percent in 2018,

or \$1.68 per \$100 of insurable earnings. This is a frustration for small businesses who already face a range of regulatory challenges and escalating costs, said Bender.

The considerable deficit of \$28.6 billion is also an issue, with no apparent plans to return to balance; this poses some questions about the country's fiscal footing, and further fiscal complications this imbalance could eventually create.

"The measures to address some of our members' more pressing issues are to be commended, but there is arguably too little in the budget to address the rising costs that businesses continue to face," said Bender.

These frustrations were also shared by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, which was cautiously optimistic about the government's planned investments in infrastructure.

"While we welcome specific measures in the budget on skills and innovation, our international competitors are racing ahead," said the Hon. Perrin Beatty, President and CEO of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. "The U.S. election was a game-changer, yet the budget is written as if nothing has changed. As our number one trading partner rolls back regulation and cuts taxes, Canadian businesses face more regulation and increased costs imposed by all levels of government for fees, taxes and essential inputs like electricity."

News from the Chamber network



Northeastern Ontario to see small rebound in 2017: report

The economy of northeastern Ontario is projected to see a small rebound through 2018 despite ongoing challenges, according to the annual Ontario Economic Report (OER), issued by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce.

The OER suggests that a positive outlook for forestry, construction, transportation and accommodation sectors will help offset negative factors such as continued outmigration, staffing challenges, and rising energy rates.

As many manufacturing businesses across Ontario are operating in a risk-averse environment in which they are disinclined to grow production by investing or hiring. Manufacturers in the Northeast region, however, are tentatively anticipating a positive year despite these challenges, according to the OER.

This is reflected by the broader economic outlook data, which further reveals the unemployment rate in the Northeast economic region will continue to drop, from 7.2 percent in 2016 to a projected 6.7 percent in 2017. This is

the result of the rise in the labour force in the face of negative net migration, which is projected to be higher in the northeast than in any other economic region of Ontario.

Despite the growth in northeastern Ontario, Allan O'Dette, President and CEO of the OCC, explains, "Investment is being held back because of a high perception of risk. We need immediate action in order for our province to continue to grow and prosper."

See P3 for more information.

Ontario Chamber of Commerce and Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec join call to resolve Canada - US softwood lumber dispute

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) and Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec (FCCQ) have come together to urge Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to intervene in the Canada - US softwood lumber dispute to ensure that Canada is supported and given free access to the American market.

The letter, issued in early March, expresses concerns about the new, protectionist measures in the dispute and their fear that a lengthy dispute could jeopardize the competitiveness of Canadian businesses.

The OCC and FCCQ explain that the Canada - US softwood lumber dispute could result in Canadian companies being required to pay tariffs to sell their products in the US, putting their

financial situations at risk. Since the last lumber dispute (2001-2006), jobs in the forestry industry have decreased in Ontario and Quebec.

To address these concerns, the OCC and FCCQ asks the government to implement a loan guarantee program to mitigate the impacts of the lumber dispute. This would allot finances to companies affected by the dispute with the purpose of protecting thousands of jobs and the future of the forest industry in Canada.



Canadian Chamber makes recommendations to the government in regards to internet-based technology

Canada should develop a national broadband strategy and make it easier for businesses to grow online, according to a report by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce (CCC).

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce (CCC) has made nine recommendations to the government in regards to improving internet based technology for businesses.

Issued by the CCC in February, *Canadian Business Speaks Up: An Analysis of the Adoption of Internet-based Technology* recommends that the government develop and regularly review a

strategy to provide a roadmap for Canada's digital future, and make significant improvements to the current tax system in order for Canadian businesses, especially small businesses, to thrive in online markets.

The report found that Canada remains a world leader in broadband subscriptions, with most Canadian businesses conducting business online through a website. The survey specifies that 91 percent use the Internet for a variety of business purposes, and 48 percent of businesses use the Internet for ecommerce, with the use of social media platforms on the rise. The ability to acquire new customers, enhanced customer service, time savings and improved efficiency are found to be positive impacts of businesses being online.

The report also outlined some of the most common obstacles faced by Canadian businesses when adopting technology, including technical barriers, the costs related to software and hardware, and Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation. The report also found that Canada is behind when compared to other countries in terms of mobile broadband subscriptions, businesses engaged in sales via ecommerce and information and communication technology.

The CCC published this report as part of their commitment to continually engage the Canadian business network.

Canadian Chamber of Commerce proposes 10 ways to build a Canada that wins

Canada must take steps to regain its global competitiveness, including cutting the cost of doing business and assuring better access to capital for Indigenous entrepreneurs, according to the Canadian Chamber of Commerce (CCC).

These and other ways Canada can leverage its unique advantages are highlighted in *Ten Ways to Build a Canada that Wins*, a report outlining specific recommendations that the CCC will advocate for throughout 2017. This publication replaces the CCC's annual list of Top 10 Barriers to Canadian Competitiveness, which depicted self-inflicted wounds that prevent Canada's economy from thriving. This year, the CCC is instead choosing to focus on the opportunities Canada has as one of the world's richest markets.

"Canada can't sit still while our competitors run laps around us," said the Hon. Perrin Beatty, President and CEO of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, in a release.

"Our list outlines specific recommendations on what Canada can do better, and the opportunities to improve our economic success. We need every advantage, and the Canadian Chamber will work with government to put these new measures in place. If we take advantage of these opportunities, we'll give our businesses new tools to ensure their growth and success."

As one path to success, the CCC says that Canada must fight global protectionism as a trade-dependent nation. To build a lucrative business climate, Canada must leverage its critical resources and other products and services that its partner nations need, as trade partnerships are means of preserving peace and fostering cooperation, according to the report.

Another important strategy identified in the report is the need to upgrade Canada's regulatory system to get natural resources and other exports to world markets. The CCC argues that Canada's

regulations are inefficient as they have become cumbersome and politicized, making it difficult for businesses to expand into other markets. The publication presses for open, transparent, fact-based and efficient systems to increase responsiveness and participation in the market for a more dynamic economic culture that better serves Canada.

With small and medium-sized enterprises

(SMEs) making up 96 percent of Canada's businesses, the CCC report says it is crucial for Canada to also focus its efforts on growing small businesses. Statistics indicate that only 46 percent of small businesses are as productive as large firms, due to less money to spend on development, training, equipment and salaries. The report suggests that the solution to this issue is to help more SMEs to export, given that

only 3.6 percent of Canadian businesses export, despite the fact that businesses who do generate 121 percent more revenue.

Additionally, the CCC indicates that assuring better access to capital for Indigenous entrepreneurs will aid in maintaining a lucrative economy. The CCC states that self-determination and long-term economic prosperity will improve the quality of life for Indigenous communities, but that will require access to capital. In 2017 the CCC will continue to advocate for the government to fulfill its commitments in addressing quality of life issue for Indigenous people, as well as press for assistance in offering guaranteed business loans and insurance for Indigenous people to assure they can access capital that aligns with their needs.

As a country with high costs but strong competitive advantages - a highly skilled workforce, plentiful natural resources, and a growing number of entrepreneurs - Canada should reduce regulatory expenses in order to encourage investment. Some key issues are the introduction of a new federal income tax bracket, delayed small business tax rate reductions, and an increase in rates for Canada Pension Plan contributions. To mitigate these issues, the CCC will press the federal government to create incentives for business investment to add growth and a competitive edge to the economy.

"As we celebrate Canada's 150th anniversary, we can look back at the essential role business played in shaping our country," said Beatty in a release. "But as we look forward, it's clear we'll need every advantage to continue building a more prosperous country."

To view the full report, *Ten Ways to Build a Canada That Wins*, visit the CCC website at www.chamber.ca





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 - *Christine Savage, IMS Coordinator, Atlas Copco North Bay*

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 - *Marion Quigley, CEO, CMHA Sudbury/ Manitoulin*

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2017 Finalists

This is the complete list of finalists for the 2017 Nova Business Excellence Awards, which will be held May 11 at the McIntyre Arena (see P1 for more details):

BMT Insurance & Financial Services Business Contribution to the Community Award (1-5 Employees)

BioPed Footcare
Near North Video Productions
Tree Bandit

The Venture Centre Business Contribution to Community Award (6-10 Employees)

Albert's Sports & Work Wear Ltd.
Bermuda Tan
Northern Windows & Doors

NorthernTel Business Contribution to Community Award (11+ Employees)

Fountain Tire
St. Mary's Gardens
Vets Taxi & Dispatch Service Inc.

FNETB Best Place to Work Award

Family Eye Care
Gosselin Law Firm Professional Corporation
Great White North Technology Consulting Inc.

Collège Boréal Young Professional Award (Under 40)

Natisha McLeod, Beautiful Noise
Katelyn Malo, Black Spruce Gallery & Framing
Dr. Michael Popovic, Timmins Chiropractic Clinic

RBC Marketing Award

Bella Esthetics & Spa
O'Reilly Sports
Radical Gardens

PIC Productivity, Innovation & Diversification Award

Handy Hydrant
NORMAP
PAIB Insurance Inc.

Northern College Service Excellence Award

Chic Baby & Kids
Hampton Inn by Hilton Timmins
Lemongrass

Caisse Populaire de Timmins New Business Award (Under 2 years)

Get Ribbed Smokehouse & BBQ Pit
The Working Class
Z Timmins Inc.

TD Bank Group Business of the Year Award (1-5 Employees)

Quantum Realty Services Ltd.
Timmins Gracie Jiu-Jitsu and Muay Thai Academy
Workforce North

Scotiabank Business of the Year Award (6-10 Employees)

Emergency Response & Support Services
Rainville Health
Timmins Flower Shop Inc.

Kidd Operations Business of the Year Award (11+ Employees)

Attawapiskat Enterprises
DJB Mining Products & Services Ltd.
The Bucket Shop

De Beers Canada Indigenous Partnership Award

CreeQuest
Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund
NORCAT and Temiskaming Native Women's Support Group

City of Timmins Non-Profit Organization Award

Anti-Hunger Coalition Timmins
Northern College
Timmins Festivals and Events Committee

OPG Lifetime Business Achievement Award

John's Neon Signs Ltd.
Mascioli Construction Co. Ltd.
Timmins Garage Inc.

President's Award

To be announced at the Nova Awards on May 11

Proud Partners of the 15th Annual Nova Awards:





Timmins Chamber celebrates Nova Awards finalists

More than 45 local businesses and entrepreneurs were celebrated on March 7 as representatives of the Timmins Chamber of Commerce hand-delivered finalist notices for the 15th annual Nova Business Excellence Awards.

In honour of being named a finalist for the May 11 event, each finalist received a hand-painted sign as a memento of the occasion.

Set to take place at the McIntyre Arena, the Nova Awards will shine a spotlight on the best

of Timmins' business across 15 categories (see P1, P6 for more details). The theme for this year's gala evening will be "Where Business Fits Together," with puzzle pieces being used as a visual motif to show how Timmins organizations and entrepreneurs work together to make Timmins a better place to live, work and play.

Thank you to Eastlink for sponsoring the occasion.

Thanks also go out to the Timmins Chamber

Board members and numerous volunteers who donated their time and energy to help celebrate the Nova finalists. Representatives from the following businesses assisted in the delivery of the finalist notifications:

- Caisse Populaire de Timmins limitée
- Eastlink
- Holiday Inn Express & Suites Timmins
- Millson Forestry Service
- Near North Video Productions
- Northern College
- Northern College (Employment Options)
- NorthernTel
- RBC Royal Bank
- Riopelle Group Professional Corporation
- Scotiabank
- Smiles for Life Dental Hygiene Clinic
- Trimedia Consulting Inc.



For more photos of the 2017 Nova Award finalists, Visit us at facebook.com/TimmisChamber

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Member Milestones

If your business is celebrating a milestone between September 1, 2016 and August 30, 2017, let us know by sending an e-mail to policy@timminschamber.on.ca

Astrid's Bookkeeping Service: 20-year anniversary



Astrid Schmidt (center), owner of Astrid's Bookkeeping, receives her commemorative Member Milestone from Timmins Chamber Board members Nancy Mageau (left) and Natalie Levasseur (right)

Astrid's Bookkeeping Service celebrated its 20-year anniversary in February 2017. Owner Astrid Schmidt took a few moments recently to talk about their business.

Q: Provide a brief description of your business.

We do:

- Business bookkeeping, payroll, remittances
- Income taxes, e-filed for personal, business and corporate clients, as well as non-profit organizations
- Final and funeral returns
- German income tax returns
- Financial planning

- Business planning
- RRSP planning

Q: How many employees do you have?
2-3

Q: What factors have helped you to successfully reach this particular milestone?

Perseverance and a love for people and the business. Also, the determination to take on Revenue Canada and fight for my clients to get them fair tax assessments and HST claims.

Q: What has been your most memorable moment in business?

There is one every day, such as when I help clients who are frustrated with CRA, or whose lives have gotten in the way of filing their taxes and they realize that they are 10 years behind, and I can solve that problem within a few hours.

Or helping to make sense of a pile of papers, or a box or garbage bag full of receipts and turning that into an organized system that the client can use to get a mortgage or business loan or get clear of the tax man -- all because everything is filed and they don't have to go to jail or have their bank accounts frozen.

This is a very personal business, and that my clients trust me with their personal business is very rewarding.

Q: What's one interesting thing about your business that people might not be aware of?

Besides organizing people and businesses, I also match them. If I have businesses that are complimentary to each other, I suggest space

rental or partnerships, and I can encourage them to provide each other with services that they need, from carpenters and construction contractors, to hair stylists, to optometrists, corner stores, apartment rentals, motel rentals, tattoos, body piercing, aesthetics, day care, churches, counselling, tree surgeons, memorabilia, car repairs and snow removal.

I believe in shopping local, so if I see that one business can use the services of another one of my clients, I will be more than happy to refer them to each other.

Q: What is the biggest challenge you have overcome as a business to reach this milestone?

The constantly changing technology, tax rules and government demands.

Adaptability is also necessary, as all of my clients have different needs; the challenge is to tailor the bookkeeping to meet everybody's needs as well as government regulations.

Q: What has your experience doing business in Timmins been like thus far?

I love working in Timmins. As it's a small town, it is rewarding when you work with all the different generations of families as they refer my service to each other.

Timmins is also a multicultural city and as an immigrant living here since 1982, I am proud to provide my services to the many different people living here in Timmins.

I have also a lot of Timmins expats, as many of those who moved coast to coast to coast have

stayed loyal to my business. Everything can be handled with technology, e-mail and fax.

Many of my clients live in other Northern towns, especially residents of Kashechewan, who I meet with when they come to Timmins for medical appointments or on shopping trips.

Q: Describe how your business started, and how it's changed over the years.

I graduated from Northern College in May 1996. During a job interview, I was asked about my plans for the future, and I answered that I eventually wanted to have my own bookkeeping business and tax service; he then suggested that I should start that now. So I went back into the cornerstore I co-owned in Schumacher in 1990-1993, I set up a desk and computer, and did my tax season and bookkeeping there, while also managing my apartment buildings.

It was a flying start, and I managed all three businesses from one location.

Q: What can we expect from your business in the future? Are there any plans on the horizon you would like people to know about?

I will continue to work for my clients' best interests, as I love to streamline businesses and make them more efficient by saving money, doing payroll accurately; I also enjoy helping them to cut costs, banking fees, and interest expenses. I plan to continue provide friendly, efficient, personalized service.

Celebrating staff at Hard Rock Animal Hospital



Hard Rock Animal Hospital was named the winner of the Best Staff Team award on March 7, and was handed out by the Timmins Chamber of Commerce to celebrate Employee Appreciation Day. Selected by random draw, Hard Rock Animal Hospital received a certificate and \$250 gift card from any member of their choice. The award was presented by Melanie Verreault of Trimed Consulting Inc.

Learning about Facebook tools for business



As part of the Timmins Chamber's Social Media Series, Newbie Media Marketing & Design's Rosalia Rivera (center) and Liselle Sambury (left) helped to show local businesses how to boost sales, generate leads, and build customer loyalty through Facebook at a March 8 event. Also pictured: Laura Imhoff (right), ICT project coordinator with event sponsor NEOnet.

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