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Welcome and Reflection

Summer has brought sunshine and hope that we have turned a corner on COVID.

Everyone has been touched or poked by COVID over the last year, and we are so ready for warmer days! We have pivoted, pretzeled, and yes... experienced personal and collective growth. We have learned a lot – what to hold on to, what to let go of, and what is truly important –supporting each other, being together, and making a difference in the world. For us, it has always been about relationships and our belief in abundance. It's carried us through, over, under, and through again this year!

We are grateful for each other, for our community, and for you! Many of us have not been together for over a year, so it feels like we are long overdue for some “in-person” time to be with family, connecting with friends, and enjoying our bubbles. We are happy to be sharing some of the moments that we have celebrated this year with you. And we look forward to connecting with you and our communities soon!

Jean Vicki Paule

Far away there in the sunshine are my highest aspirations. I may not reach them, but I can look up and see their beauty, believe in them, and try to follow where they lead.

—Louisa May Alcott



Please note: Throughout this newsletter, all embedded links are identified by **purple text** and underlining.

The Horizons Team

Executive Team

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Paula Hutchinson
Vicki Crowell

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Event Update

Spring Into Action 2021



Our *Spring Into Action* 2021 challenge took place earlier this spring. It was a terrific six weeks with 35 teams and 246 participants taking part this year.

After a long winter, we hope the challenge encourages people to become more active as spring and summer approached, and to have some fun while doing so.

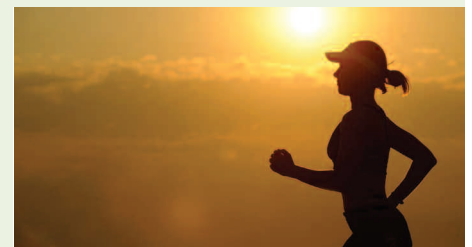
This year, physical activity has been more important than ever for maintaining our health, both physical and mental, and when we hear from participants that “*My team has been inspired by the challenge which is awesome*” and “*I really enjoyed taking part in Spring Into Action. I think keeping a log of the physical activity was very motivational*”, we feel like we have achieved our purpose for the challenge.



(L-R) Crystal (Team Marvel), Ashley (The Allie Cats), Pam (Team Marvel), and Alisa (Team AC/DC) out for a walk at lunch.



Spring Into Action weekly prizes this year included a really cool Heather Roadster Headwrap, and awesome seed packages of marigolds, wild lupins and calendula provided by Michelle Wolf of [Whole Green Heart](#) (who is also one of Horizons' fabulous research assistants)



In addition to our weekly prizes, grand prizes were drawn from a pool of teams and individuals who achieved the goal of 30 minutes a day, five days a week for all six weeks of the challenge. Our grand prize individual winner for 2021 was Lorena from **Team Mixed Nuts** who won \$100 to help support her future physical activity goals. Our team grand prize winners of a \$150 donation in their name to an organization or program that supports physical activity for youth was **Team Dead Lifters**. The Dead Lifters have donated their grand prize to *KidSport* Halifax Regional Municipality.

Thank you to all our participants who make the challenge so much fun! We look forward to next year.

Vicki

Spring Into Action Coordinator

Current Contracts

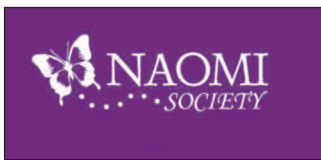


■ Consultation and Review of the Adult Capacity and Decision-making Act • Nova Scotia Department of Justice • (Jean, Paula, Sarah)



Horizons is working with the **Department of Justice** to develop and implement a consultation process to review the effectiveness of the **Adult Capacity and Decision-making Act (ACDMA)** in meeting its purposes and to assess if a formalized supported decision-making should be recognized in Nova Scotia law. We conducted several focus groups and interviews and implementing web surveys to document first-voice input and feedback from persons with disabilities, persons with traumatic brain injury or age-related dementia, their families and advocates, organizations representing their interests, the legal community, the health professions, and many others. We have created the draft final report of what we heard and are beginning the development of a plain language version.

■ Assessing and Mapping Existing Model of Services and Development of 5-Year Strategic Plan and Business Case • Naomi Society • (Jean, Paula)



The **Naomi Society**, based in Antigonish, offers support for individuals who experience family and intimate partner violence through community outreach services. We are working with them to evaluate the Exploring Rural Services in Domestic Violence project. So far we've carried out an evaluation of their current programs and services, conducted a scan of other related models, focusing on web-based services. We've begun strategic planning and will be meeting with the board of directors in person in September (Public Health guidelines allowing) to continue the process.

■ Evaluation of the Impact of COVID 19 on Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and Their Careers • Canadian Progress Club • (Paula, Sarah)



Canadian Progress Club

Working with **People First, Community Homes Action Group**, and **McMaster University**, Horizons is conducting research to better understand the impact and challenges that COVID 19 has presented for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

Through an online survey of parents, caregivers, and supporters, and by working closely with a People First member with intellectual disability who is reaching out to other members and collecting their stories and information, this research will help partners in Nova Scotia in planning and advocacy.

■ Evaluation Coaching • Nova Scotia Association of Community Health Centres • (Jean)



Horizons has provided guidance and advice for an evaluation of Community Health Centres that are part of the **Nova Scotia Association of Community Health Centres**. The evaluation's purpose is to provide feedback on how they are impacting the lives of community members they serve, and to show how the CHC model is impactful and sustainable to change thinking and support for CHCs moving forward. All CHCs have now completed their component of the survey and input from patients will follow.

(Cont'd.)

Current Contracts (Cont'd.)

■ Fountain of Health • (Jean, Vicki)



Our ongoing project management of the **Fountain of Health** (FoH) initiatives continues, supporting national and Nova Scotia teams and projects. Our work with the Optimal Aging Workshop program continues and has branched out in the coming months to include a one-hour introduction to the concepts.

Thriving MD, the latest project, received is funding earlier this spring and work has begun on the initial session for physicians which introduces the Fountain of Health pillars, behaviour activation, and goal setting. The work also includes updates to the FoH website and The Wellness App. Sessions for physicians will launch in the fall.

■ Nova Scotia Network for Social Change Evaluation • Inspiring Communities • (Jean, Paula)



Horizons has been working with **NS GovLab** and **Inspiring Communities** on a three-year evaluation to assess the impact of the NSN4SC, their federally funded social innovation network project. The project has been reviewing and reconsidering its role in the social innovation space and has shifted its focus more firmly to work toward equity, inclusion, and diversity. We have now begun working on the initiative's final evaluation.

■ Strategic Visioning Session • South Shore Opportunities • (Jean)



With COVID-19 and lockdowns, our work with **South Shore Opportunities** to plan and facilitate a one-day strategic visioning session with its Board of Directors has been on hold. We will finally be meeting in August to complete the session.

Flourish Community Development Co-operative Update

As part of our last newsletter, we introduced you to a new producers co-operative made up of a number of consulting firms and individual consultants and academics. Since then, the group has taken on a variety of projects, while clarifying its brand and name. The cooperative, originally called Leading Edge, is now Flourish Community Development Co-operative, and will soon have a logo and website to go along with the new name.

The **Horizons** team has been involved in two projects over the last few months, including:

- The Valley Regional Enterprise Network strategic planning process; and
- Social Succession Stakeholder Analysis for the Canadian CED Network (Penni carried out a series of interviews and drafted a stakeholder analysis report from the interview findings).

Recently Completed Contracts



Since our winter newsletter in December 2020, **Horizons** has completed the second phase of the **Nova Scotia Health Authority's** website development project for the Mental Health and Addiction Program, completing an environmental scan, and the development and implementation of an engagement strategy for youth to gather input on what they are looking for in this type of website. This project was a struggle because of the pandemic and shifting processes around schools. We are very grateful to the Adolescent Team of Mental Health and Addictions who were able to collect a significant amount of feedback from the young people involved in their programs.

We have also completed the design and facilitation of a strategic planning process, and the development of a strategic plan for **Prescott Group**, a non-profit organization that supports adults with disabilities in the Halifax area through development of life and work skills. Our work on the strategic planning process with the Prescott Group was a great – and successful – learning opportunity in taking the planning process online. The Board and staff were fully engaged and shared that they were very happy with how the process unfolded.

Other projects also initiated and completed by Horizons recently include:

■ **Pandemic of Racism Online Conversations Evaluation and Literature Review** • **Senate of Canada** • (Jean, Paula)



Between January and March 2021, Senator Wanda Thomas Bernard and Senator Stanley Kutcher hosted a series of Facebook Live discussions related to systemic racism experienced by Indigenous, Black, Asian, and other racialized peoples. **Horizons** created and assisted in the implementation of a web survey to gather information to guide Senators' and the Progressive Senate Group's next steps. **Horizons** also conducted a review of the literature around racism and topics covered over the course of the series, as they related to potential policy action. Both the evaluation report and literature review were then provided in both official languages.

■ **Evaluation of Indigenous Corporate Training Sessions** • **Senate Progressive Group** • (Jean)



In March 2021, as part of their Indigenous Learning Series, the senators and staff of the **Progressive Senate Group** (PSG) participated in two training sessions offered through Indigenous Corporate Training (ICT). As a follow-up to the learning series, **Horizons** conducted an evaluation through both English and French web-based surveys with participants to assess the training's impact and outcomes, evaluate the process, and identify potential actions and training needs.

■ **Gender Inclusive Leadership Training for Male Supervisors in Skilled Trades Initiative - Evaluation Framework and Implementation Support** • **YWCA** • (Paula, Jean)



We supported the evaluation of the **Halifax YWCA's** pilot Gender Inclusive Leadership Training for Male Supervisors in Skilled Trades, an initiative of their Shift Change project. Since January, two groups of male supervisors from the trades have completed the program. We supported the project coordinator through coaching and building her capacity in data analysis and evaluation report writing for a variety of audiences, and synthesized some of the data.

■ **Proposal Development Training Session** • **Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI** • (Jean)



Horizons worked with **Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI** and **First Nations Inuit Health – Atlantic Region** to develop and deliver a half-day proposal development training session for Atlantic First Nations' staff responsible for the Children's Oral Health Initiative that focused on the program's innovation fund and application components. We designed a session plan that reflected the participants' needs, facilitated the session, and provided a summary of the workshop.

(Cont'd.)



Happenings...

Liverpool International Theatre Festival (LITF)



LITF announces its post-COVID return to the stage in 2022. The festival will return to the historic Astor Theatre in Liverpool and will run from May 12 to the 15th. In the meantime, the LITF team undertook a virtual theatre festival called **Short Cuts**. The plays are 5–10-minute originals, focused on the theme of family. The festival had a great response from around the world. Announcements of the top six began June 26th, and the winners were announced onstage at the Astor Theatre, and streamed around the world on August 7th.



Be sure to check out Theatre Nova Scotia's video series "*For the Love of Theatre*" featuring some of their community theatre members across Nova Scotia. Watch Kristopher Snarby and our very own **Jean** speak about the Astor Theatre and Liverpool International Theatre Festival and the amazing theatre community of Liverpool at <https://youtu.be/CcleeOeuOU8>.

Paula Awarded Credentialed Evaluator Status



Paula and her "congratulations" bouquet from Horizons upon receiving her designation.

Our congratulations to **Paula** who has been approved as a Credentialed Evaluator by the OCanadian Evaluation Society! The Credentialed Evaluator (CE) designation is designed to define, recognize, and promote the practice of ethical, high quality and competent evaluation in Canada through a program for professional designations. Designation is achieved by providing evidence of education and experience required to be a competent evaluator.

Happy 60th to Jean!



Jean pictured with daughter Kate and son Ian at a birthday celebration with family and friends held at Ponhook Lake in late July.

Recently Completed Contracts (Cont'd.)

- **Regional Libraries Accessibility Framework Consultation**
 - **Public Library Accessibility Working Group** (*Jean, Paula*)

Regional libraries across Nova Scotia are creating accessibility plans as part of their commitment to an accessible province by 2030. To support these local plans, a *Provincial Library Accessibility Framework* was created to provide guidance on accessibility design principles and practices for the provincial library system. As part of creating the Accessibility Framework, the **Accessibility Directorate** contracted **Horizons** to carry out the engagement and facilitation of gathering input from provincial organizations that serve or work with people with disabilities. Our work focused on focusing on the important principles and values to consider for creating a Provincial Library Accessibility Framework and the barriers that people with disabilities encounter when accessing, using, and/or working or volunteering at libraries in Nova Scotia. We created and implemented a web survey for the organizations to complete. A report was created that provided the results of that survey. This was followed by a focus group with organizational representatives to gather their input on the framework's components.



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