

MEDIA RELEASE

THREE OTTAWA EMPLOYERS RECEIVE EXCELLENCE AWARDS IN IMMIGRANT EMPLOYMENT

Wednesday, March 11, 2020 (Ottawa) – Hire Immigrants Ottawa (HIO) and the Employer Council of Champions (ECC) presented three Employer Excellence Awards today at the 2020 Employer's Summit. The Awards recognize local employers for their innovative workplace policies and practices around the recruitment and integration of skilled immigrant employees into their organizations.

The theme of this year's Summit was *The Future of Work and Immigration* and included a keynote address by Sunil Johal, an expert on modern labour standards, technology and social policy. Sunil addressed the impact of disruptive technologies on work, the role immigrants will play in the forthcoming economy, and how employers can position themselves to attract and include immigrant talent to benefit their workplaces.

"This year's theme is an important and timely topic," said Frank Bilodeau, Vice President, Scotiabank, Ottawa Centre and Gatineau and ECC Co-Chair. "We know that many employers are uncertain about the availability of key skills, major shifts in the economy, and how the changing nature of work will impact jobs."

The Summit brought together more than 100 senior executives, civic leaders, and human resources professionals from business, government, and not-for-profit sectors to exchange ideas and best practices to support the integration of immigrants into Ottawa's labour force.

"Ontario is facing a skilled labour shortage," said Hon. Monte McNaughton, Minister for Labour, Training and Skills Development. "That is why our province's future requires immigrants with the skills and experience our economy needs. I am committed to attracting skilled workers to the province to fill gaps in the labour market, meet the needs of employers and help businesses grow, for the benefit of the people of Ontario."

"This year's award-winning organizations demonstrate progressive and unique ways of attracting and retaining top talent as the labour market tightens," said Gaye Moffett, Founder, GEM Healthcare Services, and ECC Co-Chair. "It is equally important that employers create inclusive environments where all employees feel valued, are engaged and empowered to contribute fully."

These are the recipients of the 2020 Employer Excellence Awards:

Northforge Innovations Inc.

Northforge Innovations Inc. has built its success as a global leader in the secure network communications field through an aggressive global recruitment strategy to hire skilled technical experts from around the world, to meet the needs of its more than 75 clients.

The ability to grow its diverse employee base and build an inclusive workplace is achieved by implementing several strategies including a comprehensive bias-free global recruitment program involving both conventional and unconventional approaches in order to reach qualified candidates; employee support from the onset and through the immigration and settlement period; an extensive and structured onboarding program that spans an entire year; multiple platforms to encourage employee feedback and suggestions; and, mentorship and professional development to ensure employee success.

Keeping that talent hinges on building a respectful and inclusive workplace that celebrates multiculturalism, connects employees from all backgrounds and faiths through special events and informal get-togethers, and helping individual employees achieve career success. Northforge recognizes that its large skilled and talented employee base is integral to this growth.

Payments Canada

The Canadian economy depends on the exchange of billions of dollars each day, and Payments Canada is delegated by the federal government to meet the payment needs of consumers and businesses. Given the company's unique mandate in the financial industry, a broad and diverse talent pool is crucial to its ability to remain competitive in a global world.

To attract and recruit international talent, Payments Canada leverages partnerships with immigrant communities and organizations such as World Skills, and HR staff also attend diversity job fairs and take advantage of the Global Talent Stream of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program. These outreach efforts resulted in the successful recruitment of 26 skilled immigrants hires in 2019.

At Payments Canada, a nurturing and supportive work environment is designed to maximize employee success; a buddy and Influencers programs; a continuous learning culture and a budget to gain certifications or licenses; cross-cultural competency training and social events helps to build their diverse culture and fosters respect and inclusion.

Sander Geophysics Ltd.

Sander Geophysics (SGL) provides geophysical services—high-resolution airborne surveys for petroleum and mineral exploration, and geological and environmental mapping—to companies around the world.

A multigenerational immigrant-owned and -operated company, SGL has developed a comprehensive recruitment process that focuses on education, knowledge and skills, with international work experience recognized without the need for immediate proof of Canadian equivalency. The company's priority is to recruit qualified people into positions that match their educational and professional background. A robust onboarding process ensures new employees have the information and tools they need to be successful.

Assistance is provided to help employees obtain the right credentials for regulated positions that require specific licensing or professional membership qualifications. SGL's growth and competitive edge is directly linked to the value it places on recruiting and retaining skilled immigrants with international and diverse work experiences and multilingual abilities to serve its global clientele.

About Hire Immigrants Ottawa

Hire Immigrants Ottawa (HIO) is an initiative that brings together employers, immigrant agencies and stakeholders to enhance employers' ability to access the talents of skilled immigrants in the Ottawa area. HIO is funded by the Government of Ontario.

For more information, please contact:

Kelly McGahey, Hire Immigrants Ottawa
Phone: 613-228-2502 Mobile: 613-314-3754
Email: kmcgahey@hireimmigrantsottawa.ca

Hayley Robateau, United Way East Ontario
Phone: 613-683-3898 Mobile: 613-898-6908
hrobateau@unitedwayeo.ca