

# Someone to look up to

Searching for a mentor to advance your career?  
Your future role model might be right under your nose.

By Dawn Chafe

## I have some good news and some bad news.

But before we get to that, I want you to think for a moment on every negative comment you've ever heard about the "me" generation (or, as Joel Stein referred to them on a recent cover of *TIME* magazine, the "ME ME ME" generation). You know what I'm talking about ... the entitled princes and princesses of vainglorious selfie fame ... the lazed progeny of hovering helicopter parents ... the insatiably selfish lads and lasses who expect a well-paying job to simply land in their couch-loving laps, preferably on a silvered platter with an ample snack on the side (delivered in bite-sized pieces, no less). They, you've heard from countless sources, have no social skills outside their narrow smart-phoned worlds. Nor do they have any work ethic, ambition or sense of responsibility.

Now I want you to picture yourself balling all of those unseemly stereotypes into a tightly-wadded sphere and kicking it forcefully to the curb. Or better yet, douse it with something highly flammable, set it afire and watch it literally go up in smoke. Preferably accompanied by a humbly-hummed Kumbayah. Because, honestly, haven't you had enough of the pessimistic appraisals of today's youth? And, doesn't it tweak your own pride just a bit, knowing you're part of the village responsible for raising this supposedly narcissistic generation?

But here's the good news: today's youth are just as, if not more, driven, creative, entrepreneurial and idealistic as any of their predecessors – and the proof is readily apparent in the stories you'll find over the next few pages. The bad news? We, their predecessors, are just as judgemental and cantankerous and bitter as any generation before us. The young people are doing great; apparently, it's ourselves we need to worry about.

The following are excerpts from extended interviews.  
Get the full story online: [www.atlanticbusinessmagazine.com](http://www.atlanticbusinessmagazine.com)





Gorilla trekking while in Rwanda for the harvest of patchouli crops for The 7 Virtues next fragrance. The gorilla tours help conserve and protect them from poachers, with much of the funds from the tours going to fund schools and hospitals in the local village. (photo: Barb Stegemann/The 7 Virtues)

## Victor Stegemann (19)

**Hometown:** Halifax, N.S.

**Executive summary:** University student in a self-designed apprenticeship program, combining hands-on with online learning. The online learning is via Henson College at Dalhousie; the hands-on component is as the head of the E.U. office of The 7 Virtues. Founded by Victor's mother (Barb Stegemann), The 7 Virtues is a Canadian perfume manufacturer that buys essential oils from rebuilding nations like Afghanistan and Haiti.

**I visited a couple of universities** and looked into their business programs while I was in grade 12. None of them offered anything that I couldn't get from my mother. In fact, some of these schools were asking her if students could do co-op work with her. Why would I pay a school to work with my mother when I could work with her and get paid?

**In London,** I head up European distribution, so when any of our stores place an order, I handle it from start to finish. Support materials, testers, media packages, photos ... anything that's required I personally take care of it. I also go on trade missions and pitched and landed stores for our company in Berlin and Vienna. The Vienna store sold out and reordered the first week.

**The most challenging part** of my role is cold selling on the floor in our stores. Stopping strangers is hard. Everyone in our company has to sell on the floor and get to know the customer. Our CEO is on the floor long days in new markets and visits as many stores as possible. It keeps us informed, excited and approachable.

**I've been doing this since I was 18** (I only just turned 19 in March). A lot of the time, people who first meet me will just assume I'm older. It's always fun to watch the shock on their faces when they find out my actual age.

**My mother and I are a different team.** She will ask me if I've met my deadline and in the same breath will ask me if I ate my breakfast.

## Kaetlyn Osmond (18)

**Hometown:** Marystown, N.L.

**Executive summary:** a Canadian figure skating champion who has competed in 11 international competitions, including the 2014 Olympic winter games where she won a silver medal (team event) and the ISU World Figure Skating Championships (finished 11th overall).

**I train six days a week.** Five of the days consist of three hours of on-ice training and another hour of either strength training, pilates or ballet. My sixth day of training consists of just an hour on a bike to keep my legs moving on the weekends.

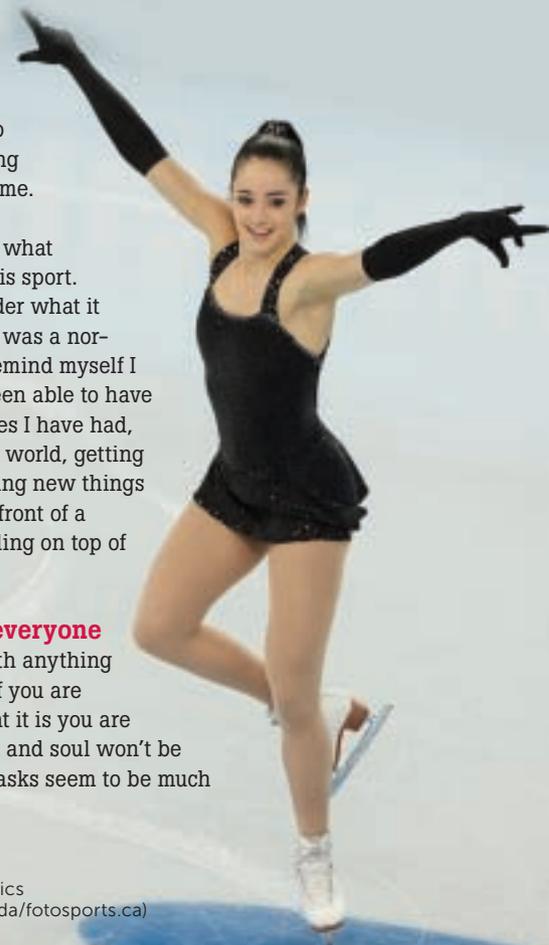
**My inspiration growing up** was my sister. She had such an amazing work ethic on the ice and she was always beautiful to watch.

**Figure skating became** my passion because of how happy it made me feel just to feel the ice beneath my feet and the cold against my cheeks. Even at a young age, I liked to perform, and that passion for performing still burns deep inside me.

**The biggest challenge** is making sure I am being the best that I can be at all times. Not just on the ice, but how I act and carry myself off the ice. There are a lot of people who look up to Olympians and I've met a lot of people who see me as a role model. I don't want to let these people down because it means so much to me having them supporting me.

**I never regret** what I have put into this sport. Whenever I wonder what it would be like if I was a normal teenager, I remind myself I wouldn't have been able to have all the experiences I have had, like traveling the world, getting the rush of learning new things or performing in front of a crowd, and standing on top of a podium.

**My advice to everyone** is to have fun with anything you want to do. If you are not enjoying what it is you are doing, your heart and soul won't be fully into it and tasks seem to be much harder.



2014 Winter Olympics  
(photo: Skate Canada/fotosports.ca)

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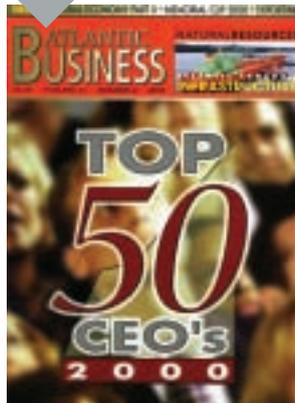
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*Atlantic Business Magazine* is officially Atlantic Canada's longest-publishing regional magazine and we're celebrating with a trivia contest. There'll be a different contest in each of our six issues this year, each with its own fabulous prize. Correctly answer the following questions for your chance to win this issue's prize (above).

Draw date  
June 9, 2014

Since our Top 50 CEOs are always listed in alphabetical order, it should come as no surprise that the name of our final award winner in 2000 starts with a 'Z'. What's his full name? (Hint: he's a Hall of Fame inductee)

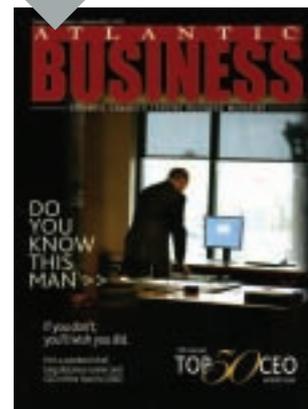


In 2010, we inducted a record number of CEOs into *Atlantic Business Magazine's* Top 50 CEO Hall of Fame. How many inductees did we have that year?



In 2005, we announced the formation of the Top 50 CEO Hall of Fame. How many times does a CEO have to be named one of the Top 50 before she or he can be inducted?

Pierre-Yves Julien of Medavie was named *Atlantic Business Magazine's* CEO of the Year for the entire region in 2007. In what province is Medavie headquartered?



Entry form (and answer hints)  
at [atlanticbusinessmagazine.com](http://atlanticbusinessmagazine.com)



## Jordan Hipson (19)

**Hometown:** Halifax, N.S.

**Executive summary:** a proud homemaker who has turned an early childhood fascination with being organized and creating beautiful surroundings into a career. Jordan is a multi-media personality with a weekly radio show, TV show, quarterly print magazine and expansive online presence (jordanhipson.com).

**At 13, I first** came across the television show *Martha* – a lifestyle series featuring celebrities, comedy, fun and most importantly homemaking advice. Up to this point, I never saw the fun in chores. Stewart not only opened my eyes to the world of homemaking and its many facets, she presented the information in a way that had me hooked.

**Immediately out of high school,** I began Jordan Hipson Omnimedia. In my first year of business, things were growing at a pace that worried both my mother Pam and father Scott. Like many new businesses, JHO was not an overnight success. They continued to support me, and are now extremely proud of what I have achieved. While university is an excellent option that many should not miss, I knew that at 18 it was just not for me. Without the support of my mother and father, my incredible partner Ryan, adorable little sister Brooklyn, and fantastic step-parents Wes and Sarah, none of this could have been my reality.

**My most embarrassing moment** was during a live-taping of my television show in front of an audience. During a segment break, I left my lapel microphone on. The whole break I spent doing breathing exercises ... because I was so nervous about the entire event. When I came back I realized everyone could hear me on the P.A. the entire time!

**The biggest mistake** I made was attempting to do everything as a new-business owner. Like many, I thought I could do everything from accounting to the actual work of the business. I received a great piece of advice stating stick to what you're good at, and let someone else handle the rest. I now know that if you are starting a business, it is paramount to work the financial details of outsourcing your weaknesses to someone else to ensure you do not make any mistakes, or fall behind.

## Habiba Cooper Diallo (18)

**Hometown:** Halifax, N.S.

**Executive summary:** Bilingual high school student (English and French); volunteer; founder and executive director of Womens' Health Organization International (non-governmental organization dedicated to empowering women in Africa and the African Diaspora via improved health care and the dissemination of health education); one of Canada's Top 20 Under 20 youth leaders.

**When I was 12,** I read the story of Anafghat Ayouba – the young woman who inspired me to start obstetric fistula awareness and to subsequently establish WHOI. That's when I realized that obstetrics is my passion.

**One of my biggest challenges** starting WHOI was the process of obtaining legal status. I drafted a set of by-laws that all had to be approved by the registry. I then began to design a logo. Next, I wrote out the acronym for the organization so it could be part of the logo. Finally, I collaborated with a friend of mine from Toronto who's a designer and visual artist. I sent him the sketch and he drew the final image of the woman and the baby currently on the logo. Emotionally, I was coming to terms with my Dad's death. He was one of my best friends and a number one fan of everything I did. His death made me look deep within myself and draw upon my inner confidence, which gave me the strength to continue my efforts.

**My mother is my biggest inspiration.** She is a very experienced and educated woman, holding a PhD in Black Canadian Studies and African History. In addition to her, all the other women in my community – my big sister, my aunties, my young female cousins – also inspire me. These women have been through the fire, and have managed to come out on top.

**In 10 years' time,** I see myself just about finished my medical education including gynaecology and obstetrics, and married with two kids. By then, I plan for WHOI to be more established with a greater financial capacity for programming and awareness building.

### Am I a typical teenager?

I honestly don't know. I guess that's left up to interpretation, but I do know that I'm not like everyone else, and everyone else is not like me. We all have a particular spot on the spectrum.

Passionate advocate for women's health (photo courtesy: Habiba Cooper Diallo)



## Alex Gillis (15)

**Hometown:** Halifax, N.S.

**Executive summary:** High school student with a passion for sailing, soccer, downhill skiing, photography, technology and computer programming. Alex is the co-founder of Microcent.org (a micro donation and content discovery platform) and Frame (a service similar to NetFlix that offers stock photography instead of video or television).

**My greatest teacher is my mom.** She's a medical geneticist at the IWK hospital and teaches at the Dalhousie medical school. She's a single mom who has done it all on her own, going through graduate school and medicine while raising me. I hope to follow in her footsteps as a strong independent individual who strives to make the world a better place through assisting others.

**I've been programming since age nine.** I started with visual basic through online forums and then became very passionate about web technologies and started to become fluent in both frontend and server-side languages by the time I was in grade six.

**I subscribe to the** 1,000-100-10-1 rule of thumb for entrepreneurship. At any given time, about 1,000 people around the world will have the same idea, 100 people will

start exploring the idea further, 10 people will actually go ahead and build something and in the end one will succeed. With this in mind and the capacity to dare to fail, anything is possible.

**The mission** of MicroCent is to make the web a better place by keeping the web open and free. You simply purchase a monthly subscription and continue to browse the web. At the end of every month, MicroCent tallies up which articles and posts you've read and rewards the writers and content creators based on how much of their content you've read. The best part is you also get to reward the charity of your choice every month by requesting a percentage of your subscription be passed on to them.

**In the next 10 years,** I hope to have launched a successful start-up and to be a mentor for aspiring young entrepreneurs. Ultimately I would like to build connections to Silicon Valley but maintain my strong ties here in Atlantic Canada.

Wearing his Fountain Academy school colours (photo: Barb Martell/Sacred Heart School of Halifax)



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## Nathan Whalen (20)

**Hometown:** St. John's, N.L.

**Executive summary:** University student (Bachelor of Business Administration, MUN); financial services representative and investment consultant, TD Bank Group; owner and manager of business development, The Lifesaving Team Inc. (a first aid and water safety training company); and, volunteer president of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils (the youngest person to ever hold this position).

### Leadership requires sacrifice

and I certainly make sacrifices in my life in order to allow me to be an involved entrepreneur, banker, and volunteer. I believe that as long as you understand both your limits and your motivation for doing what you do, you can be successful. Also, working in teams certainly is helpful. Often, we are reluctant to ask for help when we need it or we're afraid to share our successes and projects with others.

### I first started working with TD

because as a TD Scholarships for Community Leadership recipient, they provide four years of summer employment; however, after the first summer, I was hired permanently. ...I really enjoy banking and the ability to help people with their financial well-being and to be honest, their corporate culture is extraordinary – I can see a serious long-term future at the bank.

Feedback: [dchafe@atlanticbusinessmagazine.com](mailto:dchafe@atlanticbusinessmagazine.com); @AtlanticBus; @ABM\_Editor; #YoungRoleModels

**The question** I get asked the most often is why I work for TD when I have my own business. The answer is complex, but it is mainly because as a new business, (co-owner) Cody Dunne and I decided to invest our money in growing the company, which means investing less in delivering immediate financial return for us.

### Coming from a single-parent-low-income household,

I will be the first person on my mom's side of the family to obtain a post-secondary degree. For me, a degree means more than a piece of paper and letters after my name. It means a sense of pride and the ability to put food on the table – because frankly, as a child I knew what it felt like to worry about whether or not there was food to eat. I want my mom and my sister and my own kids (eventually) to not have those worries.



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