

# TURNING DREAMS INTO REALITY

The Cornwall Business Enterprise Centre is helping entrepreneurs get off the ground quicker with **Starter Company**

» BY CANDY POLLARD



Entrepreneurs are a rare breed. It takes passion, commitment, flexibility, hard work and courage to open a business, even in the best of times. Those qualities have never been more important than they are right now.

Over the past year, many new businesses have opened, some have closed, and others have expanded. One thing rings true – changing to meet the times and continual learning is part of the process.

While working in the plumbing industry, Dylan Colbourne saw the need for different options when homeowners had to replace or upgrade water heaters. Opening The Water Heater Guy was a no brainer, and less than a year later his business is meeting that need.

Personal passions can certainly lead us in directions we never thought they would. When working at a local used goods store, Myriam Gaudet was





Alex Nurse





Mike Petrynka

dismayed when she learned how many books actually end up in the landfill. Her passion for books led her to open Red Cart Books, selling used books. When it grew to the point of opening a store front, she applied to Starter Company PLUS and took full advantage of the learning opportunities.

"The prospect of handling paperwork and organizing the back end of a business was knowledge that I did not possess", said Ms. Gaudet. "Walking through this step by step with the program webinars was a confidence booster. I am so glad that I was able to participate in the program."

Alex Nurse comes from a family of entrepreneurs. Once she obtained her Registered Massage Therapist (RMT) certification, she knew she would open her own clinic. Just short of a year after opening, Balanced Massage Therapy now has a staff of 3.

"I gained a lot of knowledge through the Starter PLUS program," said Ms. Nurse.

"I loved the help creating my business plan and financial forecast, and the feedback helped me create a professional, detailed report."

So what do these entrepreneurs have in common? A passion for their products and services and the knowledge that there is help for both budding and more seasoned entrepreneurs.

Mike Petrynka of Mike's Printing & Apparel took advantage of the webinars offered by CBEC as part of the Win This Space Contest. Mike went on to win the contest and is currently in the process of establishing his business on Pitt Street in the Downtown Core.

The Water Heater Guy, Red Cart Books and Balanced Massage Therapy are all Starter Company PLUS program participants who have benefitted from webinars and grants through the Cornwall Business Enterprise Centre. They continue to access the services offered by the Centre through one-on-one consultations, and ongoing webinars.

The Cornwall Business Enterprise Centre runs two programs, Starter Company PLUS and Summer Company, both designed to assist entrepreneurs turn an idea into reality by providing training, mentoring and start up funds. Over the past few years over 250 local residents have participated in these programs.

A relatively new program, Digital Consult, is specifically to assist existing businesses by providing access to experts who can advise on various topics related to COVID-19 recovery.

Anyone looking to follow in these entrepreneurs' footsteps should contact the Cornwall Business Enterprise Centre. Come prepared to discuss your business idea and together with the Centre staff determine which services you would like to access. You could be the next successful entrepreneur in Starter Company PLUS or Summer Company!

[www.businessenterprisecentre.ca](http://www.businessenterprisecentre.ca)



A woman with short grey hair, wearing a maroon zip-up cardigan over a grey turtleneck and dark trousers, stands in a well-stocked bookstore. She is holding a book titled 'The Complete Works of William Shakespeare' with a decorative cover. The bookstore has tall wooden shelves filled with books, and a sign above her head reads 'Mystery'.

GAME CHANGER

## BOOK SMART

Myriam Gaudet is helping many book lovers turn the next page with her second-hand bookstore Red Cart Books, and in the process is saving tens of thousands of books from the landfill.