

# TECHSPLOURATION®

## COMMUNITY REPORT





## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



On behalf of the Techsploration Board of Directors, it is my pleasure to share our latest Community Report. The past year was an exciting period of both reflection and renewal for our organization as we thanked our fearless founder and out-going Executive Director, Tricia Robertson, for her many years of service and dedication. Without her vision, Techsploration would not exist. We were also thrilled to welcome Arylene Reycraft as Techsploration's new Executive Director. With the 20th anniversary year now upon us, we are actively looking at our expansion in both Nova Scotia and beyond our provincial borders.

The topic of gender parity in science, engineering, technology, and trades (SETT) fields has been at the forefront of media outlets over the past year. With progressive government policies such as free tuition for apprentices and an increase in scholarships and awards to people considering careers in these fields, our partners in industry,

government, labour and education help us find creative ways to help young women overcome gender stereotypes, social anxieties, and barriers to accessing female role models in Nova Scotia.

Discussion around the challenges for women in these fields is at an all-time high, which is a testament to the importance of Techsploration and the successful delivery of our programming. We know we are needed.

In November, Techsploration was chosen as one of six Now! Nova Scotia Good News Award recipients from over 200 applicants! With the support of our sponsors and our entire community, we look forward to an exciting year ahead and more 'good news' as we continue to empower the next generation of skilled science, trades, and technology talent! Thank you for the role you play in this important work.

Together, we're actively building a more diverse and productive workforce!

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TINA KELLY - Techsploration President

## About Techsploration

Our hands-on, mentor-led programming introduces girls in grades nine through twelve throughout Nova Scotia to in-demand careers in science, trades, and technology. We believe there is power in possibility, so we encourage our program participants to explore careers they may not have considered otherwise, while also helping them understand the significance of math and science for their future careers.

Whether it's through the popular Women in Action Videos or a worksite experience with a Techsploration role model, the impact of Techsploration's programming across Nova Scotia is significant. Hundreds of volunteers, role models, and teachers donate their time and resources to help make Techsploration a thriving, community-led organization. Together, we work with industry to build Nova Scotia's next generation of skilled female leaders!

Each year we reach...

**3,500**  
STUDENTS

**40**  
SCHOOLS

"I'm an aircraft maintenance apprentice and when I complete my apprenticeship I would like to become a mentor. My experience at Techsploration is the reason I'm excelling in my career and why I would like to influence other girls."  
- K-Leigh Murray-Merrill  
Techsploration Alumna '12

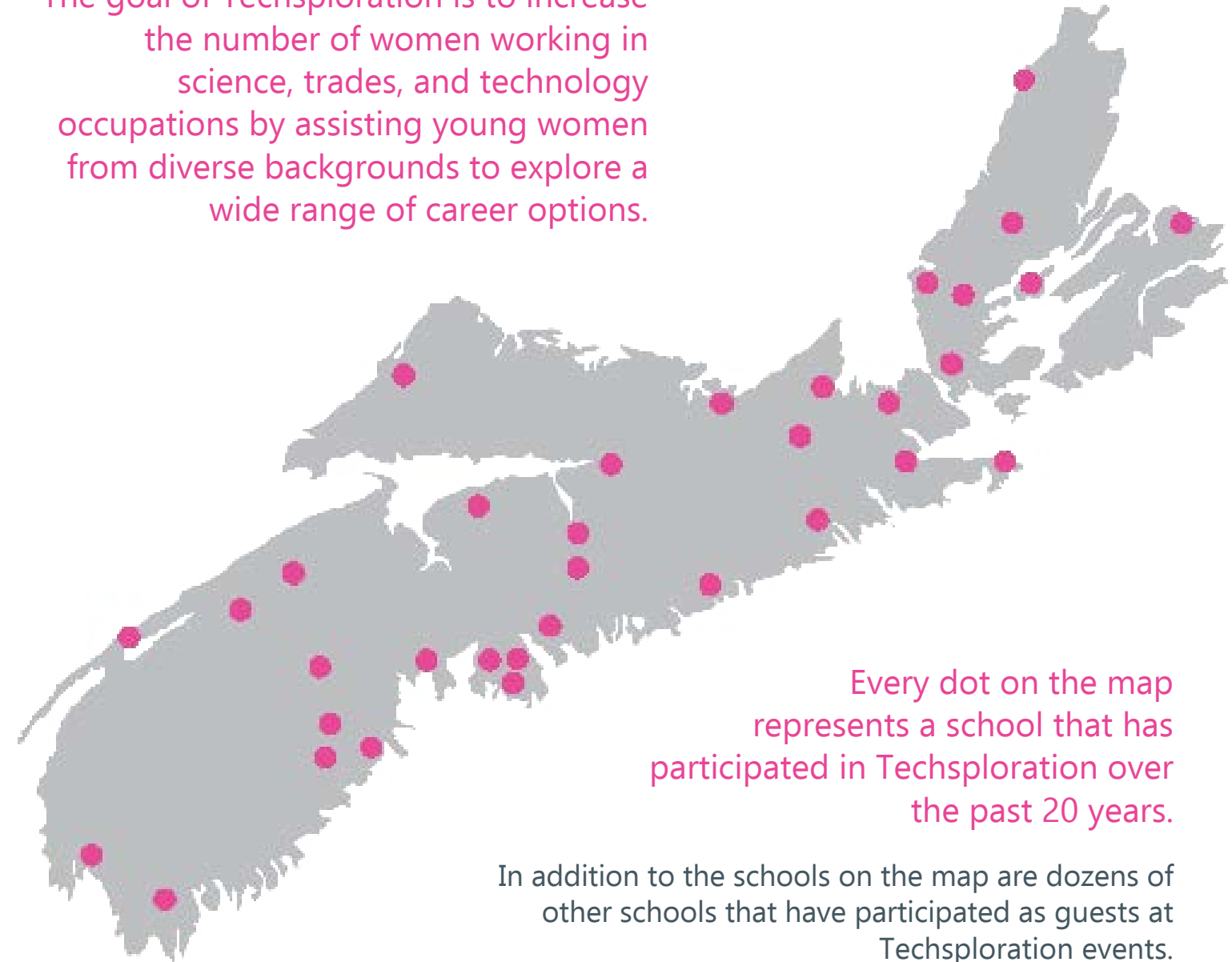
Each year we work with... and deliver...

**350**  
VOLUNTEERS

**50**  
EVENTS

"The whole experience made me feel part of something bigger than myself. We worked as a team, it was amazing!"  
- Nikayla Rosnok  
Techsploration Alumna '11

The goal of Techsploration is to increase the number of women working in science, trades, and technology occupations by assisting young women from diverse backgrounds to explore a wide range of career options.



Every dot on the map represents a school that has participated in Techsploration over the past 20 years.

In addition to the schools on the map are dozens of other schools that have participated as guests at Techsploration events.

Techsploration is truly province-wide; reaching out to diverse communities throughout Nova Scotia.





## Margaret Davidson Techsploration dedication: 20 years and counting...

## ALUMNA PROFILE

*Contributed by Kelsey Crosby, Acadia University Student/Writer*

Among the thousands of amazing volunteers and alumnae who have participated in Techsploration programming over the past twenty years, one volunteer has experienced the program each year from day one to present day. Margaret Davidson was a member of the first graduating class of Techsplorers in 1998 and the first recipient of a Techsploration scholarship (which helped her pursue technical training at NSCC). Since graduating, Margaret has volunteered with the program each and every year (just ask her about her Techsploration t-shirt collection)!

Today, Margaret is the mother of an eight-year-old son and a four-year-old daughter. She hopes both of her children can grow up in a world where they know no boundaries. She wants Techsploration to be a tool to show her children that they can be anything they want to be. Her main goal as a volunteer with Techsploration is to continue to be a proud and vocal advocate for the program.

She believes the program provides a positive, supportive environment for young women to build confidence and remove the word 'can't' from their vocabulary: "Techsploration pushed me out of my comfort zone, which encouraged me to take risks when I normally wouldn't. It's been the voice in the back of my head telling me to do something I'm passionate about."



## The Program

### Techsploration Goes to Work

December – March

Students apply and a teacher selects six to eight young women in grade nine to be on their school's Techsploration team. Together, they research a science, trades, or technology career assigned to their team. With the help of a female role model working in that field, the team spends a day at her workplace, learns about her work, and creates a presentation.

### Techsploration Goes to School

February – April

The Techsploration team shares their experience and presentation with students at their school. Young women and young men, staff and invited guests are introduced to in-demand careers by participating in a round robin with women working in these fields. Students ask the role models questions about their jobs, training and education.

### Techsplorer Events

April – May

Techsploration teams from across the province gather together to share their presentation with participants from other schools. The young women get an in-depth look at multiple science, trades, and technology careers and participate in interactive presentations and workshops that aim to build confidence and leadership skills.

### Techsplorer Alumnae Activities

Ongoing

Young women in grades 10 – 12 are invited for follow-up activities such as interactive workshops and alumnae conferences to learn about more career options, while also developing leadership and teamwork skills. They are encouraged to help teachers select the new school team and assist with the program. In grade 12, all participants can also apply for scholarships created especially for Techsploration by our sponsors and volunteers.

Girls who participate in all of our programming from grade 9 through to grade 12 will have had the opportunity to meet over **125** different role models!



## Alumnae Tracking Project

The Alumnae Tracking Project is an on-going, survey-based initiative that was first launched in 2012. The results have not only provided us with the opportunity to learn how to make program improvements, but have also proven that Techsploration works!

As we continue this initiative, we aim to highlight trends that emerge from the data, which complements the feedback received through alumnae engagement at Techsploration's in-person events.

Check out the amazing results from our latest Alumnae Survey throughout this report!

## Women in Action Video Series

These videos explore exciting careers for women in science, trades and technology-related fields. Since their launch in 2009, the videos have become increasingly popular, being used as a resource tool in classrooms, assemblies and career presentations across Canada. Each video features a female role model who provides a two-to-three minute overview of her career and career path.

We have been thrilled with the success of this project, and were amazed when careercruising.com, an online career guidance system used in 18,000 schools and libraries across North America, asked to feature our Women in Action Videos in their database of occupation profiles.

There are 53 videos in our online library to date. The videos can be viewed in the Women in Action library at [techsploration.ca](http://techsploration.ca), [wiseatlantic.ca](http://wiseatlantic.ca), or on Techsploration's YouTube channel.

# 300,000+ views and counting!

## INFLUENCE

In our 2017 Alumnae Survey, we asked our alumnae to rate each of our events and activities on their effectiveness. Below, you will find the percentages of respondents who agreed each event either 'taught them a great deal' or 'sparked their interest' in:

- making them more aware of careers in science, trades, and technology (dark grey)
- making them more interested in pursuing a career in science, trades or technology (light pink)

### WORKSITE EXPERIENCE

96% | 90%

### TEAM ROLE MODEL

95% | 90%

### TEAM PRESENTATIONS

91% | 83%

### TECHSPLOURATION GOES TO SCHOOL

95% | 88%

### TECHSPLOURER EVENTS

99% | 95%

### WORKSHOPS

98% | 92%

### ALUMNAE CONFERENCE

98% | 90%

### ROLE MODEL SESSIONS

97% | 93%





## SCHOLARSHIPS

Techsploration offered 5 scholarships ranging in value from \$1000 – \$3000 in 2016 and 2017 to recognize outstanding Techsploration alumnae and to assist them financially as they pursue post-secondary education.

### 2017 Recipients

Kady Scott, Truro Junior High School - Saint Mary's University, Bachelor of Science

Jenna Nauss, New Germany Rural High School - Acadia University, Bachelor of Science

Kaitlyn Chisholm, East Antigonish Academy - St. Francis Xavier University, Bachelor of Science

### 2016 Recipients

Samantha Sarty, New Germany Rural High School - Saint Mary's University, Bachelor of Science

Lindsey Caughlan, Sir John A. MacDonald Regional High School - Acadia University, Bachelor of Science

Techsploration recently announced an expansion of its scholarship program for the 2018-2019 school year with the launch of the '20 scholarships to celebrate 20 years' campaign in recognition of Techsploration's 20th anniversary in 2018!

**20** scholarships to  
celebrate **20** years!





## ALUMNA PROFILE



**Jenna Nauss**  
*2017 Scholarship Recipient and Bachelor of Science Student*

Techsploration does more than introduce young women to careers in science, trades and technology; it provides young women with the opportunity to build confidence and excel in any profession.

“Through my involvement with Techsploration I grew as a person, experiencing new things and stepping out of my comfort zone. Since a young age, I have despised speaking in front of others, but with the support and courage of my team I participated in several Techsploration event skits and gained the courage to try new things and the mind-set that I could do anything.”

Jenna is currently finishing the first year of her Bachelor of Science degree in Biology at Acadia University.

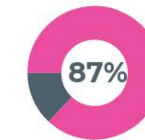
## INFLUENCE

Our Alumnae Tracking Project, an on-going initiative, allows us to better understand how Techsploration has influenced the lives of our alumnae.

Our Alumnae Survey asks the same questions each year so we can identify trends over time. This section provides the percentage of respondents who said they either ‘slightly agree’ or ‘agree’ with the following statements:



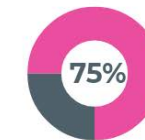
Techsploration introduced me to career opportunities that I don't think I would have known about otherwise.



Techsploration encouraged me to pursue fields of education that I would not have considered otherwise.



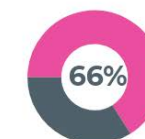
Techsploration improved my confidence about future career possibilities.



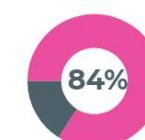
Techsploration influenced my decision to enroll in math and science courses in high school beyond the basic level required for graduation.



Techsploration influenced my decision to graduate high school.



Techsploration influenced my decision to pursue post-secondary education.



Techsploration increased my self-esteem.

“Who cares  
if girls are in  
science,  
trades or  
technology?”

Our Sponsors.

## Benefits to Sponsors

### Development of a Local Workforce

Your support demonstrates leadership in promoting education, training, and youth initiatives that will lead to career and job opportunities for Nova Scotians.

### Addressing the Skills Shortage

The current skills shortage will require a significant recruitment effort to attract new workers to science, trades and technology fields. Techsploration directly addresses this challenge. Women make up over half the workforce and present a viable source of skilled workers in a wide variety of occupations.

Involvement in Techsploration also assists organizations in attracting talented young people to post-secondary educational training opportunities. For employers, this is a way to renew your workforce in future years and to start succession planning.

### Workplace Diversity

Your participation demonstrates the value you hold for workplace diversity. Techsploration is a proven program that supports employment equity initiatives and programs.

### Demonstrate Commitment to Your Community

The increased popularity of corporate citizenship has meant corporations have become a vital part of community and non-profit organizations. Techsploration offers you the opportunity to make a significant statement about your commitment to the communities in which you operate.

### Recognition

Your organization will be recognized in all promotional materials. Your corporate logo will appear on Techsploration program materials distributed to teachers, role models, students and their parents. In addition, your name will be highlighted at the Annual Launch, Alumnae Conference and Techsplorer Events.

## Our Founding Program Partners



## Our Sponsors



Our Sponsors help us change lives.





## Get Involved

### Provide a Female School Team Role Model

Each school team is assigned a science, trades, or technology-related career to research with the assistance of a team role model employed in that career. She will:

- facilitate and host a 'Techsploration Goes to Work' day
- participate in a 'Techsploration Goes to School' event
- participate in a Techsplorer Event

### Provide a Female 'Techsploration Goes to School' Role Model

Each year, up to 200 role models participate in Techsploration Goes to School events across the province. Role models present on a science, trades, or technology-related career to female and male students, teachers and invited guests. Employers support role model participation by providing the time to attend the event and by covering the cost of travel and expenses.

### Provide In-kind Products or Services

Techsploration relies on support from industrial and educational organizations. If you can provide an in-kind donation of services, promotional products, or participate on a Techsploration committee, please feel free to contact the Techsploration office at 902.491.4768. We would love to discuss this with you.

### Provide Financial Support

Your donation will ensure the ongoing success and expansion of the Techsploration program. While considering the benefits to your organization, we want to assure you that your contribution can be flexible; payment for your contribution can be in one or more installments. If you decide that Techsploration is a great fit for your organization, please contact Emily Boucher, Manager, Communications and Strategic Partnerships, at 902.491.3535 or [emily.boucher@techsploration.ca](mailto:emily.boucher@techsploration.ca).

**EMPOWERING** *young women*  
**TO EXPLORE CAREERS IN**  
**SCIENCE, TRADES & TECHNOLOGY**



## The Organization

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“Techsploration has had a huge impact on my decision to go into science. It showed me that there are so many opportunities and careers to explore. As I continue along my career path, I will always remember how Techsploration helped me consider options I would have never even thought of before.”

Kaitlyn Chisholm  
2017 Techsploration Scholarship Recipient  
Bachelor of Science, St. Francis Xavier University

## ALUMNA PROFILE



**Taryn MacDonald**  
*2014 Scholarship Recipient and Welder*

A recipient of a Techsploration scholarship in 2014, Taryn MacDonald put her scholarship funds toward her tuition, books, and tools while she studied welding at NSCC's Strait Area campus. Two years later she received her welding diploma (with honours). Soon after, she was hired by the Strait Regional School Board (SRSB) and now works in Mulgrave at the SRSB Operations Centre. Most of her time there is spent repairing or replacing broken, cracked, or rotten sills on the bottom of the school buses. Taryn enjoys knowing that she and her coworkers ensure the students get to school safely and efficiently.

*"Without a doubt, the most life changing lesson Techsploration taught me was not that trades are for girls, but that trades are for me."*



These  
young  
women **thank you!**



## **Techsploration**

Unit 5A - 800A Windmill Road, Dartmouth, NS B3B 1L1

P: 902.491.4768

F: 902.491.4500

E: [techsploration@techsploration.ca](mailto:techsploration@techsploration.ca)

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