

my Business

engaging businesses, building community

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Building a stronger business community by supporting female leadership

This fall, the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce (ACOC) announced the inaugural members of a new initiative; The Women's Leadership Council (WLC).

The Council is working to elevate and enable women in the workplace by identifying barriers, advocating for women, and working with businesses to implement successful policies that position Abbotsford businesses as Employers of Choice in the Fraser Valley.

The WLC kicked off with an insightful panel event this September on 'Empowering Excellence in Diverse Teams,' featuring VP of Community at the University of the Fraser Valley Susan Mide-Kiss, Scotiabank Gladwin Branch Manager Naomi Pisio, and Founder of Albert Law Co Sara Albert.

"At the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce, we work to continuously champion, unite and advocate for our diverse business community. The Chamber has prioritised gender inclusion at the Board leadership level and across its operations and programs. We believe the initiatives of the WLC will help us to advocate more effectively for the economic competitiveness of our City by ensuring we can spotlight the leaders and ideas that are shaping it," says Alex Mitchell, CEO of the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce.



As part of its initial priorities, the council will hold programs and workshops that help to educate ACOC members on these issues. It will also offer resources to help businesses improve diversity and inclusion in the workplace, as well as actively championing representation on panels at Abbotsford Chamber events.

WLC 2024-2025 Members include:

- Chair, Kimberley Tamminga, Director of Business Development, Chinook Helicopters
- Carli Williams, Investment Advisor, RBC Dominion Securities
- Yovini Moodley, Senior Marketing Director, Fraserway RV
- Sarah De Klein, Director of Philanthropy, Communitas Society
- Amanda Tagle, Adaptive Soccer Lead, Abbotsford Soccer Association
- Erin Bettger, Manager Prestige and Personal Banking, Canadian Western Bank
- Stephanie Singh, Operations Manager, Prestige Physiotherapy

- Lisa Huppee, Owner, Just Like Family Home Care
- Jasmine Bhambra, Vice President, Fraser Valley Indo Canadian Business Association
- Harpreet Khangura, Mortgage Broker
- Sara Albert, Founder, Albert & Co Law
- Naomi Pisio, Senior Branch Manager, Scotiabank Gladwin
- Carla Johnson, Certified Financial Planner, The Cooperators

"A successful economy without female representation is not achievable in the 21st century. We need to do more than just ensure we, as businesses, look at how women in our workplaces drive businesses to success." said Kim Tamminga, Chair of the WLC. "I'm looking forward to our work with the Chamber's Women's Leadership Council driving the conversation about how to enable women in the workplace through programs that address the many barriers women face in the paid economy."

To learn more about the WLC and to attend an upcoming event visit <https://www.abbotsfordchamber.com/womens-leadership-council/>

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- Hope City Church
- Adam Magalhães (CYPE)
- Mahogany Law Group
- E2 Be More Coaching
- Thrive Fundraising Solutions
- Darren Mann Coaching
- Lullys Hotdogs
- Aryn Ali (CYPE)
- Radius Solutions
- Canada Mental Health Association Vancouver-Fraser Branch
- Justin Van Dorp (CYPE)
- Decent Cabinets & Doors Ltd
- East Abbotsford Dental



Company of Young Professionals & Entrepreneurs

MEET THE MENTORS: CYPE x EFCIE

OCTOBER 21 | 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM
EFCIE K180, BUILDING K, 33780 KING ROAD, ABBOTSFORD, BC

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:



ESPOSITO FAMILY CENTRE FOR INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

VISIT WWW.ABBOTSFORDCHAMBER.COM/EVENTS FOR MORE INFORMATION



Abbotsford Chamber Pushing Provincial Candidates to Prioritize Pro-Business Policies

As the Provincial election approaches, the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce continues to call on all candidates and political parties to prioritize the critical issues that will shape the future of our region. As a rapidly growing economic hub, the Fraser Valley faces significant challenges that must be addressed to ensure continued prosperity, competitiveness, and a secure environment for both residents and businesses.

"It's time for the Fraser Valley to get its fair share. As one of the fastest growing communities in Canada, our region's success is key to the economic success of all of British Columbia, however, it will take more than government spending alone for the Fraser Valley to thrive, said Alex Mitchell, CEO of the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce. "It will also take leadership and decision-making, and shared vision. That is what the Coalition is all about - bringing together our private sector voices to create partnerships, share solutions, and call for decisiveness from the government that forms in October."

With the Provincial election on the horizon, there are five key areas that are at the forefront of the business community's concerns:

1. Agriculture & Food Innovation:

With the right policies and supports, the Fraser Valley is positioned to be BC's leading agriculture and agri-tech hub. To achieve this, the Chamber is calling for the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) to be reviewed and modernized -- in consultation with farmers and

the agriculture sector -- to ensure it is meeting the goal of supporting agricultural production. In addition, there should be greater supports for agri-tech -- the advanced technologies and processes applied to farming and food production. These changes are crucial for improving food security, enhancing production, sustaining local farms, and promoting a vibrant and competitive agricultural sector.

2. Education & Workforce Development:

The region's future success depends on strong local talent. The Chamber advocates for increased investment in universities throughout the Fraser Valley to create a comprehensive education system that meets the needs of local industries. By strengthening local educational institutions, the region can retain skilled workers, foster innovation, and create a talent pipeline that supports businesses in the Fraser Valley.

3. Crime & Public Safety:

Business owners and residents alike are deeply concerned about the rise in crime and vandalism throughout the Fraser Valley. Ensuring public safety and securing our streets and public spaces is critical to building vibrant communities and fostering economic growth. The Chamber is committed to working with elected officials to implement practical solutions that address these issues and protect our community.

4. Transportation & Infrastructure:

The Fraser Valley needs a long-term

plan to accommodate its growing population and economic activity. The Chamber is advocating for a 20-year transportation and infrastructure strategy that expands highways (extending to Chilliwack and beyond), improves flood mitigation efforts, and opens up new economic opportunities. Investments in infrastructure are vital to reducing congestion, improving safety, and ensuring that the Fraser Valley remains a key economic engine for BC.

5. Alleviating Rising Costs for Businesses:

The rising costs of doing business are putting immense pressure on local companies. The Chamber calls for immediate government action to provide targeted tax relief, reduce regulatory burdens, and implement financial incentives that help businesses navigate inflation, wage increases, and supply chain disruptions. By taking swift action, the next provincial government can ensure that businesses remain competitive and continue to contribute to the Fraser Valley's economic growth.

Ultimately it's about looking to the future because when businesses thrive, the community thrives.

As a non-partisan organization, the Chamber is reminding all candidates and parties, as well as our businesses and community members that the upcoming Provincial election is a pivotal moment for the Fraser Valley. The business community is ready to work collaboratively with government leaders to create a vibrant, sustainable future for the Fraser Valley.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Meet the Mentors: Young Professional Networking Event

Free for students and Chamber Members
UFV K Building
4 pm - 6 pm
October 21st

Navigating Tax Changes for Small Business with Doane Grant Thornton

Online. Free
12 pm - 1 pm
October 23rd

Leaders Lunch - Vital Signs Report and Food Security

Clarion Hotel, \$65 for members
11:30 am - 1:30 pm
November 5th

Business Excellence Awards

Clarion Hotel
\$95 for members
4 pm - 7 pm
November 14th

Holiday Lunch with Mayor Siemens

Clarion Hotel
\$65 for members
11:30 am - 1:30 pm
December 5th

For more information and registration go to:
abbotsfordchamber.com/events

ABBOTSFORD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

THE NEWS ABBOTSFORD

The 18th Annual Abbotsford BUSINESS Excellence AWARDS

Celebrating Stellar Achievements in the Abbotsford Business Community

NOVEMBER 14th, 2024 | CLARION HOTEL

Sponsored by

Doane Grant Thornton TD Bank

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DISMANTLING BARRIERS: ACCESS TO CAPITAL



Women's Leadership Council

Access to capital is one of the greatest challenges facing women entrepreneurs today. Findings from research conducted on the gender gap in entrepreneurship show that male-led ventures are 63% more likely to source external funding than female-led ventures, underscoring the need for change in the business community. The Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce Women's Leadership Council (WLC) is working to bridge this gap, breaking down barriers and providing women with resources, opportunities, and insights that set them up for success. Most importantly, the WLC is fostering a shift in the business narrative, ensuring that women have a seat at the

table in conversations they have historically been excluded from. On January 22nd, the WLC hosted its first event of 2025, "Dismantling Barriers: Access to Capital", bringing together women entrepreneurs, business leaders, and financial experts for an evening of empowerment and community-building. The event featured a panel of expert women who have built successful careers in finance and business. Together, they addressed how capital is not just about financials, but how it is equally important to consider mindset, preparation, and persistence.

The Power of Mentorship & Support

- A strong mentor can provide guidance, open doors, and offer valuable feedback. Surrounding yourself with like-minded business owners fosters both encouragement and accountability.

Confidence is Key

- Women often hesitate to apply for funding due to self-doubt, knocking themselves down before they have had the opportunity to build themselves up. Believing in your business plan and having a clear, organized strategy is essential to success.

Financial Advisors are Your Allies

- While a thorough business

plan is critical to securing funding, building relationships with financial professionals can help easily navigate the funding process, offering honest feedback to help a business plan grow stronger.

Rejection is a Redirection

- A "no" today doesn't mean no forever—it's an opportunity to refine your approach, address gaps, and strengthen your business plan. It may also signal that you're not working with the right financial institution, as different lenders have varying risk tolerances. Finding the right fit is just as important as securing funding itself.



Moderator & Panelists: Kim Tamminga, Harjeet Mand, Linda Eldabaja, Melanie Rupp, Cathy Press



UPCOMING EVENTS

ENTREPRENUERSHIP 101
CYPE X EFCIE:
ENTREPRENURIAL BASICS
February 10th, 4:00PM - 6:00 PM

LEADERS LUNCH
BUILDING INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES
February, 2025 | More Details to Come!

Leaders Lunch Building Intentional Communities

CREATING PURPOSEFUL, CONNECTED, AND THRIVING COMMUNITIES.

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