

# Entrepreneurial Exchange

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Acadia Centre for  
Social & Business  
Entrepreneurship

ACSBE

## President's Award for Entrepreneurship

*Recipient celebrates 35 years and counting as an Entrepreneurial Leader*

With a tireless, life-long pursuit for new opportunities and a refusal to allow minor obstacles to impede her vision for the future, it's no surprise that Shae Griffith plans to remain active in the community, even after she reaches the age of her mother, who at close to 90 is still hard to keep up with, concedes Ms Griffith.

But what was a surprise, at least to Ms Griffith, was being honoured with the Acadia University President's Award for Entrepreneurship.

"I was absolutely shocked," she says from the restored 1886 farmhouse that she and her husband, Richard, transformed into the Century Farm Inn Bed and Breakfast. "I didn't expect to win the award, and I was so surprised. It is very nice to be acknowledged."

The Acadia University President's Award for Entrepreneurship recognizes an individual, individuals and/or organization that demonstrate exemplary entrepreneurial leadership in the context embodied in the Acadia definition and tradition.

Each year a recipient is chosen for their leadership in the areas of business, social, or community entrepreneurship as well as for promoting entrepreneurial education and development.

"My selection for this award validates that 'grass roots' citizens, such as I am, can be catalysts for economic development and social change by working co-operatively



*Shae Griffith, recipient of the 2009 Acadia University President's Award for Entrepreneurship.*

with individuals, community organizations, private enterprise, public sector and educational institutions," says Ms Griffith.

"For more than 35 years my entrepreneurial and leadership skills have been used to provide opportunities for

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*Lisa Lowthers, left, and Paul Richards, far right, worked with a group from the GAMA Learning Institute in St. Lucia.*

## ACSBE Launches Caribbean Partnership

What can be accomplished in a week?

A week is long enough to negotiate and sign an entrepreneurship training contract. It's long enough for ACSBE to customize a training program for use in the Caribbean. And finally, it's long enough to deliver youth training and make new friends and lasting business alliances.

In mid-June ACSBE's Paul Richards was contacted by Gilbert Jean-Francois of the GAMA Learning Institute in Castries, St. Lucia. Gilbert was looking for a reputable organization to run a "train the trainer" program for Youth Entrepreneurship.

Gilbert envisioned a three-week summer camp for youth aged 14-18, and a more advanced evening program for youth aged 18-30. He hoped for delivery in St. Lucia through his institute and in Antigua through the Belmont School of Business run friend and colleague.

"In these hard economic times," says Paul, "entrepreneurship is seen as a vehicle to establish growth in an economy. This is not only the case in this part of

the world but also in places like the Caribbean where it can be used as a stimulus to create jobs, wealth and prosperity."

A week later - with Paul Richards leading the training for the older youth in one classroom and Lisa Lowthers leading the program for the younger crowd in another - ACSBE delivered two complete

programs in just two-days.

"We couldn't have asked for a better reception or more enthusiastic learners", said Richards. "We are happy to announce that we will be returning in the fall to begin delivery of our small business counsellor certification program."

### Did you know ...

ACSBE offers a wide variety of customized workshops and training to organizations and businesses such as:

**WHMIS**  
**TRUE COLOURS**  
**Personality Dimensions**

Also, talk to us about programs for Business Development Professionals including: Financial Analysis, Strategic Planning, and International Trade

Contact Bob Racine  
(902) 585-1180  
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# The Essential Skill That Starts with an **E**

You may have heard about a concept called Essential Skills – the skills needed for work, learning and life.

They are the foundational skills we expect the education system will teach our children – reading, numeracy, writing, communication, working with others, and technological skills.

Without these essential skills, we know how hard it can be to function in society and how one's personal development can be hindered when these skills don't exist. Clearly essential skills are much-needed skills. But

if we were to stop there, the development of our youth and society would still fall terribly short.

That's why we need the essential skill that starts with an E – entrepreneurial skills.

Knowing how to make informed decisions can make a world of difference to an individual's life. Coupling this ability with entrepreneurial characteristics – creativity, focus, motivation, innovation, tenacity, with a propensity for change – our youth then have a powerful 'life skill set' that shouldn't

be underestimated, or worse yet, dismissed as something that can't be developed.

Most would agree that we need to develop entrepreneurial skills in our youth but there are few who can pay for the programming that is needed in our education systems. Involvement and financial support of like-minded partners is necessary to make the integration of entrepreneurial education a reality.

As a non-profit organization in our 20th year, it is our mission to expose youth to entrepreneurial skills through hands-on experience and learning, and we have become skilled at maximizing the return on our current supporters' investments in entrepreneurial education.

Providing entrepreneurial education at Acadia University and taking on a leadership role in the development of an entrepreneurial pathway in Nova Scotia and beyond requires resources of a minimum of \$350,000 annually. We need the help of others who support this vision to make it a reality.

If you are able to get involved and support entrepreneurial education through volunteering or financial support or would like to know more about our entrepreneurial education initiatives, we would be pleased to speak to you. Please contact Amie Haughn at 902.543.7244 or [amie.haughn@acadiau.ca](mailto:amie.haughn@acadiau.ca).

## Student Life: What ACSBE Means to me

By Linda Goslin

The first time I ever heard of ACSBE was through a student presentation made to my Sociology class in my first year here at Acadia. The student was helping ACSBE promote the Acadia Challenges and the philosophy that entrepreneurship is more than a business idea; it's a passion.

A few months later I found myself wondering into ACSBE to find Lisa Lowthers, coordinator of the Acadia Challenges that year. I had some fairly crazy ideas and it was comforting to have someone criticize and critique my ideas in a fair and kind way.

The following year there was an email sent out trying to find individuals to help promote the challenge. I'm not a very good public speaker, but I remembered how inspired I was following the presentation the year before. So I decided to offer my assistance.

I was also determined to enter this year and stick to my decision. I decided to enter the Wes Nicol Business Plan Competition.

I managed to pull off first place at Acadia and then was chosen to represent Acadia in Ottawa. Winning the competition wasn't the prize for me, it was having other individuals see my idea the way I saw it and believing in it.



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# President's Award...

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the public to tackle economic, social and environmental issues.”

Ms Griffith cites her early family and school experiences as key contributors to her development as a creative, visionary and successful entrepreneur.

“I am the eldest of four children,” she explains. “My youngest brother was critically ill for the first year of his life, so I had the opportunity to handle things at a very young age because my mother was very busy with him.”

She learned as a young girl how to mobilize a team in the form of her siblings; to be positive in her outlook; and to project with confidence, that she could do anything she wanted to do.

“I am a team builder; so within my business, family, community and social context, I figured out what I had to do to get the team organized. It is the same in business.”

She recalls her first entrepreneurial endeavour with pride, a young newspaper carrier with the Star Weekly in Saskatoon. It is experiences such as this that shaped her into the successful owner of four businesses, and the trail-blazing community and environmental activist that she is today.

Moving to Nova Scotia on a military transfer in 1971 from Comox, BC, Ms. Griffith and her husband initially settled in Halifax, and then in the Annapolis Valley, developing their first business

venture in 1976 with the 110-acre Fairfield Farm.

In 1982 they opened R&S Leasing Ltd., a vehicle rental enterprise; in 1991 the Fairfield/Century Farm Inn; and in 1993 the Greenwood Irving Service Station.

While husband Richard was deployed all over the world with the Canadian military, Shae was successfully growing their various businesses and serving on many community development boards. She was the founding President of the Clean Annapolis River Project and a founding Director of the first local development agency in the Province. “Things were pretty energetic in the late ‘80s, and I was fortunate to be at the centre of a broad range of local, regional and provincial development initiatives.

The Acadia Centre for Small Business and Entrepreneurship (ACSBE) was originally formed as a part of a consortium of four Atlantic Canada Universities known as the Atlantic Entrepreneurial Institute. I was on the founding Board of ACSBE starting in 1988 and served as the first non-academic Chairperson until 1996... ACSBE will always have a special place in my heart and it is extremely gratifying for me that what started as a small enterprise has grown to international stature.”

This year's award was handed out at Acadia University's 2009 Spring Convocation, which also marked the 125th year anniversary of the first female graduate of the institution.

## Announcement



ACSBE is pleased to announce that Shawn Patterson is our newest team member and has accepted the position of Employment Counsellor at our Hubbards location – ACSBE Job Depot.

## Student Life...

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It was at the awards ceremony at Acadia that I met Ron Robichaud, the Managing Director of ACSBE, who offered me the summer co-op position with ACSBE.

I look forward to my third year in Business at Acadia. I will be working hard on finding research for my thesis, conducting tasks as VP Administrator for SIFE, operating my business, and of course dropping by ACSBE to get my dose of creative thinking.

The Acadia Centre for Social and Business Entrepreneurship is proud to be an affiliate of



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**ACSBE**

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