

# DIALOGUE

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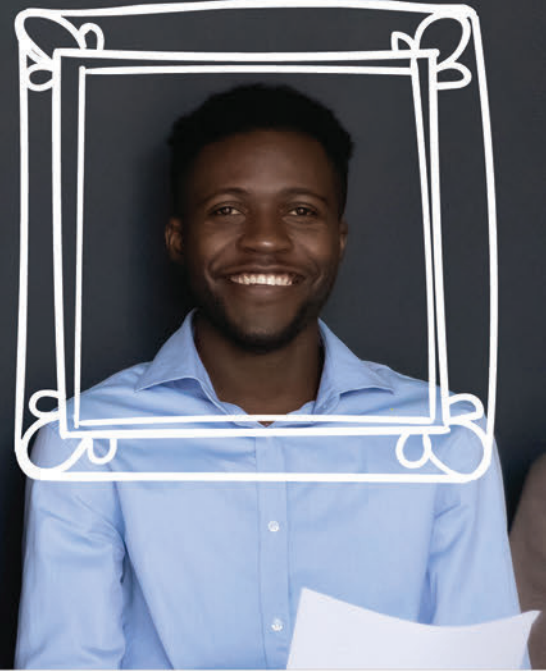
*Special Edition*

**PORTRAITS** *of* **PAYROLL**

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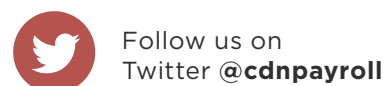


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# The Human Side of Payroll

Big shifts are happening and they are heavily skewed toward technology. Whether you're a practitioner who is being asked to change how you work or a leader who must rethink everything from resource allocation to workforce training, you need to be prepared, evolve your skills and embrace change.

Even over the last five years as President of the National Payroll Institute, I have seen some dramatic changes in our industry, especially as a result of the pandemic and growth in remote work. What has impressed me most is the resilience of our community. As a payroll professional, you are at the centre of much of this transformation, ensuring Canada is paid no matter what comes your way. You continually move ahead, taking things in stride.

Now, the rapid advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) are poised to dramatically reshape how payroll is done. But let's see this as the opportunity it is — AI can take over mundane and repetitive tasks, so you can focus

on more strategic activities. And new tasks will emerge that will require you to grow your skillset and increase your influence.

The National Payroll Institute is there with you, preparing for these changes to help you excel as professionals in this essential service. For instance, we're creating a professional development roadmap that is based on the competencies of the future. We're also redesigning designation curriculum to ensure every employer sees the value of hiring a professional for payroll, and every professional can perform their job with confidence and skill.

Humans aren't going anywhere, especially in a service as critical as payroll. This is precisely why we're celebrating the human element of payroll this year during National Payroll Week. We have brought back Portraits of Payroll, not because we have run out of ideas, but because we believe it is essential to reinforce the personal nature of payroll. This year features many of our members in their communities and workplaces to demonstrate the real impact payroll professionals have in such a diverse population, economy and geography as Canada's.

We celebrate payroll this year with the view that our members are here to stay, contributing in so many ways across this amazing country of ours, and ready to embrace the future. ■



**Peter Tzanetakis**  
*The National Payroll Institute*



# In Pursuit of Excellence

Over the past year, the National Payroll Institute has introduced a new career development platform, enhanced the professionalism of payroll, strengthened our community with impactful events — including a sold-out conference in Whistler — and provided new ways to connect through technology. And there is much more to come.

That's why I feel very privileged to continue as Chair for a second term, as a result of one of our officers having to step down. It gives me an opportunity to apply the knowledge I gained this past year and contribute more fully to our strategic vision of the future.

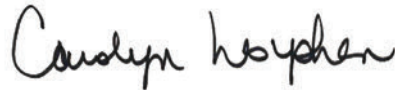
As we look to the year ahead, my promise to you and every National Payroll Institute member is that I will not stop working to cultivate a more vibrant and rewarding future for payroll. Along with my fellow Board members, hundreds of dedicated volunteers and our incredible staff, I will leave no stone unturned to increase the value of membership and elevate payroll.

In particular, we'll focus on three priorities:

- ▶ The first is **strengthening our connections**. This begins with our volunteer strategy, through which we are defining new and more rewarding ways to get involved with the Institute. And while virtual channels are great, I believe deeper connections are formed when we get together. This is why we will explore new in-person events and expand on those that already exist.

- ▶ The second is **nurturing the future of payroll education**. With research conducted in partnership with PricewaterhouseCoopers, the Institute will redefine our educational roadmap to ensure you have access to the skills and knowledge required of payroll professionals today and tomorrow.
- ▶ Finally, we will continue **elevating our profession**. As a trusted partner to government officials, our collective voice will be heard on important topics like EI reform, ePayroll and red tape reduction. Through campaigns like the Declaration for Payroll, business leaders and influencers will know the value of what you do.

Join me this month as we celebrate our community from coast to coast through the Portraits of Payroll campaign during National Payroll Week. While we all have different career journeys, we are bound together as payroll professionals — and so much more! ■



**Carolyn Lesyshen, CPM**  
*Servus Credit Union Ltd.*





# Amanda Sinclair, PCP

As a self-described introvert, Amanda Sinclair's idea of a perfect day is one spent at the lake near her home, floating on the dock or enjoying a good book.

Born in Squamish, British Columbia, she set out to leave her small town soon after high school. She moved to the Okanagan for post-secondary studies and eventually made her way to Calgary, where she has been for the past 14 years.

In Calgary, Amanda found work in administration as an office manager at a few different places before she was hired by Landmark Cinemas in 2015. By then, she had been exposed to many functions of business, and realized her passions lay in HR, payroll and benefits — so she joined Landmark as an HR Associate.

In addition to her role, she would often provide backup to the payroll and benefits team. As a result, she was offered an opportunity to be involved in the organization's Ceridian implementation. She was first trained as a super-user, and then, after demonstrating her work ethic and talent in payroll, became one of the leads on the project.

"I've always been willing to take on new things. I like to learn," she says. "I was going to any of the in-person sessions that were available through the National Payroll Institute, just because I was really interested in getting to know more and making sure I was up to date. A lot of people were anxious to dive into a big project like the Ceridian implementation, but I was happy to."

Before long, that go-getter attitude earned her a promotion to HR Manager, Payroll & Benefits, which is the title she currently holds.

What she loves about payroll is the delicate

balance of predictability and spontaneity. While there's structure to the work you do and when you do it, you always have to be on the lookout for changes to legislation or other things coming down the pipeline.

In her particular organization, she also recognizes the meaningful impact that payroll can have for employees.

"We have 1500 employees. Of those, only 160 are full-time employees," she explains. "Most of our people are part-time employees and it's usually their first job. So, it's a great opportunity when we get to connect with them and walk them through how payroll works, what they need to do in the system to make sure they're set up properly, and how they can understand their earnings or fill out their tax forms correctly, and things like that. That's one of the parts of my job that I love the most."

She also feels very excited for the future of on-demand pay, which she feels will be a huge advantage for her employees.

"We are currently rolling out a real-time pay option, which gives employees the opportunity to request payment of their earned wages as soon as their shift has finished for the day," she says. "I think this will be a huge benefit as it gives the employee access to their funds whenever they need it. If they're picking up shifts to cover bills, it can help eliminate employees needing to take out pay day loans, or give them different savings options. I think it's going to mean a lot for many of our employees."

It's clear Amanda cares a lot for her work and the employees she processes pay for. With an eye on the future, as payroll continues to evolve, Amanda will be there to turn the page for her organization. ■





# Candace Perkins, PLP

Candace Perkins works in HR now, but she has a lot of passion for payroll.

She works for the City of Colwood, British Columbia which is part of Southern Vancouver Island, where she has lived for the past four decades with her family.

When asked about how she first got into payroll, she admits it happened rather unexpectedly. After completing an Associate of Arts degree, she felt she really hadn't learned to do anything and had no idea what kind of career to pursue. She took an office administration program and, as part of it, needed to complete a six-month co-op placement, which she secured in the accounting department at a tourism sport fishing company. She impressed them and after completing her program, she was offered a role supporting the payroll team — and something clicked.

Next on her career journey, she took a position at Royal Roads University as a Payroll Associate when the organization was very “young.” It had just transitioned to a public university from a military college, and so she witnessed a lot of growth and a lot of change in a short amount of time.

After a decade in payroll, she made the official transition to HR, but even so, her experience made her the obvious choice to remain the primary liaison with the payroll department — so she feels she's managed to stay closely tied to payroll throughout her career.

That remains true even now in her role at the City as Manager of Human Resources.

“I'm always mindful that everything we do in HR is going to have an impact on payroll,” she says. “For example, when we're going through bargaining, I always want to consider what this change might mean or how we could administer

something in the agreements, and payroll can help to answer those questions.”

Candace says in those kinds of scenarios, she likes to problem solve creatively and she can always count on her payroll peers to think pragmatically about the implications and what might need to be considered, which she appreciates.

She feels that for many people, payroll skills translate well to HR, and vice versa.

“My current HR Coordinator was previously the Payroll Coordinator here, so she seems to be following a similar career path to mine,” she laughs. “But, you know, I love that. I think it's so great when HR professionals have a good solid understanding and ideally, some practical experience in payroll and finance in general as well.”

She notes however, that the biggest challenge for those moving from payroll to HR can be getting used to operating from black and white, to shades of grey.

“Payroll is very cyclical and structured and often pretty black and white, as most finance type roles are. For a lot of people who transition to HR, it can be challenging to move into the gray where things are less defined and open to interpretation.”

While Candace's day-to-day responsibilities no longer include “running” a payroll, she does note that some day she may consider what she calls “semi-retirement” from HR, which she envisions could potentially include taking on a part-time payroll role.

While she enjoys working in the “grey,” she finds much comfort in the idea of transitioning back to the black and white where her career began. ■

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*Note: This article has been condensed from its original version to fit the space.*



# Geraldine Suzet

## Ramirez-Baldonado, PCP

A lot has changed for Suzet Ramirez-Baldonado over the past decade since moving from the Philippines to Winnipeg, Manitoba. There, she was a registered nurse. Here, she is a designated payroll professional. There, she was dealing with patients. Here, she is dealing with employees. The one thing that has stayed consistent is that she loves to help people.

When Suzet arrived in Canada, she initially wanted to continue pursuing nursing but found it challenging to re-establish herself in the field in a new country. So, instead, she enrolled in an accounting program at Robertson College, where she quickly took a keen interest in payroll.

She jumped right in after graduation and has now been working for three years at a manufacturing company called Dixon Group Canada Limited.

While her career has certainly switched course, she finds the work just as rewarding.

“I’m helping employees,” she says. “I’m teaching them. I’m showing them what RRSPs are, how payroll works, how to access their benefits and pension. Payroll is so much more than what most people think it is.”

Suzet has seen a shift in the nature of her payroll work since she joined the field. The most notable of which has been the rapid shift to computer-based solutions and the move to remote work.

She feels the benefits of these advancements, and the opportunities they created for organizations, were made clear during the pandemic.

In her company, she works at the head office in Winnipeg, but they have offices in Alberta, Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan as well, so the flexibility of remote work, as well as the ability to connect with employees digitally, is important. Especially since she is the only dedicated payroll professional for the organization.

When Suzet thinks about the future of her payroll career, she’s planning to pursue her PLP designation to be better equipped to strategically lead her organization’s payroll processes. She recognizes that her organization has given her a great opportunity and a lot of responsibility, and she’s eager to rise to that challenge.

“I believe that knowledge is power,” she says. “If I learn more, I can contribute more.”

However, that will have to wait for a few more months, because Suzet is currently spending her spare time catching up on her rest. She’s expecting a baby girl in the fall.

She and her husband, who married in 2021, are excited for their new addition and for all that the future holds for their family. One thing that she is sure of is that payroll will be a part of it! ■



# Jason Nazim, PCP

Jason Nazim’s path toward a career he loves in payroll has been anything but a straight line.

After exploring architectural design and computer programming in his early 20s, Jason’s journey toward payroll really began when he took what he describes as a five-year sabbatical in the Canadian Armed Forces Reserves. That experience provided him with structure and purpose, propelling him to return to college for business administration, specializing in HR.

Graduating with high honours at the turn of the millennium, he took an internship and a couple of contract jobs before finally landing an HR Generalist Role with D&A Group Services, where he was the first member of the company’s HR department. After more than a decade in that role, which included building the organization’s payroll function from scratch, Jason decided to take on more by learning payroll.

“At first, I was focused on learning how to use our payroll system, ADP Workforce Now, more effectively,” Jason shares. “But I quickly discovered that if I wanted to manage payroll, I needed to be an expert in more than the technology. That’s when I enrolled in my first PCP course.”

Following six years as an HR and Payroll Specialist with D&A, in 2019, Jason received his designation — an achievement which he describes as “a catalyst for making a big career change” — and joined the University of Toronto Press team at the onset of the pandemic in March 2020. He said that once he added “PCP” to his LinkedIn profile, he was immediately contacted by recruiters and invited to apply to payroll jobs.

As the Payroll & Banking Analyst for the University of Toronto Press, Jason oversees a complex payroll that includes both unionized and non-unionized employees, as well as a few staff

who live in the United States. Being hired only two weeks before offices shuttered in 2020, getting up to speed was a challenge — especially since doing so required learning a new payroll system. The payroll function in the organization also recently repositioned from being within the HR department to being a part of the finance department, which meant Jason again needed to evolve his skill set, this time to include banking analysis.

Looking ahead, Jason believes that technology will continue to create new efficiencies for payroll. He has also witnessed a shift in how payroll is viewed and the skills required of a successful payroll professional.

“Payroll used to be thought of as a clerical function, but it’s so much more than just processing numbers,” Nazim says. “Payroll goes hand in hand with HR, which means that empathy, listening, communication and the ability to work across departmental lines are skills we all need more. Having a background in HR has also been useful to me because there is so much overlap between the two functions. When there is an employment standards issue or new requirement, I’m able to look at it from both perspectives to provide well-rounded advice to management.”

Of course, Jason isn’t all-payroll-all-the-time. Given his propensity for taking the road less traveled, Jason loves going for long walks through the streets and trails of Mississauga, Ontario, with his wife, Danielle. Dedicated to family, he loves spending time with his parents and hanging out with his stepdaughter, Makayla, whom he describes as “16 going on 28.” With Jason at their side, one thing is certain: Makayla and Danielle have plenty of adventure ahead of them. ■

*Note: This article has been condensed from its original version to fit the space.*



# Jonathan Dingwell, PCP

Jonathan Dingwell knows that being open to new experiences and opportunities can open doors. He grew up on a small farm on Prince Edward Island but, as he got older, he sought to broaden his horizons and decided to move to the more urban area of Halifax, Nova Scotia.

While Halifax has been a change of pace, Jonathan loves it. As a young professional, he appreciates how easy it is to explore the city on foot, meet up with friends and try new restaurants. When he's missing home, he finds pockets of serenity within the city that remind him of his roots, by visiting his favourite local flower shop or taking a quiet kayak trip.

Jonathan's career has varied and grown over the years. He started working in the hospitality industry, working his way up at the many hotels in his area. Once he made the move to Nova Scotia, he gravitated more to retail management. What he loved most about this change in industry was the exposure he got to different people and cultures. Now, with cruise ships coming in and out of port daily, there are always new faces with interesting stories and perspectives.

Craving a more predictable work schedule, he started looking into a career in payroll. Thanks to his management experience, he had a fair amount of exposure to various components of payroll, so he was able to land a payroll position and began taking courses through the National Payroll Institute. While at times it was a lot to juggle, he found it incredibly valuable to be able to earn his designation while working because he was able to see the concepts he was learning about come to life in real time.

Soon after earning his PCP, Jonathan was hired by Emera Inc., an energy services company with operations in Canada, the US and Caribbean,

where he currently works. There he found a wonderful mentor, Wendy Doane, a Past Chair of the National Payroll Institute's Board of Directors, who helped him establish himself in the company and the payroll department. When she moved on to the Pensions and Benefits department, he followed. While Jonathan's responsibilities have grown into new areas of Human Resources, he finds that his foundational knowledge of payroll is extremely helpful, especially when evaluating new benefits packages and how they will impact employees.

When Jonathan looks back at his first role in payroll, he already can see that so much has changed in a short amount of time.

He feels that advancements in technology are great opportunities for payroll professionals. Not only to focus on the bigger picture of a business and to make sure employees are supported and taken care of, but also to take a well-deserved vacation. He sees automation taking on many of the repetitive tasks of payroll, so the professionals can transition to more of an employee engagement role.

"Employees look to payroll for support," he says. "They're looking at their pay, looking at their pensions and benefits, looking at what's coming off their paycheque and wondering what it means. Technology is allowing payroll to increasingly have the ability and capacity provide that support."

His advice to other payroll professionals is to be open to opportunities that come your way.

"Payroll opens doors, and it affects large portions of the business. You might have opportunities to move outside of the payroll department throughout your career. But you'll always be able to apply your knowledge and your designation to so much more. So don't be afraid to explore." ■





# Joyce Smith, PLP

Nestled between Bonne Bay and the ancient fjords of Gros Morne National Park on the western edge of Newfoundland is the town of Rocky Harbour. It's the type of place where everyone knows everyone (all 950 residents), the restaurant owner is also the cook, server, bartender, sommelier and host, and neighbours are lifelong friends who treat one another like family. It's also a place that perfectly suits the incredible Joyce Smith, Payroll Manager for Wyndham Hotels & Resorts Canada.

When she's not managing the Canadian payroll for one of the world's largest hotel franchising companies, Joyce lives for the summer, sun and adventuring throughout western Newfoundland. So, when it was time to be photographed by Christopher Wahl, she decided to give him a taste of what it's like to live in Gros Morne by taking him on an ATV ride beneath the mountains and the endless blue sky reflected in glacial lakes of Gros Morne.

"This place is magical, and it's home!" the trailblazing Smith exclaims. "It's such a gift that, because of technology and the understanding of my employer, I was able to move back home and have been working remotely since 2013."

Joyce began her payroll career in 2000 when she was hired as a Payroll Specialist on a six-month contract while living in New Brunswick. She was obviously a perfect fit for the role because she was promoted to Payroll Supervisor only a few months later, and her manager encouraged her to pursue her PCP designation with the National Payroll Institute. Equipped with that deep and foundational knowledge and empowered by having achieved her designation, Joyce was promoted to her current role as Manager in 2006.

"When I started, we were using Excel and spreadsheets to track hours and earnings, and reconciliations were done manually by checking specific rows, columns and cells," she recalls. "Technology has changed so much since then."

One of the most significant changes she has seen in her career is a greater focus among employers on work-life balance, diversity and equity — all of which payroll can contribute significantly through the tracking and analysis of payroll data.

Looking ahead, Joyce believes that more change is coming for payroll professionals: "ePayroll is going to be a game changer for payroll, so we all need to keep up to date with what the government is doing. And it's great to know that the Institute is at the table representing our interests."

Rightly proud of her professional accomplishments and how she contributes to her employer's success and the financial wellness of its employees, Joyce truly lights up when talking about her family. At every opportunity, she will tell you about her high school sweetheart turned husband of 33 years, their Goldendoodle Whisky, her 82-year-old mother whom she travels with to see her brother and sister, and her three children — siblings whom she adopted in 2002 when they were 8, 3 and 14 months, and are now grown and thriving.

In fact, as this interview concluded, she was sure to add parenthetically: "I only wish I could have visited my son when I was in BC for the National Payroll Institute conference before he deployed. He lives in Victoria and is in the Navy and seeing him would have made an unforgettable trip even more perfect!" ■

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*Note: This article has been condensed from its original version to fit the space.*



# Katarina Veilleux, PCP

Katarina is a payroll expert who learned her profession in the school of life. She's a native of the Montreal region and the daughter of a former soldier. Before settling in Gatineau, she also lived in Quebec City and in Germany.

Her unique life journey has made her something of a jack of all trades. She started her studies in translation, but after her first semester at university, she decided to opt for accounting instead, which she felt was a more pragmatic choice. Katarina secured a position at a financial services firm. After three years, she earned her certificate for the Autorité des Marchés Financiers. Her career in payroll then officially began with an administrative assistant position in a call centre, where she was in charge of payroll processing for five years.

From there, Katarina moved on to a job working for a mechanical contractor and construction company. The human resources manager who had hired her left for maternity leave, and Katarina stepped in to replace her. Today, she works for Seguin Morris, and with help from a colleague, she handles payroll for 300 employees in three Canadian provinces. Her personal qualities and strong character have helped her in her career in payroll.

“You’ve got to love challenges and embrace change,” she says. “You have to be patient and meticulous.”

She’s always ready to look for answers to employees’ questions about their benefits, paycheques and RRSPs. She feels she really makes a difference in people’s lives.

“Without payroll, not many people would go to work in the morning,” she adds.

Over the course of her career, Katarina has worked with a variety of payroll software. She notes the biggest change she has noticed over the years is that most of these tools can now manage employee benefits too. She also observes that payroll standards have changed in many provinces, especially with regards to maternity leave.

Recently designated, Katarina believes that acquiring new knowledge has been a big development in her career.

“I don’t just have work experience. I also have a designation,” she says proudly.

As a foodie, Katarina feels payroll is like preparing a recipe.

“There are directions you need to follow to get to the finished dish. If you don’t follow them, or if you skip a step, it could turn into a disaster,” she concludes. ■



# Kim Beauchamp, PLP

Payroll has always been part of Kim Beauchamp's life. As a child, she would spend her days beside her mom at the kitchen table, watching her complete the bookkeeping for the small company she worked for, equipped with little more than paper and a pencil.

A country girl through and through, Kim has always felt the most peace outside of the hustle and bustle of the city. She currently calls Woodlands, Manitoba, home —far enough from Winnipeg to enjoy the peace and serenity, but close enough to make the commute to the office when necessary. She and her husband make the most of the winter months exploring their property by snowmobile or on snowshoes, or going ice fishing. Once the ice starts to melt, they hit the road to their cabin on Lake of the Woods in Northern Ontario.

As a senior manager of payroll for Bison Transport, Kim has spent 29 years growing personally and professionally with the company, leading her team with a mix of expertise and warmth.

Kim originally attended Red River College for Business Accountancy. After being out of school for about a year, she applied and was hired at Bison Transport. When she joined, the small family-owned business had 60 trucks. It now has over 800, making it one of the largest transport companies in North America.

In her nearly three decades with the company, advancing from payroll administrator to supervisor, manager, and now senior manager, Kim has seen a lot of change in payroll. The most obvious and striking change being in the technology used.

"It's only getting more advanced, which is exciting, but also scares me in a way," she admits. "I don't want it to take away my job. But I do think payroll

is always going to require that interaction with employees a computer can never replace."

And that's another area where Kim has seen significant growth within payroll. She has personally experienced the shift throughout her career of payroll moving from a perceived back-office function to being recognized as an integral part of the operational team, one that is looked to for advice to keep business plans on track.

"When I started my career, I was basically given the information to process and I processed it. But as I gained more education and experience, I also gained more confidence. I started speaking up, voicing concerns and making suggestions and that really opened my manager's eyes to just how much of an impact payroll can have," Kim says. "The more I spoke up, the more I noticed I was being invited to meetings and my advice was being sought out. When the leadership was making big decisions, they started asking, 'How will this work on the payroll side of things?'"

As Kim looks to the future, she's anticipating increased importance on employee satisfaction from a payroll perspective. It's about not just handing someone a paycheque, but also having conversations with them about their deductions, and providing them support and access to resources to help them manage their money.

"People want answers, and they don't always want to talk to a computer screen," she insists. She feels this is important to remember, especially in the industry she supports. "Our drivers are on the road, missing birthdays, missing holidays with their families in many cases, so you want to be that personal connection for them when they really need it." ■

*Note: This article has been condensed from its original version to fit the space.*



# Luminita Barbu, PCP

Luminita Barbu moved to Canada from Romania with her son almost two decades ago. While they originally settled in Toronto, Ontario, one summer, Luminita decided to take a short vacation to Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, and immediately fell in love with the place. After a week there, she went back to Toronto, submitted her resignation and moved to Yellowknife, now her forever home.

“I love it here,” she says. “It’s the nature and the wilderness, and once you go out of town you can really see how big Canada is.” She also loves the laidback nature of the North and enjoys visiting the tundra in both the summer and winter.

As a single parent and with a background in finance from her time in Romania, she decided to pursue a career in payroll once she arrived in Canada. After some research, she realized that earning her payroll designation would open doors for her. Not long after, she obtained her PCP.

After moving to Yellowknife, Luminita spent some time working as an auditor before moving to a human resource company as a Finance Manager. In that role, she managed the bookkeeping for a number of clients, who appreciated her skill and attention to detail.

When the company announced it would be closing in 2013, Luminita’s clients wanted to continue working with her and urged her to start her own practice.

“It was an opportunity I couldn’t refuse,” she says. “I already had the clients!”

So, with the support of her former employer, she leveraged part of her severance package to start her own bookkeeping and accounting business.

Now Luminita manages the finances for 15 loyal clients and processes the payroll for around 100 employees between the different businesses.

With the experience of running her own business and a broader view of finance management, she has a unique vantage point to consider how payroll has changed over the years.

“Fifteen years ago, everything was printed,” she recalls. “We had to wait for approvals and timesheets via fax or email.” She believes that technological advancements have not only made the payroll process quicker but also more accurate.

She feels confident that AI will continue to play a significant part in payroll, and payroll professionals will need to have both technical and organizational skills to be able to keep pace with the changing technology.

Looking to the future, her advice to those considering a career in payroll would be to “adapt to the new environment to be able to develop more effective relations with clients.”

Luminita is a true payroll success story, and has served as a great example and role model to her son. He’s currently working alongside her and taking accounting and payroll courses, which Luminita is helping him with.

“I never pushed him,” she insists. “I told him he could do whatever he wanted to do. But he enjoys it, just like me.”

Suffice it to say, they make a pretty good team. ■





# Minerva Haber, PCP

Minerva Haber has lived all over the world, but something about Toronto, Ontario, immediately felt like home.

She grew up in Lebanon, where she lived until the early 2000s. From there, she travelled around the Arabian Gulf on work visas, spending time in Dubai, Qatar and Egypt working in all kinds of industries performing all kinds of roles, from business administration to management.

When her visa was set to expire, returning to Lebanon didn't feel like the right move for her. When she was presented with the opportunity to move to Canada, she was skeptical but curious. All she knew about the country was that it was cold! However, when she landed in Toronto for her first visit, she knew it was her future home.

"I didn't want to leave!" she laughs.

She visited a number of times before officially making the move with her young son in 2010. She says she loves Toronto for its modern energy and cleanliness, but especially for the immediate respect and safety she felt.

"Here you're respected as a human being," she says.

In Canada, Minerva originally pursued a career in commercial real estate, but found the market especially tough to break into. She knew she needed something more reliable, and with a master's degree in computer science, she's always been comfortable with logic and numbers, so she took a job as a bookkeeper. The company she worked for was small. She found herself handling many aspects of the financials and HR, including payroll — and she loved it!

A quick internet search for payroll courses led her to the National Payroll Institute, where she completed her PCP designation. In 2017, she

took on her first dedicated payroll role and has progressively taken on more responsibility over the years. She now works as Payroll Manager at the Nature Conservancy of Canada but recognizes she has had really wonderful positions throughout her payroll career, in part due to her ability to speak French. In fact, she grew up speaking French and Arabic, and only first learned English as a teenager, mostly through pop culture, music and television at first, until she took some lessons to enhance her English. Now, she also speaks a bit of Spanish too. Suffice it to say, she loves to learn and grow.

Minerva would describe her career as colourful. While she recognizes there has been a lot of advancement in payroll, she loves the consistency and reliability of the numbers: it's like solving a puzzle. The answers are there within the guidelines and legislation, if you know where to find them. But she also loves the fact that some days call for more human interaction.

"Some employees need to be taken care of. Every person is different," she says. "Sometimes people come to you upset — and most of the time that's simply because they don't understand. So, I've found my own ways of talking to people to calm them down, to get them to where they need to be to be able to talk things through. And I like that part. It's not only dealing with numbers all day. There is so much more to it."

As more of the day-to-day calculations become automated, Minerva looks forward to focusing more intently on these interpersonal aspects of payroll.

"I wake up every day liking what I do," she emphasizes. "I really love payroll and look forward to seeing how the profession changes in the years ahead." ■



# Oladunni Harriman, PLP

If you ask Oladunni (“Dunni”) Harriman, payroll isn’t a career you find. It finds you.

Dunni’s career has followed her around the globe. When she started working in payroll in Nigeria, she was responsible for operating the register and paying employees out in cash on payday.

“I’d have a huge pile of money and would have to pay people out manually,” she says. “I got really good at counting quickly!”

Now she lives on an acreage about 40 minutes East of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, just outside of a small community called Meacham. A small town with a population of just over 100 residents, Meacham has a ton of heart and Dunni keeps herself deeply engrained in the community. A member of several Boards, as well as being a local Zumba instructor, it’s hard to believe that she also finds time for her other passions, which include travel and DIY renovations around her property.

“I love it here,” Dunni says. “I love the small town feel and the number of opportunities to give back. There’s something special about knowing you’re adding to the community you live in.”

When she arrived in Canada, she was met with plenty of opportunities to pursue a different career path, but her unique blend of skills eventually brought her back to payroll. Her first Canadian payroll opportunity presented itself in 2005, and from there, she progressively took on more senior roles and more responsibility until she found her forte on the technical side of things, ensuring that systems perform in the ways that companies

need them to as Manager of Payroll Services for Federated Co-operatives Limited.

She now leads a large team and feels that she’s gotten good at picking out the true payroll professionals from the crowd.

“Payroll isn’t for everyone. It’s a specialty,” she explains. “It allows you to tap into so many different areas: the human side of things, the money side. It’s not a career many people just decide to go into. It finds people. For most, they happen upon payroll unexpectedly and are like, ‘Hey, I kind of like this!’”

She brings so much passion to her work that it allows her to roll with the punches. Throughout her career and various positions, she’s always found herself in the middle of one implementation or another. From going paperless to moving to employee-self-service models, introducing new time systems — there’s always a new challenge to tackle.

When she looks to the future, she sees the potential that exists for employers to tap into the stories that payroll can tell. You can tell she is excited about the opportunity to leverage payroll to understand the trends that are impacting organizations of all sizes. For example, she explains, in a period of inflation, organizations can use payroll data to gauge how source deductions can impact employees’ cost of living — at a macro level or even by regions within each province.

“Data is power. If you have data at your fingertips, there is so much you can learn,” she says, “and payroll has the data!” ■



# Oluwatoyin

# Adeniyi, PCP

Oluwatoyin (“Dorcas”) Adeniyi has found so much to love about Woodstock, New Brunswick, where she lives with her family. But when they moved from Nigeria — landing in the dead of winter—in Labrador, she wasn’t so sure.

“It was crazy cold!” Dorcas laughs, thinking back on her first days in Canada.

Seeking slightly warmer pastures, they headed for New Brunswick, where she now feels right at home. She loves the beauty of each season experienced there, and the proximity to the city of Fredericton.

As a mom to three growing children, a boy aged 11 and two girls aged 15 and 18, Dorcas says she spends her weekends “major league cooking,” and while it’s a big job, it’s a labour of love. Over the past few years, she has been growing her garden, tending to her tomatoes, peppers, peas and lettuce, to help meet the demands of her kitchen.

Dorcas’ payroll career started in Nigeria, where she worked with her state’s government. When she moved to Labrador in 2015, she found that the differences between processing payroll in Nigeria and Canada were vast, but she still hoped to be able to continue her career in the field.

She found work through contract opportunities and eventually secured a full-time accounting role with a long-term care facility — but her desire to return to payroll remained strong. In her accounting role, she would often get called on to support payroll-adjacent tasks, but due to the confidentiality requirements of processing payroll, it wasn’t something she was able to easily volunteer to help on to gain the experience to take on a dedicated role.

The move from Labrador to New Brunswick

gave her the push she needed to try something new. She seized the opportunity to register for PCP courses offered through New Brunswick Community College and was excited to gain the knowledge necessary to jump back into a payroll role. Unfortunately, not long after, COVID hit and her studies had to move to an online environment. Nevertheless, she persevered and graduated in 2021.

From there, Dorcas was unstoppable! She secured a payroll role at the Franchise Management Incorporation (FMI), where she currently works, responsible for processing payroll for over 1000 employees, and she loves it.

Interestingly, Dorcas has noted so many differences between the work she is doing now and the work she did in Nigeria, but she feels that the elevated technology has really made payroll practices here much more efficient. For example, instead of tracking, processing and recording payroll on a digital system, in Nigeria, everything was recorded by hand (on paper cards) for each employee. Suffice it to say, she much prefers the digital process.

“Technology eases the burdens of the job and makes everything work faster for you,” she says. Looking to the future, she feels it is essential for payroll professionals to keep their knowledge up to date — because no matter how much changes, people will always need to be paid accurately and on time.

You can’t miss Dorcas’s optimism and passion for her work. Despite the challenges she faced in pursuit of her payroll career after immigrating to Canada, she’s so happy to have found her way back to the profession she loves. Her advice to anyone in a similar position is to be relentless in the pursuit of your passions. ■



# Sanjeewa

## Rajapaksha, PCP

Sanjeewa Rajapaksha moved with his wife and son from Sri Lanka to Prince Edward Island to build a life together here in Canada. With the addition of two beautiful daughters and a growing career in payroll since then, it seems to have been a success.

As Sanjeewa and his young family settled into their new home of Stratford, he took on some odd jobs here and there until his sights became set on earning his payroll designation. Back in Sri Lanka, he had worked in accounting and logistics, so payroll felt like a natural fit. In 2015, he successfully completed his PCP.

Before long, Sanjeewa landed a job with a construction company called Atlantic Enterprise working in their accounting and payroll department. There, he managed payroll for about 20 employees and it all came pretty easily to him. He stayed in that role for six and a half years before joining the Public Schools Branch as a Payroll Officer, where he currently works. Now his responsibilities have grown exponentially, as he works with a team who manage payroll for 22 schools. It's a job Sanjeewa describes as an exciting challenge.

"It's always changing and there is lots of responsibility," he says, "but I love it. The

challenges and the responsibilities make me work hard to ensure I'm getting it all right."

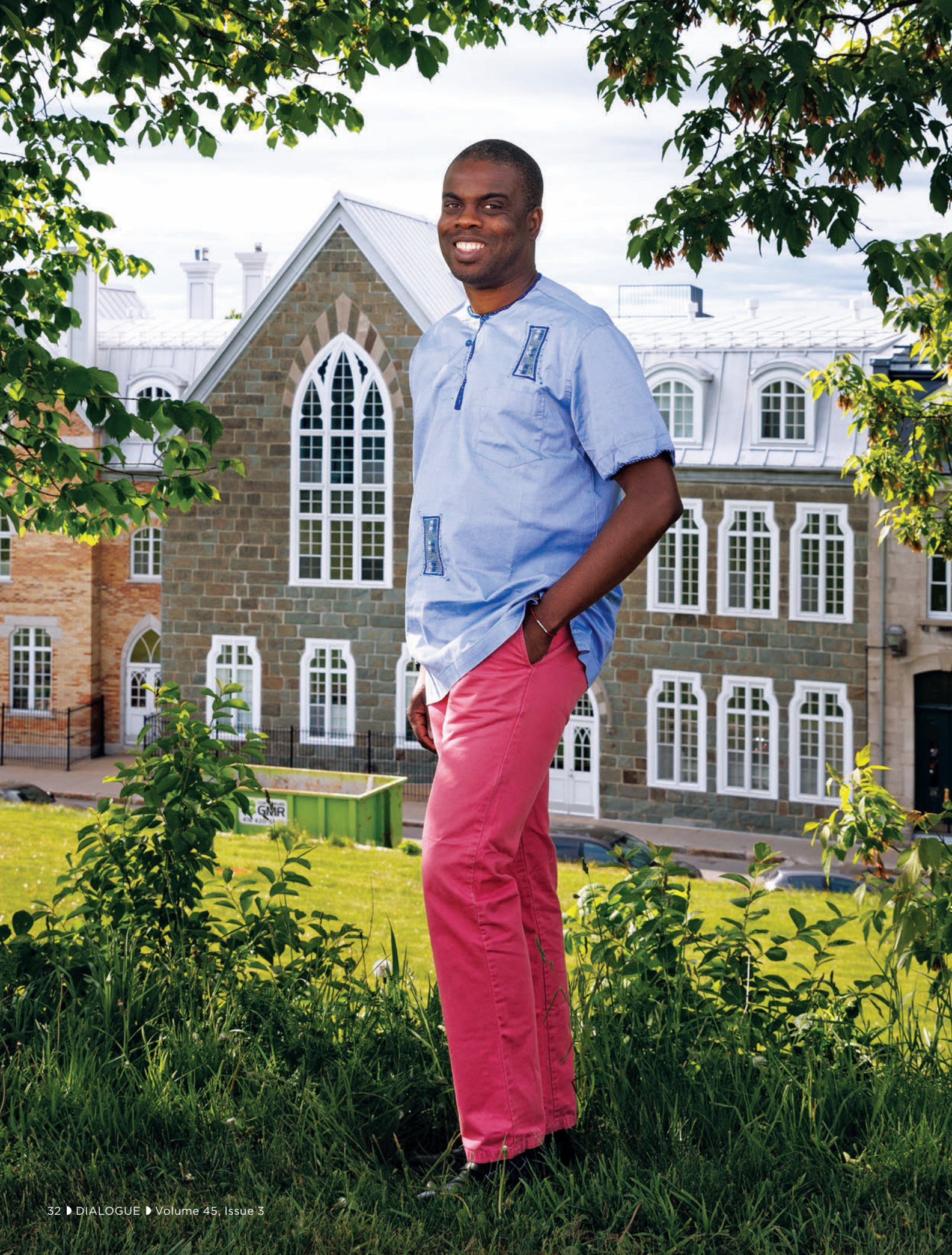
Working for a school board feels like a good fit for Sanjeewa. He's a passionate lifelong learner who, despite being a busy father of three and working full time, is also pursuing his degree in Business Administration. He admits he has experienced a steep learning curve since entering the field and wants to do everything he can to be successful.

Sanjeewa would encourage anyone who enjoys numbers and problem solving to consider a career in payroll.

"It's a nice area to get in to," he says. "There is so much learning. Every day there's something new to be learned. I really enjoy it!"

When Sanjeewa does manage to find some time to himself, he loves to play cricket, which reminds him of his friends back in Sri Lanka. But more often than not, he's spending his spare time playing board games with his kids or taking them for walks to enjoy the beauty of their home in Prince Edward Island.

"It's a beautiful island," he says. "We really love it and are so grateful to call this home." ■





# Yapi Yves Alain, PCP

The first time Yapi Yves Alain ever saw snow was when his plane was preparing to land in Montreal in December 2013. Originally from Côte d'Ivoire, this lover of tennis and fine dining had come to study accounting at Collège de Rosemont.

Soon after completing his studies, Yapi started his career at the Centre Hospitalier Universitaire Ste-Justine, where he noticed that staff were having trouble understanding the deductions on their paycheques. Yapi took the time to explain things to them and decided to sign up for payroll training at the National Payroll Institute.

In 2018, Yapi continued his career in the Quebec public service as a Paymaster in the Payroll and Compensation department at Revenu Québec. He had to leave the cosmopolitan city of Montreal and move to Quebec City, which he saw at the time as a “big village.”

It was a big change for him. The transition wasn't easy, but Yapi adapted and made a place for himself quickly.

He recalls that at the start of his career in payroll, there were enormous amounts of paper documents and huge filing cabinets full of employee files, and staff were constantly printing vast amounts of documents.

“There was a lot of pressure during payroll closing periods because all of us were trying to close our payroll on time.”

Through his work with Revenu Quebec, he was proud to work on the Zero Paper project (whose mission is to reduce the impact of paper documents)

and the establishment of a digital file system for over 14,000 civil servants.

“Payroll has evolved significantly as a result of the pandemic because it accelerated the deployment of these projects. With electronic files, employees were able to work without printing out paper documents. The team in charge of workloads could process a more diverse range of cases,” he explains. He thinks that this change reduced the tendency for him and his colleagues to work in isolated silos.

During this same period, Yapi completed his PCP designation with the Institute.

In September 2022, his payroll designation and work experience helped him move up to the next step in his career with a job in the federal public service, where he continues to develop his knowledge in the analysis of payroll registers and records of employment.

Yapi believes that it's essential for payroll professionals to acquire new computer and database skills. “Doing basic calculations alone isn't enough anymore. We need to know how to analyze, process and interpret our data,” he emphasizes.

“Staying up to date with new trends will be essential for our future in this field,” he adds. One of those emerging trends, especially in the United States and Europe, is pay on demand, which allows employees to be paid for the days they've worked without having to wait for the next payday. In Yapi's view, it's important for organizations to be ready adapt to changes like this one in the labour market. ■



# Yuki Fukushima, PCP

Looking for a fun adventure, Yuki Fukushima came to Canada in 2006 from Japan. Taking a short break from her career as a computer programmer, she planned to stay for just one year. Over 15 years later, she proudly calls Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, home.

People often ask why she would choose to live so far north, “in such a cold climate,” but she loves it. While she admits the winters get cold, she says the summers are especially beautiful.

Initially, she began working in the tourism industry seeking out the Aurora Borealis (otherwise known as the Northern Lights). But before long, with a baby on the way, she knew she had to find a job that had more regular daytime hours.

She found that job working for a supermarket helping with their bookkeeping, little by little taking on more responsibility for the finances. She later transitioned to a role handling all aspects of the finances for an art gallery. As this was a small business, she found there she was responsible for everything — including payroll.

She learned payroll on the job, taught by her predecessor, but once she got comfortable in her work, she started to uncover what she believed to be errors. However, she wasn't totally sure and didn't really know how to go about fixing them. As the now only payroll professional, she didn't have anyone to help or show her how it should be done.

This was all during the pandemic — so Yuki had some spare time. She decided to enroll with the National Payroll Institute and began working towards her PCP designation, which she completed in 2022.

“It was so nice,” she says. “My questions became answers, and I was able to learn so much. Because of that, I was able to fix some of the errors my organization was making. Eventually

I got a call from Service Canada that I needed to handle and, while I was nervous at first, I was able to understand why they were calling and work through it with them.”

Now Yuki is working as the Finance & Administration Officer for Inclusion Northwest Territories, a non-profit organization that supports people with intellectual and other disabilities and their families.

The volume of payroll processed is much greater than she's experienced in her past roles, but she's enjoying it. Especially since she now works closely with her manager, Akiko Shimada, who has taught her so much.

Yuki really loves the precision of payroll — getting things perfect, down to the cent. Knowing she's checked all the boxes and has everything in proper order gives her a great sense of satisfaction.

In the future, she sees technology helping to make the lives of payroll professionals a little easier, and while she recognizes that some people may think that it will take away payroll jobs, having worked as a computer programmer, she doesn't agree.

“You'll always need a person there,” she says. “When employees have questions or problems, they are going to want to talk to a real person. That isn't going to change.”

In her spare time, Yuki and her two children have been working away at a garden plot they've rented. She enjoys teaching them how to take care of the land — from seeding, to harvesting their crops and using them in the kitchen. Despite the slightly cooler weather in Yellowknife, they've had success growing potatoes, carrots and beans so far. Never forgetting how far she has come, on weekends, she sometimes lets her kids stay up late and they'll drive out to catch the Northern Lights, together as a family. ■

# Honour Roll

The National Payroll Institute wishes to recognize and congratulate the professionals who recently achieved the designations of Payroll Leadership Professional (PLP), Payroll Compliance Professional (PCP) and Professionnel de la paie du Québec (PPQ).



Anna Adamska, ON  
Monica Alb, ON  
Rizwana Ameerbeg, ON  
Ashley Antle, NS  
Christine Archambault, QC  
Usman Ashraf, ON  
Sukhbir Bahia, BC  
Jennifer Biggar, YT  
Erin Buell, AB  
Prabhjot Burmi, ON  
Christina Correia, ON  
Marcela Cosma, ON  
Mosunmola Dania-Amoo, ON  
Kuno Dengler, YT  
Nadia Deol, BC  
ChengHua Dong, BC  
Jenna Drumm, ON  
Han Du, BC  
Carla Edwards, ON  
Rabab El Fakharany, AB  
Irin Nahar Eva, ON  
Sandy Fawson, NS

Troy Gebhart, BC  
Ritika Goyal, BC  
Jocelle Mae Gultiano, AB  
Sherone Harris, BC  
Humaira Haroon, ON  
Jennifer Hayes, AB  
Mahmoud Heydari, ON  
Mary Hosein, ON  
Li Yu Huang, BC  
Munibah Hussain, ON  
Melissa Kemp, ON  
Danielle Labrecque, ON  
Nichol Leal, AB  
Hui Hui Liu, BC  
Maria Angelica  
Lovina-Lim, AB  
Tabatha MacDonald, AB  
Erin MacEachern, NS  
Marc Maistrelli, ON  
Lucy Medvedeva, NS  
Manisha Mohan, BC  
Manvir Nagra, BC

Sati Naraine, ON  
Hollian Ness, ON  
Seher Nisar, ON  
Shelly Ptaszyk, ON  
Rhona Rajpal, ON  
Jillian Reid, NL  
Reinalyn Reyes, QC  
Elaine Reyes, ON  
Harpreet Sahota, ON  
Amruddin Sahray, QC  
Jolene Sararas, ON  
Joyce Smith, NL  
Dwayne Stewart, ON  
Tomoka Sweet, BC  
Vikki Turner, ON  
Rose-Zan Verinder, MB  
Yi Fang Wang, ON  
Xiao Qin Wang, ON  
Thuzar Win Maung, BC  
Jiang Hua (Wendy) Yu, BC  
Tina Wing Tsum Yu, ON  
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Mai Abou Ayyach, AB  
Tawakalit Adekola, MB  
Deepika Aggarwal, MB  
Alexander Aguiluz, BC  
Rukayat Akintunde, SK  
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Alexandru Apetrei Ciuca, QC  
Jennifer Appleby, ON  
Sabrina Arai, BC  
Mary Anne Ash, ON  
Ashley Au-Yeung, ON  
Jagjit Bahia, BC  
Cori Bailey, ON  
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Gian Karla Banlaoi, BC  
Sarah Barreto, BC  
Melisa Basilio, AB

Anjana Bastian, NS  
Aicha Batouli, QC  
Jo Ann Beaton, ON  
Deepak Behl, BC  
Marie-Eve Bérubé, QC  
Sandra Bevanda, BC  
Jasmeet Singh Bharj, MB  
Meena Bhatia, ON  
Priyanka Bhavsar, AB  
Basel Bitar, QC  
Shannon Board, ON  
Michelle Bojecho, AB  
Mona Bosch, SK  
Punnya Bose, ON  
Rachel Bossert, AB  
Karlee Bowley, AB  
Amna Brkan, ON  
Ryan Brooks, AB  
Myra Brooks, BC

Emily Brule, BC  
Rochelle Burgiss, ON  
Cathy Burt, ON  
Amy Bush, ON  
Carla Cain, AB  
Kylie Campbell, ON  
Kiara Marie Capinpin, QC  
Kristin Carson, BC  
Liliana Castro, QC  
Lyrics Cayabyab, BC  
Shulan Chen, ON  
Anwen Chen, ON  
Xiao Yun Chen, BC  
Bernie Chipchase, ON  
My In Chung, ON  
Simone Clarke-Nairne, ON  
Nasstaja Cobetto, QC  
Edwarda Coelho, QC  
Gabriela Colosimo, ON



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 Dwight Corey, NB  
 Patricia Costa, ON  
 Christina Coutu, ON  
 Natasha Craig, ON  
 Kim Crosby, BC  
 Lina Cui, ON  
 Nanette Custodio, ON  
 Brigitte Dandurand, QC  
 Zara Daouda Dia, QC  
 James Timothy Dayag, ON  
 Sheryl Derasp, ON  
 Stephanie Dodman, AB  
 Yu Dong, ON  
 Lydia Drodge, AB  
 Patrice Duchemin, QC  
 Tarah Duncan, BC  
 Christina Duncan, BC  
 Helen Dunn, ON  
 Tara Dunn, NS  
 Joshua Eastman, ON  
 Rachele Eboseo, ON  
 Safiya Elshazly, BC  
 Dianne Escorpiso, AB  
 Christiana Eze, AB  
 Jennie Mae Fast, BC  
 Samiyah Fazal, ON  
 Alyson Fel, BC  
 Jamie Fellner, SK  
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 Erin Finlayson, AB  
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 Mary Gougeon, AB  
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 Mila Guidorizzi, ON  
 Magy Guirguis, ON  
 Crystal Gustafson, MB  
 Kelly Gutziet, AB  
 Dawn Hackl, SK  
 Amanda Hadden, SK  
 Nicole Hamilton, AB  
 Husham Majeed  
 Hammood, BC  
 Mallary Hampton, AB  
 Sandy Hanna, ON  
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 Most Sifat Haque, AB  
 Rifaa Samiha Haque, QC  
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 Sheron Jie Qing Hu, ON  
 Zoltan Huber, ON  
 Tessa Hudek, MB  
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 Tracy Huston, BC  
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 Leigh Ireland, BC  
 Annie James, ON  
 Marguerite Jansen, MB  
 Jasmin Jaramillo, BC  
 Sandeep Jawake, ON  
 Permil Jawanda, BC  
 Ying Jin, ON  
 Genevieve Jones, ON  
 Sherri Jones, ON  
 Menaka Jugessur, QC  
 Tetiana Kalenska, SK  
 Meenu Kanwal, ON  
 Engela Kara, BC  
 Jaspreet Karwal, BC  
 TJ Karwandy, SK  
 Arshdeep Kaur, ON  
 Avneet Kaur, ON  
 Gagandeep Kaur, AB  
 Sharon Keillor, BC  
 Helina Kena, AB  
 Maham Khalid, ON  
 Mazen Khattab, ON  
 Soyeon Kim, BC  
 Vinay Menon  
 Kizhakkiniyadath, NS  
 Jayne Klingenberg, ON  
 Jessica Kobzey, BC  
 Jodie Koenigs, PA  
 Chanjayaa Kovinthan, ON  
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 Batul Kubbawala, ON  
 Andre Kuerbis, BC  
 Santosh Kumar Viswa, ON  
 Christine Kung, AB  
 Lorie Kuntz, AB  
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 Dorota Kwiatek, ON  
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 Ming Yan Lai, MB  
 Suet Ying Lai, BC  
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 Mélanie Langlois, QC  
 Chris Law, BC  
 Aimee Lawrence, BC  
 Crystal Legary, MB  
 Genevieve Lema-  
 Gubatan, ON  
 Emilie Lessard, AB  
 Hoi Yan Li, ON  
 Licong Li, BC  
 Yanbing Li, ON  
 Caxanthia Li, AB  
 Kevin Lieu, ON  
 Jia Liu, ON  
 Wenye Liu, SK  
 Chunfang Liu, AB  
 Hui Jun Liu, ON  
 Feng Liu, BC  
 Bing Liu, QC  
 Daisy Liu,  
 Hai Yan Liu, BC  
 Loraine Grace Logan, AB  
 Jiahui Lu, BC  
 Vania Lujan Ferrutino, QC  
 Thi Hong Dao Luong, ON  
 Ashley Lutz, AB  
 Carmen Lyons, AB  
 MarieCris Macatiguib, ON  
 Jaime MacGillivray, ON  
 Heidi MacPherson, NS  
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 Martin, ON  
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 Roohi Masih, AB  
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Marla Mills, ON  
Lindsay Monk, AB  
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Rinko Nagaishi, ON  
Amanda Neumayer, ON  
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Li Niu, SK  
Itohan Okoebor, ON  
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Maria Victoria Rizado, AB  
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# 2023 YEAR- END

## Legislative Changes Made Clear and Simple



The National Payroll Institute is offering a variety of year-end training options. This includes in-person, online and on-demand sessions. Our most popular and comprehensive option is the Complete Year-end Package. Over 2,400 payroll professionals attended this seminar in 2022 and gave it a high score of 4.4 out of 5 - it is quality training you can trust.

This year will see the implementation of significant legislative changes enacted by both Federal and Provincial governments. Now, as critical year-end reporting deadlines and requirements loom, it's time for you to get ready - because your organization and the employees you support are counting on you as a payroll professional.

### THE COMPLETE YEAR-END PACKAGE

Available online and in-person, this full-day seminar covers:

- Federal legislative update
- Jurisdictional legislative update
- Year-end balancing and reconciling (PIER, balancing tax slips to payroll register, preparing jurisdictional Year-end reports for workers' compensation and provincial health taxes)
- Quebec legislative update
- Quebec Year-end reports
- Bonus: On-demand access to Box-by-Box Federal and Quebec Year-end Slip Reporting

### LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: YEAR-END AND NEW YEAR

This shorter online seminar is designed for more experienced payroll professionals and covers only the following:

- Federal legislative update
- Jurisdictional legislative update
- Quebec legislative update

For a full list of topics and dates, visit [payroll.ca](https://payroll.ca)



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