

Head of the class

Newfoundland business students take on the world's best and win



Memorial University's business students have done it again.

Four students of the school's Master of Business Administration program took home the Concordia Cup in the John Molson MBA International Case Competition held in Montreal recently. The quartet beat out 36 teams from 18 countries to claim the competition's top prize. The win marked the fifth time the St. John's-based university has won the award, more than any other school in the world. It previously won the Concordia Cup in 1988, 1990, 1991 and 1996.

Nick Lane, who was part of the Memorial team along with Kate Boland, Stephanie Daley and Greg Piercey, says winning the competition was a proud moment for him and the team. "We put a lot of time and effort into it," Lane says. "It's one of the proudest moments of my life."

The competition challenges MBA students from some of the world's top business schools to solve business cases. Schools are pitted against each other in a round robin format. Teams are given a case that includes the details of a business problem that has happened in the marketplace. The squads then have three hours to review the case and work out a set of recommendations that provide direction for how the company can solve the problem. Each team then presents its recommendations to a panel of judges and a winner is chosen. The Memorial team defeated the University of Calgary and Queensland University of Technology from Australia in the final to win the Concordia Cup. It also took home \$10,000 for its efforts.

Lane already works for Deloitte in St. John's, so there is no need to use the win to provide a boost in a job search. However, the victory will benefit his career and that of his teammates. "A lot of us took this on to see how far we could push ourselves," he says. "But I'd be lying if I said it wasn't a little bit of a confidence builder. It helped us realize we have potential we may not have reached yet."

HOT STREAK

Memorial University's Faculty of Business Administration has made a habit of winning regional, national and international competitions. Here is a roundup of some of the hardware the school and its students have garnered in recent years.

2016

Memorial's team wins the **Tim Horton's Cup** and is crowned champion of the **Enactus Canada National Exposition**. Enactus is an international student-run volunteer group that gets university and college students to develop programs that improve the quality of life and standard of living of people in need.

2015

Commerce student Emily Bland wins the **HSBC Women Leader of Tomorrow award** for Atlantic Canada for her community volunteer involvement and work with Enactus. Meanwhile, Enactus Canada chose Memorial commerce student Jon King as its **Student Leader of the Year**, and business administration student Courtney Clarke won its **Gwyn Morgan Bursary for Principled Leadership**.

2014

A team of Memorial MBA students capture the **G20 Global Business Challenge** and the \$100,000 prize. The Challenge asked six teams from schools around the globe to develop an innovative solution to use, recycle and/or manage water to achieve large-scale impact.



On a mission

Can Women for 50% make New Brunswick provincial politics more female friendly?

If some leaders in New Brunswick get their way, the provincial legislature will have a vastly different gender makeup in 2018.

Women for 50% was launched this past January. As its name suggests, the group's goal is to have women make up 50 per cent of the candidates in the 2018 provincial election and move towards female parity in its legislature. It has its work cut out for it. Women currently make up just 16 per cent of the MLAs in the New Brunswick legislature. Robyn Quigley, one of the group's founding members and president of GlassSKY Inc. in Saint John, says it's important more women in New Brunswick run for political office and win. "Studies show diversity makes us work harder and think more creatively. With a more diverse legislature, it

can't help but produce better outcomes," she says. Quigley says Women for 50% has received positive responses to its cause from all the party leaders and other interested sectors. She hopes the awareness the group creates will convince more women to run.

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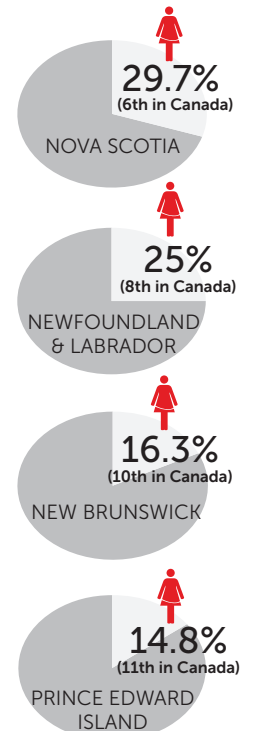
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If the group can make progress on gender equity in the New Brunswick legislature, Quigley thinks it could seep into other areas, like the business world where women are often paid less than men for similar work and don't occupy as many leadership roles. "Any time you have women occupying leadership roles in traditionally male-dominated spheres, it can provide other women with the idea that they can do that, too," she says.

PARITY?

WHAT PARITY?

Among the 13 provinces and territories, no province in Atlantic Canada ranks higher than sixth in the country when it comes to the percentage of women it has in the legislature.



Island of opportunity

P.E.I. set up for economic success, but threats could stunt growth

Aging populations, high taxes and economies dependent on commodity prices are some of the threats to Atlantic Canada's fiscal future. A recent report issued by the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council says that, of the four Atlantic provinces, P.E.I. might be in the best shape to fight off those threats.

"P.E.I. is not suddenly going to be Hong Kong," says APEC's president and CEO Finn Poschmann (right). "But there is a positive economic future there if it's managed well."

According to APEC, the key metrics in the gentle island's favour are a growing population that will be the youngest among the four Atlantic provinces, a government on the path to balancing the budget, and an

economy with a number of businesses thriving in the light industries and technology sectors.

However, there are some dark clouds messing with P.E.I.'s sunny economic forecast. The island is tied with another Atlantic province (Nova Scotia) for having the highest corporate tax rates in Canada, which could dissuade some businesses from moving to P.E.I. and current ones from expanding. In addition, its tiny population (approximately 145,000) makes it expensive to deliver all the programs and services expected of a province. And its important agricultural sector is facing succession issues as many farm owners near retirement age.

Those threats could stymie the island's path to fiscal security. But Poschmann says if solutions are found, such as for the farm succession problem, the province will be stronger for it. "That issue is going to change what small communities look like there. But there are always opportunities when smart people tackle these things," he says.



When change isn't good

How employers can head off a tsunami of sick leave when change erupts at the office



Note to employers: if you're undergoing any sort of change at your company, expect to deal with a lot of sick leave requests.

A Morneau Shepell survey of employers and employees across Canada found that nearly half (49 per cent) of survey respondents in Atlantic Canada have taken time off of work and/or noticed other employees taking time off follow-

ing workplace changes. That result was higher than the national average of 46 per cent.

Greg Caines, a health and benefits expert at Morneau Shepell's Halifax office, says workplace change can take a number of forms, including office renovations, job re-design, sale of the business and more. Caines says the survey shows how much workplace change can stress employees and cause them to miss work.

What can employers do to alleviate the problem? Caines says providing managers with better training on how to guide employees through change is important. Communication and providing regular updates on any workplace change can also help make employees feel more at ease during a time of transition. "Without that communication, employees are left wondering and drawing their own conclusions," Caines says. "You've got to consistently explain the reasons why the change is happening and the positive things you hope to accomplish."

MIND GAMES

What did Morneau Shepell's survey reveal about the mental well-being of Atlantic Canada's workforce?

32% of employee respondents said workplace change negatively impacted their health and well-being. (National average: 40%)

29% of employee respondents said workplace change said it negatively impacted their job performance. (National average: 30%)

37% of employee respondents indicated they suffer or have suffered from depression.

28% of employee respondents indicated they suffer or have suffered from anxiety.

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