

# **TECHSPLORATION<sup>®</sup>**

## *2021 COMMUNITY REPORT*





# Message From Our President

Sherry Donovan

On behalf of Techsploration's Board of Directors, I am pleased to introduce our 2021 Community Report! Despite the challenges COVID-19 presented during our 2020-2021 program year, we successfully delivered online programming in Nova Scotia...and Ontario! That's right, the Techsploration Team not only redeveloped and transitioned our traditional program model to an online delivery format, they also implemented programming in Ontario for the first time ever as part of our National Expansion Pilot.

An initiative funded by Employment and Social Development Canada, the National Expansion Pilot was completed following our June 3rd Techsploration Career Quest. With significant support and guidance from Uneath Education Éveillé, our Ontario Program Delivery Partner, as well as Mohawk College, Shopify, and PCL Construction, the pilot was a success and will see us continue programming in Ontario into 2022.

In addition to implementing and completing our National Expansion Pilot project, Techsploration is continuing to recruit alumnae to participate in the

second cohort of our Online Alumnae Mentorship Program. This initiative was first launched as part of the National Expansion Pilot and provides further mentorship to our alumnae 18 and over to help them navigate post-secondary studies or a career in science, engineering, trades, or technology.

Over the past year, we also expanded our popular Power in Possibilities Series with the launch of a new video featuring Bethany Locke, a Powerline Technician Apprentice with Techsploration Partner, Nova Scotia Power. New videos will continue to be launched in 2021 and into 2022 – stay tuned for the launch of next video featuring Gina Bak, a Mobile Developer with Techsploration Partner, Shopify.

It's also been a year of new and strengthened partnerships, including:

- A strengthened partnership with Shopify, who became our newest Eureka Level Partner and provided us with one of the largest annual private sector investments in our program to date
- The development of a new “Set for Safety” campaign with Construction Safety Nova Scotia – stay tuned for details!

- A PEI Expansion Pilot in partnership with the PEI Business Women's Association (PEIBWA) and ACOA, which will see two PEI schools participate in our Nova Scotia programming

- Techsploration Goes Virtual, a new augmented reality worksite series hosted in partnership with Mohawk College

I know we'll continue to face challenges as we adapt again to a hybrid model, both in-person and online programming, but with the continued support of our incredible community of industry and education partners, teachers, alumnae, role models, and volunteers, we are ready for 2022!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Founding Program Partners, the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency and the Nova Scotia Community College, and all Techsploration sponsor and partner organizations. We are grateful for your continued commitment to our organization.

Thank you!



# About Techsploration

Our award-winning hands-on, mentor-led programming introduces young women in Grades 9 through 12 to in-demand careers in science, engineering, trades, and technology. We believe in the power in possibilities, so we encourage our program participants to explore careers they may not have considered otherwise, while also helping them understand the significance of math and science for their future careers.

Whether it's through the popular Power in Possibilities online video series or a worksite experience with a Techsploration role model, the impact of Techsploration's programming is significant. Hundreds of volunteers, role models, and teachers donate their time and resources to help make Techsploration a thriving, community-led organization. Together, we work with industry to build the confidence, knowledge, and skill-sets of Canada's next generation of female leaders!

In 2022, we are set to reach:

**3,800+ STUDENTS**

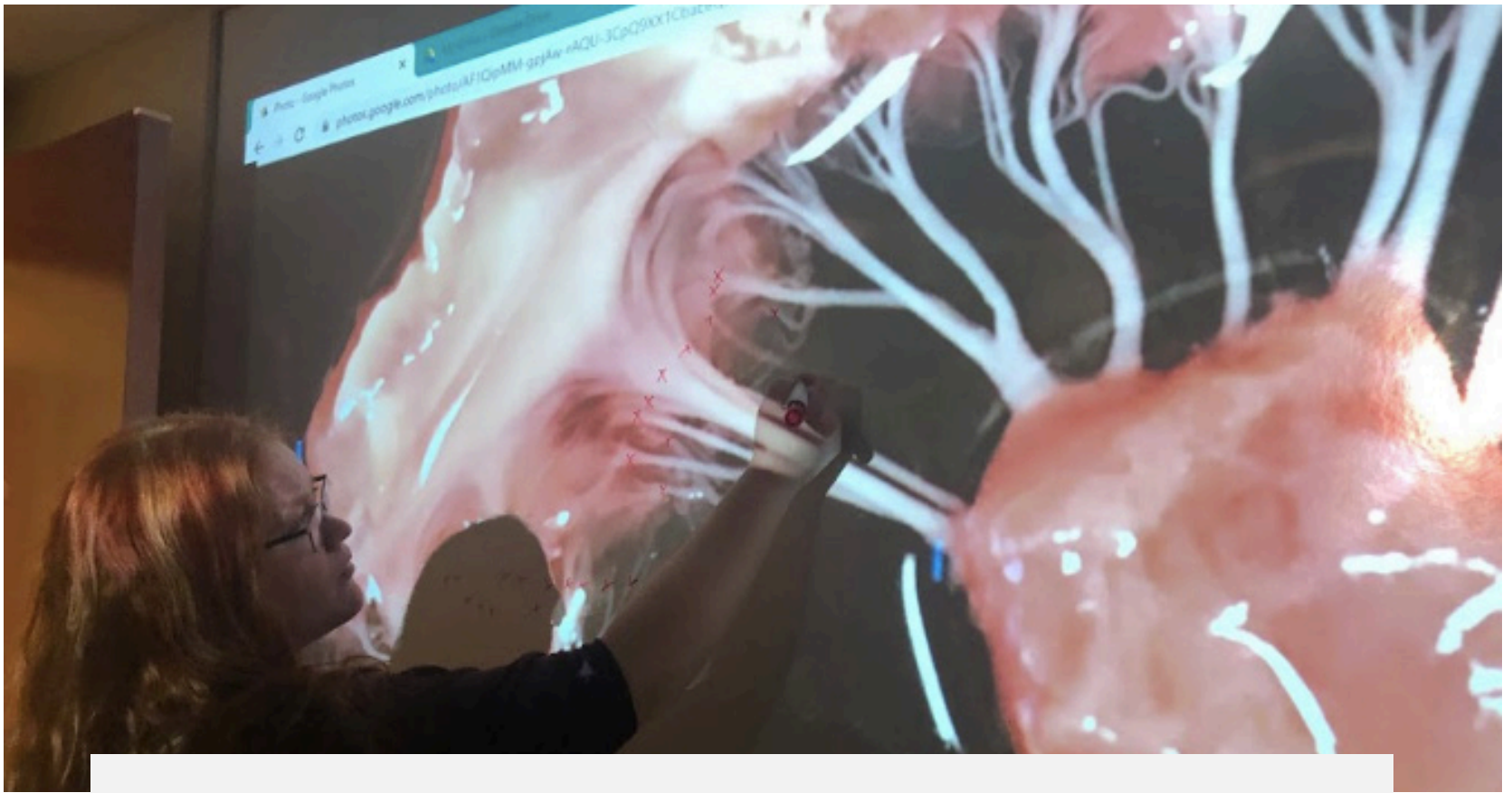
**35+ SCHOOLS**

with support from...

**200+ VOLUNTEERS**

to deliver

**50+ EVENTS**



## *Meghan Martin*

“Techsploration had a huge impact on my career — it made me aware of what was out there, what I might possibly be interested in, and it helped me eliminate what wasn’t for me. It boosted my self esteem and helped me learn how to do public speaking! It impacted my chosen career path because if I didn’t do Techsploration I wouldn’t have all the amazing females routing for me and supporting me along the way!”

Biomedical Engineering PhD student, Dalhouse University  
2021-22 Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship recipient  
Techsploration Alumna

# The Program

## Techsploration Goes to Work

### December – March

Students apply and a teacher selects six to eight young women in grade nine to be on their school's Techsploration team. Together, they research a science, engineering, trades, or technology career assigned to their team. With the help of a female role model working in that field, the team spends a day at her workplace, learns about her work, and creates a presentation.

## Techsploration Goes to School

### February – April

The Techsploration team shares their experience and presentation with students at their school. Young women and young men, staff and invited guests are introduced to in-demand careers by participating in a round robin session with women working in these fields. Students ask the role models questions about their jobs, training and education.



## Techsplorer Events

### April – May

Techsploration teams from across the province gather together to share their presentation with participants from other schools. The young women get an in-depth look at multiple science, engineering, trades, and technology careers and participate in interactive presentations and workshops that aim to build confidence and leadership skills.

## Techsplorer Alumnae Conference

### October

Young women in grades 10 – 12 are invited for follow-up activities such as interactive workshops and a round robin session to learn about more career options, while also developing leadership and teamwork skills. They are encouraged to help teachers select the new school team and assist with the program. In grade 12, all participants can also apply for scholarships created especially for Techsploration by our sponsors and volunteers.

Techsplorers who participate in all of our programming from grade 9 through to grade 12 will have had the opportunity to meet over 125 different role models!



*Ellen MacDougall  
Apprentice Plumber, VEP Mechanical*

*A Conversation with*

# *Emily Boucher*

*Executive Director, Techsploration*

Emily first joined the Techsploration team approximately five years ago as the Manager of Communications and Strategic Partnerships, but initially got involved with the program as a volunteer and mentor. Last year, Emily took on the Interim Executive Director following the retirement of Arylene Reycraft, who served with Techsploration for nearly two decades.

We're now pleased to welcome Emily as our new Executive Director!

Initially published as a blog post with the Atlantic Chapter of Women in Communications and Technology, we took some time to chat with Emily about her own career path and the importance of mentorship.



## ***What was a pivotal point in your career?***

There have been a few, for sure. One pivotal point was when I led the Canadian Advanced Technology Alliance's 'Women in Tech' national division. The experience provided me with the insight to realize I was passionate about increasing diversity in Canada's tech sector and in fields where women remain significantly underrepresented. It also introduced me to an incredible and inspiring group of individuals and allies, many of whom I'm still in contact with today.

I've also really enjoyed growing with Techsploration. It's an incredibly impactful program with an important mission, and I'm so proud to be a part of it. I first got involved with the program as a volunteer mentor and was instantly impressed by the impact the program has on all participants - students and mentors alike. It reminded me (and still does) that you need to enjoy what you do for a living - don't settle, explore all the opportunities and pathways that are out there.

### ***Did you have a mentor during your career or education that had a significant impact?***

I've been really lucky to have had so many incredible mentors throughout my career. The late John Reid, who was the President and CEO of the Canadian Advanced Technology Alliance, had a profound impact early on in my career. He was an incredibly humble and innovative leader who cared about his team and really pushed us out of our comfort zones to be our best. He encouraged me to take on a lot of responsibility at a young age and to gain confidence in my skill set, while growing it at the same time. Nancy Flam, who has also been involved in and led several tech initiatives with the province, has always been a cheerleader for me and an incredible source of support and guidance as I navigated my career in communications and tech. I was first introduced to Techsploration (as a mentor) through Nancy.

### ***What are you most proud of?***

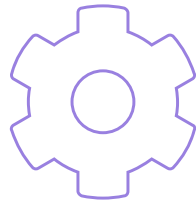
The Techsploration team. This has been a significant year of transition for everyone, especially those in educational programming. Our team has been able to adapt and re-adapt our programming in an online/virtual environment – not an easy feat when our traditional model includes more than 50 in-person events per year. While it's been a challenging year, it's also been one of growth and innovation – for both the team and our organization.

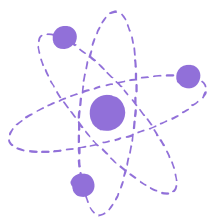
### ***Do you have any advice for women looking to grow their careers in tech or communications, or advice you could share with young women entering communications and technology?***

Participate in Techsploration. Grow a solid network of peers and mentors/sponsors who support your career development (wherever it may take you) – people who cheer you on, provide guidance, and open you up to new opportunities.

### ***What are you hopeful for in the industry?***

If COVID taught us anything, it taught us just how essential science, engineering, trades, and technology is...to everything. There are so many exciting and meaningful careers within these sectors that have the ability to help people and communities – whether it's to improve efficiencies to save time, connecting those who are isolated, building important infrastructure, or transporting vital supplies. I hope the workforce continues to grow to reflect and embrace all the people it serves, and I hope Techsploration continues to be a part of developing our future workforce!







# Online Alumnae Mentorship Platform

After a successful first year of our Online Alumnae Mentorship Program, Techsploration is now recruiting alumnae for its 2nd cohort! This platform, hosted by EnPoint, is open to all alumnae 18 and older. Mentees (alumnae) are matched with a mentor who can help guide them through their studies and career choices. There are mentors available in all of our targeted areas: science, engineering, trades, and technology.

Contact Maureen Duffy-Mason, Techsploration's Alumnae Outreach Coordinator, for more information on how to participate as a mentee: [maureen.duffy-mason@techsploration.ca](mailto:maureen.duffy-mason@techsploration.ca).



I've really enjoyed the program so far. I was missing the group experience, but I'm finding that the one-on-one interaction is also really rewarding, even virtually. I especially appreciate the care you've put into matching mentees/mentors. I feel that I have so much in common with my mentee, and have applicable experience to have input to her specific questions and goals. The overall experience for me has been wonderful. Thank you so much!

*Jessica MacLean*  
Mentor to Peyton

I think this program is awesome. It provided me with an opportunity to get into contact with an amazing female engineer who shared insights into university and workplace experiences that have already helped me in my day to day life, and will continue to help me in the future. I am so grateful to have gotten the opportunity to be a part of this program!

*Peyton Lipsett*  
Alumnae & Mentee



# Shape Your Future With Apprenticeship

*Chyenne McPherson*  
*Industrial Mechanic (Millwright)*

[nsapprenticeship.ca](http://nsapprenticeship.ca)



NOVA SCOTIA  
**APPRENTICESHIP**  
AGENCY

# Influence

In our most recent Alumnae Survey, we asked our alumnae to rate each of our events and activities on their effectiveness. Below, you will find the percentages of respondents who agreed each event either 'taught them a great deal' or 'sparked their interest' in science, engineering, trades, or technology careers.

100%	Worksite tour/experience
100%	Team Role Model
100%	Team Presentations
100%	Techsploration Goes to School
93%	Techsplorer Event
93%	Workshops
87%	Alumnae Conference
100%	Role Models (round-robin)
87%	Website (online videos)



# *Get Involved*

## **Provide a Female School Team Role Model**

Each school team is assigned a science, engineering, trades, or technology-related career to research with the assistance of a team role model employed in that career. She will:

- facilitate and host a 'Techsploration Goes to Work' day
- participate in a 'Techsploration Goes to School' event
- participate in a Techsplorer Event

## **Provide a Female 'Techsploration Goes to School' Role Model**

Each year, up to 200 role models participate in Techsploration Goes to School events across the province. Role models present on a science, engineering, trades, or technology related career to female and male students, teachers and invited guests. Employers support role model participation by providing the time to attend the event and by covering the hands-on workshop kits for our online programming.

## **Provide In-kind Products or Services**

Techsploration relies on support from industry and educational organizations. If you can provide an in-kind donation of services, promotional products, or participate on a Techsploration committee, please feel free to contact the Techsploration office at 902.491.5595. We would be thrilled to discuss this with you.



## Provide Financial Support

Your financial support will ensure the ongoing success and expansion of the Techsploration program, particularly as we continue with a hybrid model with a blend of in-person and augmented reality worksite experiences. While considering the benefits to your organization, we want to assure you that your contribution can be flexible; payment for your contribution can be in one or more installments. You can also donate to Techsploration and secure a charitable tax receipt through our new partnership with the NSCC Foundation.

If you decide that Techsploration is a great fit for your organization, please contact **Emily Boucher** at [902.817.6418](tel:902.817.6418) or at [emily.boucher@techsploration.ca](mailto:emily.boucher@techsploration.ca).



# Career Quest

As part of our national expansion pilot, funded by Employment and Social Development Canada, and with the support and guidance of our Ontario program partners, Mohawk College, Shopify, and Uneath Education Éveillée, we hosted two Techsploration Career Quests for Ontario students.

On March 8th, in celebration of International Women's Day, Techsploration Ontario held its first Career Quest, followed by our second virtual conference on June 3rd.

Career Quest was comprised of inspiring keynote speakers, round-robin style networking between students and role models in STEM and Skilled Trades, and hands-on workshops; all made possible by our amazing community of partners and volunteers!



168	Students
22	Role Models
15	Judges

# Techsploration Goes Live!

On May 12th, we launched an exciting live YouTube series called Techsploration Goes Live! Hosted by Olivia Harris, our series features interviews with women in science, technology, engineering, math, and skilled trades. This series allows students, educators, and parents to hear first-hand stories from women working in their chosen fields and can potentially help shape a young person's career path.

To date, guests have included women in environmental science, cybersecurity, game development, web development, aviation, and skilled trades.

All episodes of Techsploration Goes Live are available to view anytime on our YouTube channel.

[www.youtube.com/Techsploration](https://www.youtube.com/Techsploration)

## Fun Fact

Techsploration Goes Live is the direct result of a student presentation!

During Techsploration Career Quest, a team of students proposed the concept of a video interview series, where they could learn from, and ask questions to, women working in STEM and Skilled Trades.

Their presentation led to the concept launch of Techsploration Goes Live!



**TECHSPLOURATION GOES LIVE!**  
*with your host*  
**OLIVIA HARRIS**



**You Tube**

Wednesdays  
6pm EST  
7pm ADT

**TECHSPLOURATION**



KIERAN WASUEK JOHNSON  
NATURAL RESOURCES ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY

# FOLLOW YOUR *PASSION.*

NSCC is made for tomorrow's makers and builders.  
Those who push boundaries and themselves.

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# *2021-2022 Scholarship Recipients*

Each year, Techsploration is thrilled to offer a number of scholarships and bursaries to provide financial support for Techsploration alumnae and young women in Nova Scotia who pursue post-secondary education in science, engineering, trades, or technology. Congratulations to our 2021-2022 scholarship recipients!

## **2021-2022 Recipients**

Acadia University and Techsploration Science Award

**Madison Thornhill - Gaetz Brook Alumna**

Engineers Nova Scotia and Techsploration Engineering Award

**Alexandra DeCoste – East Antigonish Academy Alumna**

Saint Mary's University and Techsploration Science Award

**Erin Denny - Allison Bernard Memorial High Alumna**

Cape Breton University and Techsploration Science and Engineering Award

**Rhenda Jeddore - Allison Bernard Memorial High Alumna**

We are grateful for the support and generous contributions of our Scholarship sponsors to our scholarship program. Available scholarships for the 2022-2023 school year will be posted in late-January, 2022.



# Impact

Our Alumnae Outreach Project, an on-going initiative, allows us to better understand how Techsploration has influenced the lives of our alumnae.

Our Alumnae Survey asks the same questions each year so we can identify trends over time. This section provides the latest percentage of respondents who said they either 'slightly agree' or 'agree' with the following statements:

100% Exposed me to career opportunities I didn't know about

100% Encouraged me to pursue fields of education I wouldn't have considered

87% Influenced my decision to enroll in math and/or science courses beyond the basic requirements

93% Influenced by parents' views about my career path

100% Affected opinions of my friends and family about women in science, engineering, trades, and technology careers

100% Improved my confidence about future career possibilities

87% Made me more comfortable speaking in public or with new people

93% Increased my self-esteem

93% Improved my career research skills

100% Taught me how successful women can be in any career

87% Influenced my decision to graduate high school

80% Influenced my decision to pursue post-secondary education

# *Sponsor Benefits*

## Development of a Local Workforce

Your support demonstrates leadership in promoting education, training, and youth initiatives that will lead to career and job opportunities in your region. Share job opportunities with our skilled alumnae network across the country!

## Addressing the Skills Shortage

The current skills shortage will require a significant recruitment effort to attract new workers to science, engineering, trades, and technology fields. Techsploration directly addresses this challenge. Women make up over half the workforce and present an untapped resource of skilled workers in a wide variety of occupations. Involvement in Techsploration also assists organizations in attracting talented young people to postsecondary educational training opportunities. For employers, this is a way to renew your workforce in future years and to start succession planning.

## Workplace Diversity

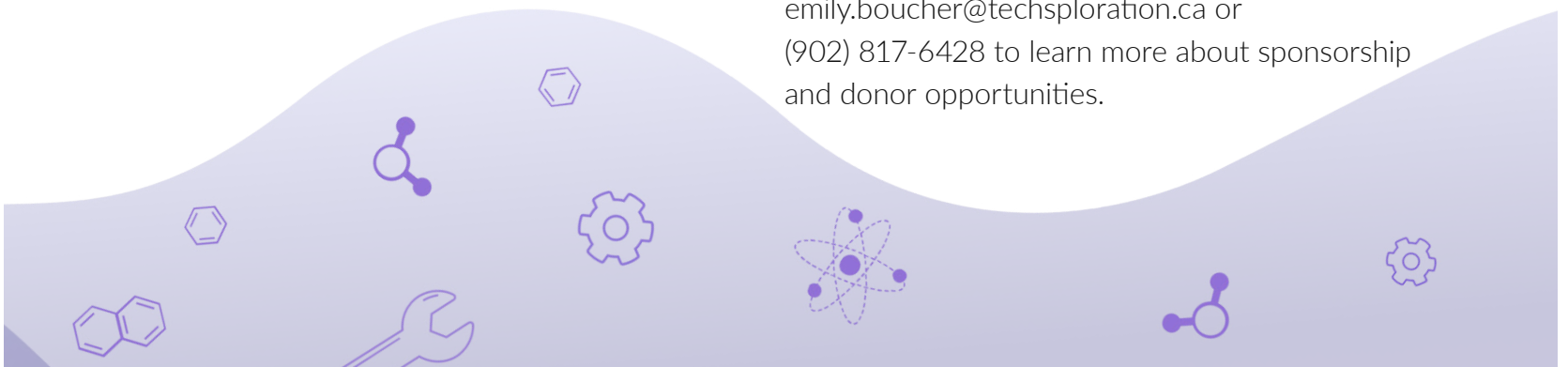
Your participation demonstrates the value you hold for workplace diversity. Techsploration is a proven program that supports employment equity initiatives and programs.

## Commitment to Your Community

The increased popularity of corporate citizenship has meant corporations have become a vital part of community and non-profit organizations. Techsploration offers you the opportunity to make a significant statement about your commitment to the communities in which you operate.

## Recognition

Your organization will be recognized in a variety of ways at our events, on our website and printed material, and through our growing social media channels. Contact Emily Boucher at [emily.boucher@techsploration.ca](mailto:emily.boucher@techsploration.ca) or (902) 817-6428 to learn more about sponsorship and donor opportunities.



# The Organization

## Board of Directors:

### President

**Sherry Donovan - Director of Special Projects  
and Director of Human Resources**

*Creative Flooring Solutions Inc.*

### Vice-President

**Dale Crawford - Director, Partnership and  
Innovation**

*Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency*

### Secretary

**Tracy Smith - Partner**

*Boyneclarke, LLP*

### Treasurer

**Adam Bird, CPA - Financial Controller**

*ReelData A.I.*

### Director

**Kathleen Allen - Principal**

*NSCC Ivany Campus*

### Director

**Teri Brown - Intelligence Officer**

*Canadian Armed Forces*

### Director

**Heather Cruickshanks - Owner**

*L.E. Cruickshanks Sheet Metal Limited*

### Director

**Donald Hill - Career Pathways Consultant**

*Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early  
Childhood Development*

### Director

**Kathleen Jay – Vice-President, Delivery**

*Maplewave*

### Director

**Michel Raymond – Division Vice President, Nova  
Scotia**

*Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters*



*"Participating in Techsploration has opened up a lot of women's eyes to the endless amount of possibilities surrounding these types of jobs.*

*Being able to see successful women partake in these fields is so empowering and really shows that women can do anything."*

*Techsplorer Event Participant*

# Join Our Partners

## Founding Program Partners



## Eureka Partners



## Explorer Partners



## Navigator Partners



## Pathfinder Partners



## Compass Partners

CAPE BRETON UNIVERSITY

DESIGN MARKETING INC.

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ENGINEERS NOVA SCOTIA

J.D. IRVING TRANSPORTATION & LOGISTICS

NOVA SCOTIA ADVISORY COUNCIL  
ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

NOVA SCOTIA CONSTRUCTION SECTOR  
COUNCIL

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