

MARCH 2017

## Mental Health Event Motivates and Educates



**Mi'kmaq elder Bill Lewis.**

ON FEB. 23, almost 100 people gathered at Pier 21 for a leadership development day centred on recovery-oriented practice. Recovery Regional Event Nova Scotia: Building Leadership, was a joint initiative between the NSCDA and the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC).

The day-long event opened with a few words from Mi'kmaq elder Bill Lewis, who praised the project saying, "...it puts people who go through this (mental health challenges) in charge of their own treatment and to me, that's a monstrous step." He added that he's been both a "customer" and a counselor when it comes to treatment.

Mental health advocate Laura Burke gave a passionate and insightful talk about changes in her life after being diagnosed with schizophrenia more than a decade ago. Burke now works

as a peer support advocate, using her experiences and journey to recovery helping others.

### Mental Health Champions

As part of the NSCDA's commitment to improving services and support in the area of mental health, 33 staff members from Nova Scotia Works' offices have been identified as Mental Health Champions within their centres.

The NSCDA is embarking on an ambitious initiative to engage these Champions in developing education and training opportunities on mental health recovery-oriented practices, and has partnered with mental health consultant and co-author of the MHCC's *Guidelines for Recovery-Oriented Practice*, Neasa Martin to develop a comprehensive training program.

The objective is for every career service worker to have the knowledge and skills necessary to support clients in achieving their goals. These volunteer Champions will also seek ways to engage community partners to strengthen employment, social inclusion, and improved access to mental health and recovery supporting services. *Continued on next page...*

### IN THIS ISSUE

Mental Health Event	... page 1
Certification Update	... page 3
Training and Dev. Update	... page 4
Conference News	... page 4

### Did you hear?

- The NSCDA has improved the current phone system. Callers now only have to dial one number to be transferred to the party they'd like to reach: 902-832-0334. Direct numbers still work as usual.
- There's a new certification page online with our most popular documents and infographics at <http://www2.nscda.ca/index.php/certification2>
- The conference website is live: <http://conference2017.nscda.ca/>
- We now have a French version of the NSCDA logo and have had our brochure translated into French.

... continued from previous page.

To meet this challenge and ensure the ongoing success of the project, the NSCDA is also joining forces with the MHCC to begin breaking through the barriers preventing career developers from recognizing their roles as important assets in recovery-oriented practice, and mental health.

During her presentation at the event, Neasa Martin described the 33 Mental Health Champions as "... all passionate and committed." She also stressed that, "Employment and education are critical pathways to recovery."

The Honourable Kelly Regan, Minister of Labour and Advanced Education, also gave a brief address to participants, describ-

**"I came back to the office and immediately started looking at ways to change things and implement new strategies to help clients and staff. The event motivated me to be a better person and a better employee."**

— Elizabeth Fitzner

ing her own heartache in dealing with a family member who had mental health issues. "Some people would say that the stigma is worse than the illness," she said, a remark that was met with many audience members nodding their heads in agreement. Regan also said that the initiative between the NSCDA and the MHCC is "an important partnership."

Elizabeth Fitzner, Workshop Facilitator with TEAM Work Cooperative who attended both the recovery-oriented practice event and a second day of Mental Health Champions' training on Feb. 24, says, "I came back to the office and immediately started looking at ways to change things and implement new strategies to help clients and staff. The event motivated me to be a better person and a better employee." □



Laura Mulally (left), Program Coordinator, Prevention and Promotion, Recovery Initiatives with the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC), along with the Honourable Kelly Regan (centre), Minister of Labour and Advanced Education, and Bonita Varga (right), Knowledge Broker with the MHCC, attended the Recovery Regional Event Nova Scotia: Building Leadership, on Feb. 23 at Pier 21.



NSCDA Training Development Coordinator, Pam Tracz (far right) and some of the 33 staff members from Nova Scotia Works' offices who have been identified as Mental Health Champions, took time to pose for a photo on after receiving their certificates on Feb. 24 in Halifax.



## Certification Update

Phil Ward, Registrar



THE LAST FEW MONTHS have been busy at the NSCDA. The team has been working hard behind the scenes to make the certification process run as smoothly as possible for candidates.

### New Certification Page on Website

You might have noticed that Certification now has its own designated page on the NSCDA website. This is an alternative to the familiar dropdown box at the top, which will remain to give users a choice. The new page includes “Quick Links” to forms and files that are frequently used, and our popular infographics for Steps to Certification; Career Pathways to Certification; and the Core Competency Chart. You can reach it by clicking on the big blue Certification box on the front page, or go directly to: <http://www2.nscda.ca/index.php/certification2>

### Exams, CCDPs, and Candidates

In February, 14 people wrote the certification exam at four different locations. Since exams are no longer marked electronically, it takes a bit longer to send people their final scores. The time it takes to do the scoring depends on how many exams we have, but you can typically expect your mark within three to five business days of writing the exam.

There are three more exam dates scheduled for May 23, Aug. 22, and Nov. 21.

To date, 141 candidates have completed the certification process and can use the Certified Career Development Practitioner (CCDP) designation. There are another 85 working their way through the process, which takes about three to six months to complete.

An additional 17 candidates are working on their certification through the Career Pathways to Certification

Program. The Career Pathways Program is for those who do not have the prerequisite 5400 hours of employment in the career development field within the last five years.

### Exam Prep Webinars

To help candidates do their best, we’ve organized exam prep webinars before each date. Success strategies, test anxiety, and methods of coping with test anxiety are all discussed during these sessions and participants are given the opportunity to ask questions. The dates for these, and all events, can be found on the NSCDA training calendar at [www.NSCDA.ca](http://www.NSCDA.ca).

### New Certification Webinar

We are also developing a webinar focusing on the certification program, which will include information about how the process works, the steps to certification, and the Career Pathways’ option. We plan to have this available in late March. It will be on the NSCDA training calendar when available.

### Improved Procedures

There are ongoing efforts to improve and optimize all areas of the certification process. Aside from the new dedicated page on the website, we’ve managed to greatly reduce processing times internally. We’ve also taken steps to improve communication with candidates throughout their certification journeys and have added new automated telephone system that should make reaching NSCDA staff easier and more efficient.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at 902-835-0315 or email me at [registrar@nscda.ca](mailto:registrar@nscda.ca). You can also contact our Administrative Coordinator Chantelle Marshall at 902-835-0316 or email her at [cmarshall@nscda.ca](mailto:cmarshall@nscda.ca). □



## Training and Professional Development Update



Pam Tracz,  
Training Development Coordinator

NSCDA STAFF HAVE been working hard over the past few months to bring timely and relevant events to NSCDA members. Margo Lett facilitated several popular sessions on intercultural engagement and other topics, and we're looking forward to more from her in the future. Keith Gelhorn lead two workshops on ADD in the workplace in Antigonish and Kentville, which received high praise from participants.

We're currently working on sessions to be offered this spring covering change and transition, case management, compassion fatigue and more!

On Feb. 24, a day-long training event was held in Halifax for the 33 Mental Health Champions from Nova Scotia Works' centres. Mental health consultant Neasa Martin,

and I co-facilitated the training. Martin co-wrote the Mental Health Commission of Canada's *Guidelines for Recovery-Oriented Practice* to support people with mental health issues.

Our Mental Health Champions will work in centres across the province to advocate for recovery-oriented practice, act as resource guides, and help to map out community resources to support mental health in their area. They'll share this information through networks, discussion boards and of course through person to person contact.

NSCDA is very excited to be leading this project and creating more supports for everyone in the Nova Scotia Works' centres. □

## 19th Annual Conference

THE NSCDA'S 19TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE is still a few months away, but work is already well in progress. The conference is being held at the beautiful Inverary Resort on Baddeck Bay. The keynote address will be presented by Aboriginal Speaker Candy Palmater. Palmater is a well-known motivational, educational, and inspirational speaker who believes in healing with laughter. The NSCDA is equally as fortunate to have booked Jennifer Moss as closing speaker. Moss is an expert on science-based workplace happiness and is Canadian Business "Innovator of the Year," 2016. For conference news and updates, visit <http://conference2017.nscda.ca/>

### Call for Presenters

The NSCDA welcomes presentation proposals for the conference until Friday, April 7. This year's theme, Forging New Directions, focuses on finding fresh perspectives to create new paths that will help us reach our shared goals. The general presentation streams are: Diversity & Inclusion Career Development Skills and Self-Management Skills. □

NSCDA 19TH  
ANNUAL CONFERENCE

**Forging  
New  
Directions**



June 7-9, 2017 Baddeck Bay, Cape Breton, NS