

April – June 2015

The Importance of **TICO Elections**

Key to TICO's success is its Board of Directors, a group of individuals—some elected, others appointed—who work incredibly hard to properly and fully represent you, the TICO registrant. They tackle a wide range of complex issues that challenge the travel industry, locally, nationally and globally, and their decisions shape the livelihood of Ontario registrants and the travel experience of Ontario consumers. No matter the length of their term of office, every board member since the inception of TICO has wholeheartedly and diligently taken on the responsibility that this carries.

With this in mind, casting your vote in the upcoming elections is immensely important. It will help to ensure that the Board fundamentally represents your interests and concerns. The candidates who have agreed to run for office deserve our profound thanks for being willing to invest the time and energy necessary to oversee the health of your industry. At the very least, they deserve your careful consideration and then your vote.



As most of you are aware, the upcoming election is for three elected positions: one Retail, Wholesale or Marketing Group position; one Retail position; and one Wholesale position. The retail, wholesale or marketing group position is newly created, replacing the seat that was formerly held by an appointee from the Canadian Institute of Travel Counsellors. The term of office is for three years, commencing at the AGM to be held on June 23, 2015 and ending at the AGM to be held in 2018.

The elected retail position is to replace Paul Samuel, whose term will be completed on June 23, 2015. The term of office is for two years, commencing at the AGM on June 23, 2015 and ending at the AGM to be held in 2017.

The elected wholesale position is to replace Jim Diebel, who resigned from the TICO Board in August 2014. The successful wholesale candidate will replace Mr. Diebel and serve the remainder of his term, which is one year commencing at the AGM on June 23, 2015 and ending at the AGM to be held in 2016.

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TICO BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2014/2015

INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES

Ray De Nure – Vice Chair
CEO
DeNure Tours
Lindsay

Jeff Element
President
The Travel Corporation (Canada)
Toronto

Mike Foster
President
Nexion Canada
London

Louise Gardiner
Senior Director, Leisure Travel - Canada
Carlson Wagonlit Travel
Toronto

Paul Samuel
Manager, Overseas Travel Division
Vision 2000 Travel Group
Toronto

Richard Vanderlubbe
President
Travel Superstore Inc.
Hamilton

Brett Walker
General Manager, Canada
Collette Vacations
Mississauga

MINISTERIAL APPOINTMENTS

Michael Janigan, J.D., LL.M. – Chair
Special Counsel,
Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
Public Interest Advocacy Centre
Ottawa

Jean Hébert
Consultant
Ottawa

Patricia Jensen
Member
Consumers Council of Canada
Toronto

Ian McMillan
Executive Director
Tourism Sault Ste. Marie

Lorraine Nowina
Toronto

MESSAGE FROM THE REGISTRAR



As TICO's new Registrar, it has been my distinct pleasure to meet with many registrants through our roundtables series, educational seminars and other outreach initiatives. I've been as far north as Thunder Bay and east to Ottawa. In addition, I've met with registrants through our OMCA, ACTA and CATO partners and individually, or in groups, at one of our many meetings. In all cases, I am genuinely impressed by the incredible knowledge, professionalism and integrity of our province's travel professionals. At these sessions, my role is best served by listening to you, understanding your challenges, engaging in constructive dialogue, and yes, having a bit of fun along the way.

Building on past successes, I believe TICO is well positioned for the future. We have a great team at TICO, an experienced and committed Board and a strategic agenda that addresses many of the things you have shared with me in my early weeks and months. There has been great debate in the press about the future role of our travel agencies and wholesalers. From my vantage point, I believe our registrants are crucial to the industry, provide superior value in an increasingly complex world of travel, and most important, serve a vital role in Consumer Protection for Ontarians.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our AGM in June, and at the roundtables during the year ahead. Travel safe!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Smart".

Richard Smart
President and CEO

The Nomination package that was sent out to all registrants included complete details on what is entailed in being nominated, and potentially elected. One requirement is that all Directors must attend at least three-quarters of the meetings held in any twelve-month period of his or her term. Board of Directors meet approximately once every two months, although sometimes more frequently, if required. Nominations had to be received by April 24, 2015. Once their required qualifications (as outlined by TICO in the Nominations package) were ascertained, the ballots were sent out to all eligible registrants in mid-May. The deadline for casting your ballot(s) is June 12, 2015.

Introducing the Candidates!

The following individuals have been nominated and accepted to run for office on TICO's Board of Directors.

Retail, Wholesale or Marketing Group position (3-year term):

X Kari Lynn Larsen is President of Dragonfly Meeting Solutions Inc., a full-service incentive travel, conference and meeting management agency in Thornhill, Ontario. With over 20 years' experience in the retail and special interest travel industries, Kari Lynn has held many positions in this industry and has first-hand knowledge of the financial, operational and business development obstacles/issues concerning the various travel trades. Kari Lynn brings experience and understanding to the critical issues facing travel management services, locally and globally. She is passionate about the travel industry and believes all sectors of the trade need to operate within the business ethics and professionalism regulated by TICO and other governing institutions.

Kari Lynn graduated from the University of Calgary with a BA in Criminology, and Mount Vincent University, Halifax, with a Bachelor of Public Relations. She is a member of Meeting Planners International and the Society of Incentive & Travel Executives. Her formal education and ongoing skill development training will be a great asset to TICO in communicating their goals and objectives to its audiences. If elected, Kari Lynn will strive to improve lines of communication between TICO and its registrants, to ensure all stakeholders' ideas, issues and concerns are heard and responded to in an accountable and timely fashion.

X Patricia (Tisha) Saunders is the owner of a Marlin Travel franchise (affiliation with Transat Distribution Canada) in Orangeville, Ontario for the past 17 years. Tisha has 32 years' experience in all aspects of consulting customers, marketing initiatives and all travel business operations. She has acclaimed strengths in building high performance teams, conceptualizing business processes and strategic planning. Marlin Travel Orangeville has continued to enjoy sales growth year over year. She has worked with organizations such as Transat Distribution Canada-Franchise Advisory Council whereby she

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In Memory of



Daryl McWilliams

The travel industry was deeply saddened by the unexpected death of **Daryl McWilliams** on March 10, 2015. Daryl's career spanned a pivotal time in Canada's travel industry. He first joined Sunflight Vacations in 1969, and then went on to work with Skylark Holidays in the early '70s. Later, he co-founded Paramount Holidays in 1981, and Encore Cruises in 1989, before joining Nordic Cruises in the mid-'90s. Eleven years ago he joined the Sunwing Travel Group, where in 2012 he took on the role of Vice President of Business Development.

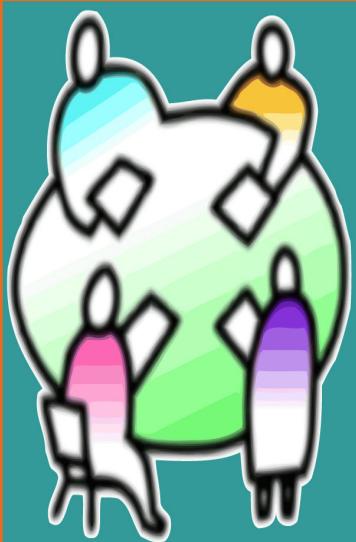
Daryl was one of the founding members of CATO, and served several times in the capacity of its chairman and vice chairman. His involvement with CATO allowed him to work more closely with TICO, whose board he joined in 2012. At the time of his death, Daryl was Vice Chair of the TICO Board and Chair of TICO's Business Strategy Committee.

Daryl's steadfast commitment and significant contribution to the shaping of Ontario's travel industry was unquestionable. "Daryl McWilliams' contributions to TICO and his presence will be greatly missed," said Richard Smart, TICO President and CEO.

News From the Board

At the Board of Directors' meeting held on March 31, 2015, **Ray DeNure, CEO of DeNure Tours** was named Vice Chair of the Board of Directors. The position was previously held by **Daryl McWilliams, Vice President of Business Development for Sunwing Vacations**, who passed away suddenly on March 10, 2015 (*TICO's tribute to Daryl is on page 3*). Ray DeNure will hold the Vice Chair position for the remainder of the term until TICO's upcoming Annual General Meeting on June 23, 2015.

TICO would also like to extend a warm welcome to **Ian McMillan, Executive Director, Tourism Sault Ste. Marie**, who recently joined the Board as one of five Ministerial appointees.



PRESENTING

Jeff Element TICO Board of Directors

In June, Jeff Element, President, The Travel Corporation (Canada) will have completed a 10-year term as one of CATO's delegates on TICO's Board of Directors. Considering how much has happened, it seems timely to ask for his perspective on all that has transpired and his hopes for TICO's future.



What, from your perspective, have been TICO's most significant achievements over the last ten years?

Introducing Education Standards was the most significant achievement, considering the widespread impact it has had on Ontario's travel industry. For the most part, people were on board with it, so it required a minimal effort to have it accepted—on top of which, the process was managed extremely well by TICO.

Although much more recent, I believe that finding a great replacement for Michael Pepper is another critical achievement. An immense effort went into finding the right person for the long-term wellbeing of TICO, and I see it as a milestone that the torch has been passed on to the best person. Seeing how our new Registrar and CEO has performed in his first six months confirms that we made the right choice.

When you were interviewed eight years ago by TICO Talk, you felt that the security of the Compensation Fund and Alternate Funding were two particularly important issues facing TICO. What are your thoughts on them now?

The Alternate Funding Committee evolved into the Expanded Coverage Committee. We've put in a lot of time defining what we want and the direction we'd like to go in, and have been making presentations to the Ontario government. I believe it understands where we are coming from, but making change is a slow process. I see this as TICO's biggest priority.

Regarding the Compensation Fund, I'd like to see more coordination across the country. Michael Pepper worked very hard at this. I think we should continue to advocate for a national plan. Although it's not specifically part of TICO's mandate, ultimately it would benefit Ontario's consumers.

Roundtables a Success, More to Come

From the perspective of a CATO delegate on TICO's Board, have you seen any specific changes relating to tour operators, or do you see any area that still could change in the future?



From the tour operators' perspective, TICO is doing very well. It understands some of our struggles, such as dealing with the credit card companies. However, the reality is that TICO is limited in what it can do in this area.

Do you have any regrets about leaving the Board?

Mainly that we haven't been able to implement Expanded Coverage yet, but I'm leaving TICO in very good hands, knowing that our goals have advanced further at the government level.

Will you continue to be involved in other travel industry associations?

I will be chair of CATO for the next two years.

Do you have any advice for future Board members?

Always come well prepared for every Board meeting, and when it comes to discussions, use your own background and knowledge but remember that consumer protection must be the key driver behind all Board decisions. I also talk to my direct competition about industry issues, so that I can properly represent CATO.

What are your hopes for TICO's role and standing in the future?

I'd like to see Expanded Coverage of the Compensation Fund, in the form of a national plan with TICO taking a lead role, particularly when it comes to rules around advertising and disclosure.

Any final thoughts?

I've been impressed by the calibre of absolutely everyone who works at TICO. I've felt proud to be part of the organization and hope that in some small way I have provided good feedback. Ten years have gone by very quickly and I'm a little sad to see my term come to an end. It's very important for the Board to have new blood, but as I have the energy and interest, I'd be happy to rejoin TICO again at some point in the future. ▲

Thirteen roundtable sessions were held throughout Ontario in 2014-2015, with the intent to encourage engagement, dialogue and nurture relationships with industry stakeholders. They provided a forum for attendees to ask questions and voice concerns on any developing industry issues. Registrar Richard Smart attended several roundtable sessions in early 2015, providing attendees with the opportunity to meet and ask questions of TICO's new CEO.

More roundtables are planned, and Richard Smart will attend several in various parts of the province, so that he can both personally engage with more industry members and also secure a better understanding of the issues and concerns that registrants have.

Feedback from those who attended the roundtables to date highlighted their appreciation of having face-to-face time and open discussions on industry issues. Attendees indicated that they would encourage their industry colleagues to attend a roundtable when the opportunity arises. The schedule of upcoming sessions will be posted on TICO's website and e-blasted to all registrants. Stay tuned!

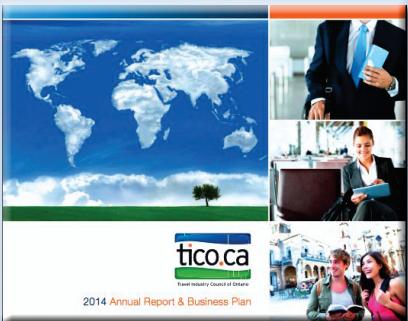


TICO Talk Evolves

Partly as a cost-saving measure, and partly as an effort to better serve registrants' preferences, TICO will offer the next two issues of **TICO Talk** online only. Following publication of the second issue (October-December 2015), TICO will survey registrants to evaluate their response to this change in distribution and circulation of TICO's quarterly newsletter. Please be sure to let us know, at that time, what you think of **TICO Talk** having an online presence only.

A Head's up on the AGM and the 2015 Annual Report and Business Plan

TICO's 18th Annual General Meeting takes place on June 23, 2015, and the 2015 Annual Report and Business Plan will be released at that time. There will be a limited number of hard copies available for those who attend. You may also download a copy from TICO's website at www.tico.ca, call us at **1-888-451-TICO**, or write us at tico@tico.ca to request a copy.



NOTICE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TAKE NOTICE THAT the Annual General Meeting of the members of the Travel Industry Council of Ontario ("TICO") will be held at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 23, 2015 at the Toronto Congress Centre, 650 Dixon Road, Toronto, Ontario for the purpose of:

- a) receiving the financial statements for the previous financial year, together with the Auditor's Report;
- b) receiving and considering the Annual Report;
- c) appointing the auditors for the next year and authorizing the Board of Directors to fix the auditor's remuneration;
- d) announcing the successful candidates for the positions on the TICO Board of Directors; and
- e) transacting such other business as may properly come before the meeting.

Only members in good standing are entitled to participate in and vote at the meeting. Members of the public are invited to attend.

The deadline for providing written notice of any motions to be made at the Annual Meeting has now passed.

Members who will not be attending the meeting are invited to submit written requests for proxies. Copies of the audited financial statements as at and for the fiscal period ended March 31, 2015 will be available at the Annual General Meeting and may be requested in writing prior to the meeting.

DATED at Mississauga this 15th day of May, 2015.

On behalf of the Board of Directors
Tracey McKiernan
Secretary

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We look forward TO SEEING YOU!

As well as offering an excellent occasion for registrants to hear first-hand about TICO's initiatives and other timely issues, the Annual General Meeting provides an opportunity to meet Richard Smart, TICO's President & CEO. The AGM is your chance to ask questions and make suggestions to TICO's Board of Directors, either during the AGM or at the reception afterwards. Please mark June 23 in your calendar and plan to join us for an afternoon of information-sharing and discussion.

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helped formulate decisions that impacted the TDC retail network. She is viewed as an effective spokesperson and liaison between franchise owners and TDC.

Tisha has also held positions on various community organisations such as Greater Dufferin Chamber of Commerce; Chairperson/Volunteer Annual Golf Tournament & Annual Home/Garden Show; Alzheimer's Society, President, Local Chapter; and Safe Communities, Chairperson. Her participation and efforts helped to obtain excellent results when facilitating and implementing development, productivity, quality and process improvements.

Tisha was born in Toronto and received a Bachelor of Administration designation from Athabasca University and an honors diploma in Travel & Tourism. She continuously upgrades her education in Leadership, Coaching, Project Management, Customer Service Standards, and Public Speaking.

Tisha is goal-oriented, passionate in her chosen profession and always drives to ensure results for her clients, team and colleagues.

Retail Positon (2-year term):

Two of the three candidates nominated for this position are Kari Lynn Larsen and Tisha Saunders (see page 3). The third candidate on the ballot is:

X Paul Samuel, Manager of the Overseas Travel Division at Vision Travel Solutions, Toronto. Paul has more than 30 years' of travel industry experience. From junior counsellor to manager and owner, he has witnessed enormous changes in the industry, and has first-hand knowledge of the challenges facing Ontario's travel retailers. Paul is passionate about the industry and feels that all segments of the trade should strongly promote their professionalism and experience. This is why Paul supports the mission of TICO, to maintain an equitable and informed marketplace for travel in Ontario, as it only serves to benefit everyone.

Paul graduated from York University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and then completed an Honours Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Windsor. Paul has recently completed a graduate certificate in Public Relations at Ryerson University and has obtained the Certified Travel Manager designation from CITC.

Paul was elected to TICO's Board of Directors in 2011, and serves on the Business Strategy and Complaints Committees. He also serves on the Ontario Council of the Association of Canadian Travel Agencies (ACTA) and the Tourism Advisory Committee at Seneca College. Paul is proud of his role in helping create TICO's new Consumer Awareness Campaign. If re-elected, Paul looks to build on these efforts and continue to contribute ideas and insight to help strengthen and improve the image of Ontario's travel professionals and the travel industry as a whole.

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Court Matters

CHARGES

Alicia Kielek has been charged with one count of operating as a travel agent without registration, contrary to **Section 4(1) (a)** of the *Travel Industry Act, 2002*. Ms. Kielek operated in Toronto and elsewhere in Ontario.



CONVICTIONS

6097472 Canada Inc. o/a ASAP Travel & Tours (ASAP Travel) and Carolyn Bella each plead guilty and have been convicted of one count of carrying on business with Maria Rowena Santiago Belen, who was required to be registered as a travel agent but was not in fact so registered, contrary to **Section 20** of *Ontario Regulation 26/05* made under the *Travel Industry Act, 2002*. ASAP Travel is a travel agent registered under the *Act* and it operates in Toronto and elsewhere in Ontario. Carolyn Bella is President/Manager of ASAP Travel. Ms. Bella was sentenced to pay a fine of \$5,000 plus a Victim Surcharge fee, for a total of \$6,250. Ms. Bella was given five years to pay the fine. ASAP Travel received a suspended sentence.

REVOCATIONS

Between January 15 and April 27, 2015, two companies had their registration revoked: **Beyond The Bend Inc. o/a Robert Q Travel** (located at 47 Ontario Street North, Grand Bend) and **1835087 Ontario Inc. o/a CA Tour International**. ▲

Upcoming Issues

In future issues of **TICO TALK** we plan to include:

- Update on the AGM and Election
- Update on the Consumer Awareness Campaign
- Trade Shows and upcoming events

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Consumer Awareness Remains A Priority

Since 2008, TICO has conducted a yearly awareness tracking study, putting in-depth questions to online respondents. The main goals are: to measure awareness of the TICO brand and logo; to measure consumer knowledge of TICO and its services; to assess the overall impact of TICO's advertising campaign; and to understand the role TICO plays for consumers who book online.

The encouraging news is that TICO awareness increased significantly among key target groups. Overall, Ontario residents' awareness increased by 6% to 32%; GTA residents' awareness went up 7% to 39%; and travellers generally went up 4% to 34%.

TICO's digital marketing strategy focused on improving consumer awareness of and understanding of TICO among Ontario travellers—particularly younger ones—by deeper use of internet marketing tactics in a 9-month trial program, starting in October 2014.

As a result, average monthly visits to www.tico.ca went up 24%, to 20,307. Visits to the consumer-focused pages increased 12%, 21%, 8% and 59% from October 2014 to January 2015. TICO's new blog got off to a strong start, seeing 2,050 pageviews to date, with one post being shared over 750 times. Social media is now generating 4.5% of TICO's website traffic. Overall, the campaign has generated the highest awareness for the TICO brand thus far.

TICO also conducted its annual survey on registrants' assessment of TICO's promotional and marketing efforts in all spheres. The responses were wide-ranging and informative. One of the questions concerning the most effective media for delivering TICO's consumer message underscored TICO's digital marketing strategy. Asked to check all media that they favoured, 65.43% cited internet/social media. Only TV earned higher, with 71.6%. ▲

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Since two candidates are on the ballot twice, registrants may vote for the same individual for both positions, if they wish. However, if one candidate wins both positions, that candidate will serve in the three-year position and the candidate with the next highest number of votes in the retail category will serve in the two-year position.

Only one eligible nomination was received for the one-year wholesale position, which meant that there was no need to vote for that position. The names of the successful candidates for all three positions will be announced at the Annual General Meeting. ▲

