

# CONFERENCE **PROGRAM**

MARCH 1 - 4, 2025

GATHER  
EXPLORE  
INNOVATE  
**THRIVE**



NATIONAL  
**FOOD &  
BEVERAGE**  
management  
CONFERENCE



**CMAC**  
Club Management Association of Canada

**THRIVE!**  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
March 1 - 4, 2025



## WELCOME TO THE EAST COAST

The Atlantic Branch cannot wait to extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to Halifax from March 1 – 4, 2025. We are delighted to have you join us for this momentous occasion as we convene to explore, innovate, and **thrive** in the dynamic landscape of Food & Beverage management.

The theme "**Thrive**" resonates deeply with the ethos of our gathering, symbolizing resilience, growth, and the pursuit of excellence in our ever-evolving industry. Throughout this conference, we aim to inspire and empower each of you to embrace change, seize opportunities, and chart a course toward sustainable success.

Halifax offers a flourishing culinary scene, with a focus on fresh seafood and locally sourced ingredients. From cozy pubs serving traditional Maritime fare to upscale restaurants offering innovative cuisine, the city is a paradise for food enthusiasts.

Halifax is known for its friendly locals and welcoming atmosphere. Visitors often remark on the genuine warmth and hospitality of Haligonians, making it a popular destination for travelers seeking authentic experiences and genuine connections.

Overall, Halifax's blend of history, natural beauty, cultural vibrancy, academic excellence, culinary delights, and warm hospitality make it a truly unique and memorable destination for the conference. In closing, may this conference be a catalyst for inspiration, innovation, and transformation as we embark on a collective journey to **thrive** in the ever-evolving landscape of food & beverage management.

### LOCAL PLANNING COMMITTEE



**Allisha Hamilton**  
Restaurant Manager  
& Events Coordinator  
Oakfield Golf &  
Country Club



**Eric Sargent, CCM**  
General Manager  
Fox Creek Golf Club



**Laura Spicer**  
Restaurant Manager &  
Wedding Coordinator  
Oakfield Golf &  
Country Club



**Eric Tobin, PGA**  
General Manager  
Oakfield Golf &  
Country Club



**Racheal Weagle**  
Director of Membership  
Oakfield Golf & Country  
Club



## CMAC Membership

CMAC is the national professional association for individuals involved in the club management profession in Canada. CMAC represents a diverse collective of club industry professionals who share a common interest in the industry. There are three categories of CMAC membership: Professional, Community, and Honourary.

Senior Management roles (GM/COO/CEO, Assistant GMs, Clubhouse managers) make up nearly half of our membership. Food and Beverage managers, catering/events managers and executive chefs make up 26% of our membership. Membership also includes an increasing number of Accounting & Finance, golf professionals, member services, marketing, fitness, tennis, human resources, hospitality faculty, and students. Of our approximately 670 members, over 50% are from golf, or golf and country clubs, with the remainder coming from a variety of athletic, city, yacht, curling, faculty, and other clubs. Over 240 clubs are represented across Canada.

For more information or to download a membership application form, please visit [www.thecmac.ca](http://www.thecmac.ca).

## Education Credits

Education Credits are awarded on the basis of one **1 NE** Credit for each 60 minutes of education time.

There are a total of **15.5 National Education Credits** possible if you attend all sessions.

Participants must be present for the full session and an evaluation must be completed through the conference app for each session in order to be eligible for the credit(s). Breaks are not included.

CMAC members who register for and attend the full conference will be awarded **four (4) Association Activity Credits**.

## SAVE THE DATES



**2025 NATIONAL CONFERENCE**  
Windsor - Detroit  
November 1 - 5, 2025

**BMI GENERAL MANAGER/  
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER**  
January 26 - 30, 2026



# PROGRAM AT A GLANCE



	Saturday, March 1	Sunday, March 2	Monday, March 3	Tuesday, March 4			
<b>Registration</b>	2:00 pm - 4:30 pm	7:00 am - 4:00 pm	7:30 am - 4:00 pm	7:30 - 11:00 am			
<b>7:00</b>							
<b>7:15</b>							
<b>7:30</b>							
<b>7:45</b>					<b>BREAKFAST</b> 7:15 am - 8:15 am	<b>BREAKFAST &amp; TABLETOPS</b> 7:30 am - 8:30 am	<b>BREAKFAST</b> 7:30 am - 8:30 am
<b>8:00</b>							
<b>8:15</b>					<b>Conference Welcome</b>		
<b>8:30</b>					<b>Resiliency Through Adversity</b> Tareq Hadhad 8:30 am - 10:00 am	<b>Tales from the Trenches</b> Jennifer Cox, CCM 8:30 am - 10:00 am	<b>Finding Success through Humility and Vulnerability</b> David Fida 8:30 am - 9:30 am
<b>8:45</b>							
<b>9:00</b>							
<b>9:15</b>							
<b>9:30</b>					<b>BREAK &amp; TABLETOPS</b> 10:00 am - 10:30 am	<b>BREAK &amp; TABLETOPS</b> 10:00 am - 10:30 am	<b>BREAK 9:30 am - 9:45 am</b>
<b>9:45</b>							<b>Mastering the Distinction</b> Between Critique and Feedback Paul Cadieux, CCM 9:45 am - 10:45 am
<b>10:00</b>					<b>Growth and Excellence in Hospitality</b> Haissam Baityeh, CCM, CCE 10:30 am - 12:00 pm	<b>The Art &amp; Science of Upselling in Private Clubs</b> Ryan Tracy 10:30 am - 11:30 am	<b>My Fight Song</b> Tammy Cunnington 10:45 am - 11:45 am
<b>10:15</b>							
<b>10:30</b>							
<b>10:45</b>							
<b>11:00</b>							
<b>11:15</b>							
<b>11:30</b>	<b>LUNCH &amp; TABLETOPS</b> 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	<b>Personal Finance</b> Nick Mombourquette, BBA, CEBS, FEA 11:30 am - 12:30 pm	<b>Closing &amp; 2026 Promo</b> 11:45 am - 12:15 pm				
<b>11:45</b>			<b>LUNCH &amp; TABLETOPS</b> 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm	<b>Grab &amp; Go Farewell Lunch</b> 12:15 pm - 1:00 pm			
<b>12:00</b>	<b>Ask a GM Anything</b> Haissam Baityeh, CCM, CCE Alysha Berezay, Eric Sargent, CCM Eric Tobin 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm						
<b>12:15</b>							
<b>12:30</b>							
<b>12:45</b>							
<b>1:00</b>	<b>Conference Registration</b> 2:00 pm - 4:30 pm	<b>BREAK &amp; TABLETOPS</b> 2:00 pm - 2:30 pm					
<b>1:15</b>							
<b>1:30</b>		<b>Culinary Olympics</b> Chef Daniella Germond Chef Crystal Higgins 2:30 pm - 4:00 pm		<b>Club Roundtables</b> 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm			
<b>1:45</b>					<b>BREAK</b> 3:30 pm - 4:00 pm		
<b>2:00</b>		<b>Prepare for travel to Brewery and Clubs</b>		<b>Wines of the Annapolis Valley</b> Alexandra MacMillan 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm			
<b>2:15</b>							
<b>2:30</b>		<b>Brewery &amp; Club Tours</b> Garrison Brewing Company Oakfield Golf & Country Club		<b>Kitchen Party</b> Westin Nova Scotian 6:30 pm - 10:00 pm			
<b>2:45</b>							
<b>3:00</b>							
<b>3:15</b>							
<b>3:30</b>							
<b>3:45</b>							
<b>4:00</b>	<b>NewBee Reception</b> 4:30 pm - 5:15 pm						
<b>4:15</b>							
<b>4:30</b>	<b>Load bus for Welcome Reception</b>						
<b>4:45</b>							
<b>5:00</b>	<b>Travel to Weclome Reception</b>						
<b>5:15</b>							
<b>5:30</b>							
<b>5:45</b>							
<b>6:00</b>							
<b>6:15</b>							
<b>6:30</b>	<b>Welcome Reception</b> Glen Arbour Golf Course 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm						
<b>6:45</b>							
<b>7:00</b>							
<b>Close</b>							



# SPEAKERS AND SESSION DETAILS



SUNDAY, MARCH 2

## Resiliency Through Adversity

8:30 am - 10:00 am | **1.5 NE**



**Tareq Hadhad**  
Founder and CEO  
Peace by Chocolate

Tareq Hadhad is telling his story. He was a Syrian refugee and now living his new life with his entrepreneurial family in Canada's east coast. He is the founder and CEO of Peace by Chocolate, and most recently was recognized as one of the Top 50 CEOs in Atlantic Canada by Atlantic Business Magazine.

In 2012 the Hadhad's home and factory that housed the family chocolate-making business were destroyed which forced them to seek safety in other countries. A former medical student at Damascus University and long-time peacekeeping advocate, Tareq joined medical relief efforts after arriving in Lebanon. A new life began when Tareq and his family were welcomed to Canada on a community-based sponsorship. Passionate about peace and entrepreneurship, his family relaunched the family business to recreate the chocolates they once exported across the Middle East and their story has turned into an international inspiring phenomenon.

Tareq and his family have a focus on job creation, utilizing a network of local community members and refugees from across Nova Scotia and Canada to help support the local economy. Now that their chocolates are distributed across Canada, they look to offer more employment and exporting opportunities as their business grows.

Author, Jon Tattre wrote a book about the Hadhad's story which has become a bestseller. A feature film, Peace by Chocolate, also based on the family's story, premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival and launched in Cineplex theaters across Canada in the spring of 2022. The film won several film festivals awards and accolades.

In January 2020, Tareq received his official Canadian Citizenship which garnered international attention and has become one of the greatest accomplishments of his life. He has had the privilege to meet former President of the United States, Barack Obama, Canadian Prime Ministers, and has had conversations with many World Leaders. He was named a Top 30 Under 30 Innovator by Atlantic Business Magazine in 2022, a recipient of the EY Entrepreneur of The Year 2021 for Atlantic, named one of the Top 25 Canadian Immigrants, selected by Google as the National Hero Case, was awarded RBC's Entrepreneur of the Year in 2020 and Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Medal. All of this has happened since Tareq's arrival on Canada's East Coast in December 2015 as a Syrian-Canadian newcomer.

Tareq has spoken at the Summit of The Americas, Amnesty International's Human Rights Conference, TEDx events, and Chambers of Commerce Dinners. He has delivered keynote presentations in the United States, Mexico, Jamaica, the UK, France and Denmark, spoke to several corporate and government organizations both in person and virtually, and done over 1000 interviews with various news teams across the globe. Tareq speaks on the compelling story of his family, the positive impact of newcomers, and the spirit of resiliency, entrepreneurship and giving back.



# SPEAKERS AND SESSION DETAILS



SUNDAY, MARCH 2

## Growth and Excellence in Hospitality

10:30 am - 12:00 pm | **1.5 NE**



**Haissam Baityeh, CCM, CCE**  
Chief Operating Officer  
Washington Golf & Country Club

Haissam earned his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of South Carolina with focus on Club Management and his Masters of Business Administration degree from LSU and has spent his entire working career at private, member-owned, clubs.

Haissam has worked at Myers Park Country Club, Charlotte NC; Cape Fear Country Club, Wilmington, NC; Governors Club in Chapel Hill, NC; Bent Tree Country Club in Dallas, TX; Country Club of Spartanburg in SC; and currently and most recently at Washington Golf and Country Club.

Haissam has served on the Board of the Carolinas CMAA chapter and the Carolinas Club Foundation including as President of both. He also served on the Texas Lone Star chapter's Board including as Vice President. Currently he serves on the National Board of Directors of CMAA.

Throughout his career, Haissam's keen focus has always been on:

1. Team building and the development of team partners
2. Member services, member engagement, and member pride of their own club
3. Governance and Strategic Planning and Focus
4. The development of Students, Rising Stars and Future Managers

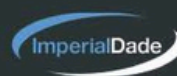
Haissam's life philosophy is inspired by the serenity prayer and the poetic wisdom of his favorite author Khalil Gibran with his favorite book "The Prophet".

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# SPEAKERS AND SESSION DETAILS



SUNDAY, MARCH 2

## Ask a GM Anything

1:00 pm - 2:00 pm | 1 NE



**Haissam Baityeh, CCM, CCE**  
Chief Operating Officer  
Washington Golf & Country Club



**Alysha Berezay**  
General Manager  
Beach Grove Golf Club



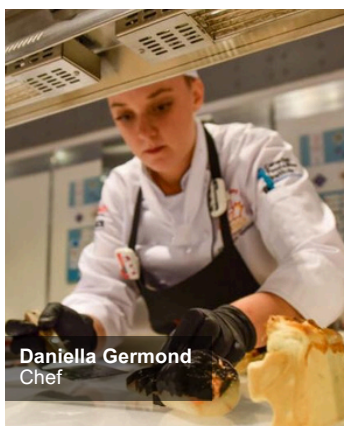
**Eric Sargent, CCM**  
General Manager  
Fox Creek Golf Club



**Eric Tobin, PGA**  
General Manager  
Oakfield Golf & Country Club

## Culinary Olympics

2:30 pm - 4:00 pm | 1.5 NE



**Daniella Germond**  
Chef

Daniella Germond has been passionate about food since she was young. She finds inspiration from global cuisines and cultures; a passion that was sparked while traveling and competing in culinary competitions around the world.

Bringing home 1st place in the 2016 Young Chef Olympiad, and a gold and silver medal from the 2016 IKA Culinary Olympics in Germany, Daniella also received recognition by the Ontario Hospitality Institute as part of their Top 30 Under 30 winners for 2016 in Ontario hospitality. After completing her travels Daniella has worked in some of Ontario's most well known golf clubs.



**Crystal Higgins**  
Sous Chef  
Royal Glenora Club

Born and raised in Edmonton, Alberta, Crystal was brought up by a young single mother and became the family cook by age 10. In her early twenties, she worked in oil and gas as an Accounts Receivable clerk, but cooking was always her passion. After having two children, she worked nights as a Customer Service Manager at Walmart before deciding to return to school. On her 35th birthday, she enrolled in the Culinary Arts program at NAIT, a turning point in her career.

Within her first year, she joined the innovation kitchen, collaborating with food scientists on plant-based meat alternatives while working evenings as a line cook. When tryouts were announced for the NAIT Culinary Olympic Team, she signed up and became Captain of the first all-female team to compete at the IKA Culinary Olympics.

During training, she joined the Royal Glenora Club under the mentorship of Executive Chef and Food & Beverage Director Steve Buzak. Now, as Sous Chef, she oversees the Banquet team and restaurant operations.

Since competing at IKA in 2024, Crystal has been invited to lead another Olympic team and will return to the IKA Culinary Olympics in 2028 in pursuit of gold.






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# SPEAKERS AND SESSION DETAILS



MONDAY, MARCH 3

## Tales from the Trenches

8:30 am - 10:00 am | **1.5 NE**



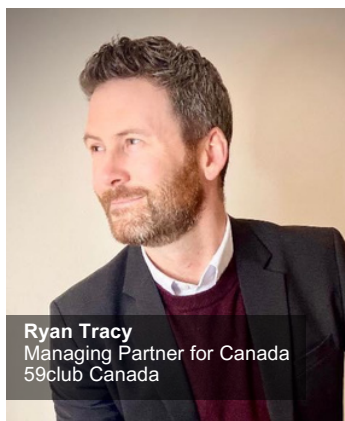
**Jennifer Cox, CCM**  
General Manager / COO  
Edmonton Petroleum Golf &  
Country Club

With over 25 years of experience in private clubs and a strong background in Food & Beverage in the Calgary area. Now residing in Edmonton, she serves as the General Manager and COO of the Edmonton Petroleum Golf & Country Club.

Throughout her career, she has navigated many changes in the industry and expects to see even more as the business evolves. Guided by her core values of accountability, resilience, and care, she leads her team while building strong relationships with both staff and members across all generations.

## The Art & Science of Upselling in Private Clubs

10:30 am - 11:30 am | **1 NE**



**Ryan Tracy**  
Managing Partner for Canada  
59club Canada

Ryan is a PGA of Canada Professional with over 20 years of experience spanning entrepreneurship, academia, and club management. He has served as a General Manager and Chief Operating Officer, gaining extensive expertise in the private club industry.

In June 2020, during the early days of COVID-19, Ryan founded Club Study, a social forum connecting private club managers across North America. By fostering industry discussions and data-driven decision-making, Club Study embodies Ryan's core values of curiosity, community, and continuous improvement.

Ryan has managed golf clubs in two Canadian provinces, leading Miramichi Golf & Country Club to Club of the Year (Small Club Category) in 2015. In 2017, he was recognized as MYPIE Professional of the Year and Atlantic PGA Professional of the Year.

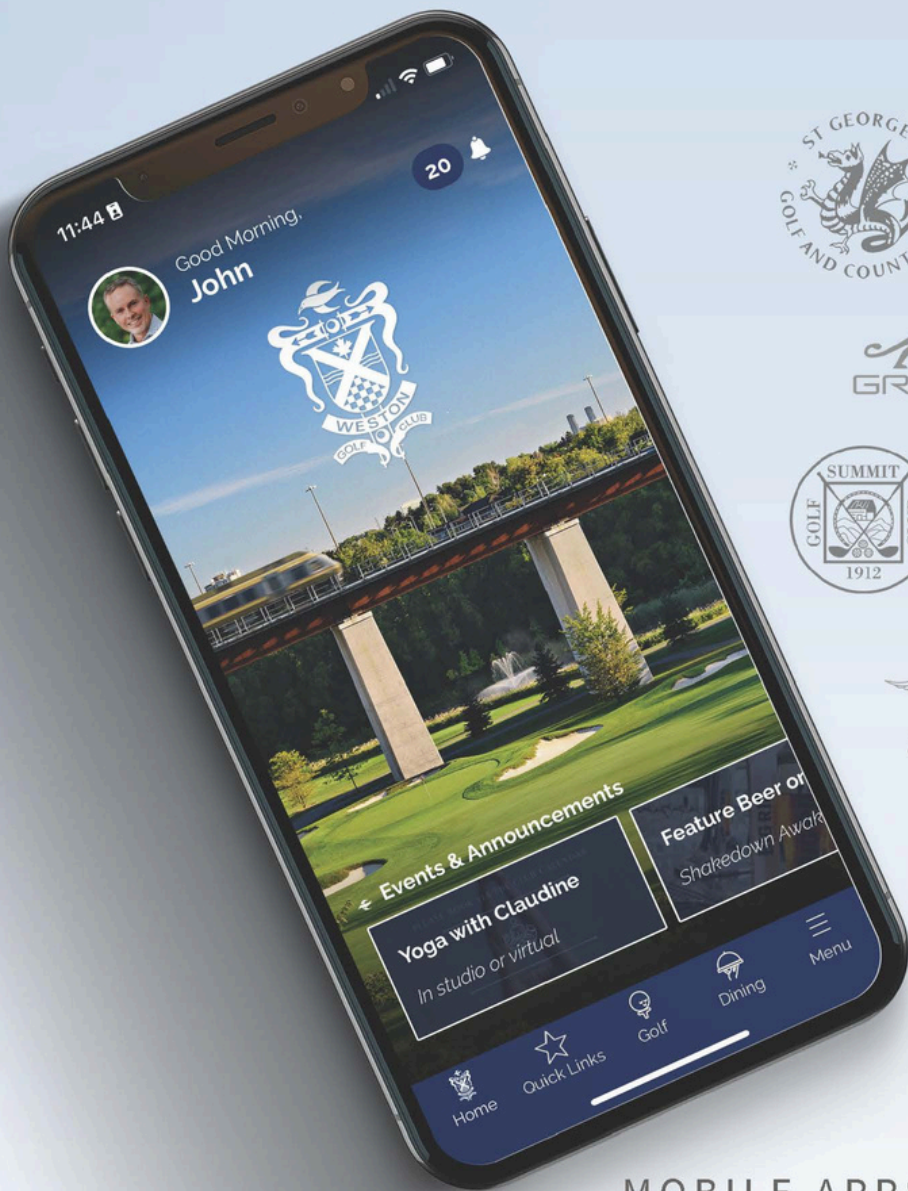
His career also includes operating an executive golf venture, taking corporate clients to major championships, and teaching in Durham College's PGM and Business programs. Dedicated to giving back, he has volunteered with PGA of Canada Zone, CMAC Branch committees, Rotary, and other community groups.

Ryan holds a diploma in Professional Golf Management, a certificate in Adult Education, and has studied Business at Athabasca University.



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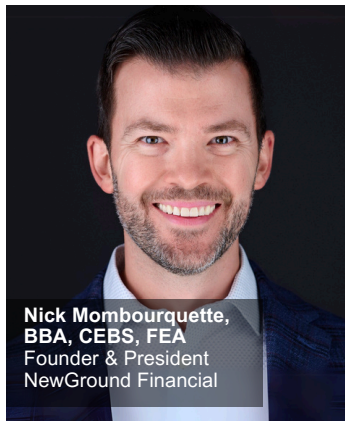
# SPEAKERS AND SESSION DETAILS



MONDAY, MARCH 3

## Personal Finance

11:30 am - 12:30 pm | **1 NE**



**Nick Mombourquette,**  
BBA, CEBS, FEA  
Founder & President  
NewGround Financial

Nick Mombourquette is a dynamic and seasoned advisor dedicated to helping entrepreneurs, family-owned businesses, and SMEs achieve their financial and business aspirations. As the founder and owner of NewGround Financial Inc., Nick leads a consulting firm that excels in employee benefits programs and tax-efficient insurance and wealth planning strategies. Recently honored as one of The Best Financial Advisors Under 40 in Canada/Top 40 Under 40 Rising Stars 2023, Nick brings over 15 years of expertise in the insurance and retirement planning industry.

Nick holds a BBA from Mount Saint Vincent University and boasts several professional designations, including CEBS, GBA, RPA from Dalhousie University and FEA from Family Enterprise Canada. Residing just outside of Halifax, Nova Scotia, with his wife and three children, Nick enjoys staying fit, indulging in music, reading, golfing, and both playing and coaching youth hockey.

## Club Roundtables

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm | **1.5 NE**

A dynamic roundtable discussion amongst peers to share insights, ideas, and innovations on key topics in Canadian club management.

## Wines of the Annapolis Valley

4:00 pm - 5:00 pm | **1 NE**



**Alexandra MacMillan**  
Head of Sales  
Benjamin Bridge

Born and raised in K'jipuktuk (Halifax, Nova Scotia) Alexandra MacMillan first fell in love with wine while working at a Nova Scotia's specialty wine shop in 2011 as a university student. Soon after, Benjamin Bridge scooped her up when their head winemaker witnessed her bright passion on his many in-store visits. Alex's multifaceted talents and tremendous human qualities have been felt across all aspects of the farm winery.

Not one to be focused on titles, she has been an admired leader and go-to colleague long before becoming head of wholesale, which is a dynamic and expanding part of the business.

Today, Alex brings the same joy and pride to her role as she did when first educating Nova Scotians about the emerging quality of our unique wine region over a decade ago.



# SPEAKERS AND SESSION DETAILS



TUESDAY, MARCH 4

## Finding Success through Humility and Vulnerability

8:30 am - 9:30 am | 1 NE



**David Fida**  
Food & Beverage Manager  
Glencoe Golf & Country Club

David Fida is a hospitality industry professional with over 25 years of experience in food and beverage management, team development, and operational excellence. Since 2019, he has served as Food and Beverage Manager at The Glencoe Golf and Country Club, overseeing dining operations and enhancing member experiences.

A SAIT Hotel and Restaurant Management graduate, David has held leadership roles at Melrose Café and Bar, CHOP Steakhouse, and The Kitchen by Wolfgang Puck. His expertise includes large-scale event management, operational efficiency, and team mentorship.

In addition to his operational expertise, David is passionate about fostering leadership and collaboration. He has presented on topics such as team accountability, energy management, and the balance between work and personal life. As a former member of SAIT's Hospitality Management Advisory Board, he played a vital role in evolving the institution's diploma program into a four-year degree, shaping the future of hospitality education.

Outside of work, David enjoys family time with his wife, two daughters, and their dog, Enzo. A talented home chef, he loves hosting and sharing his culinary creations.

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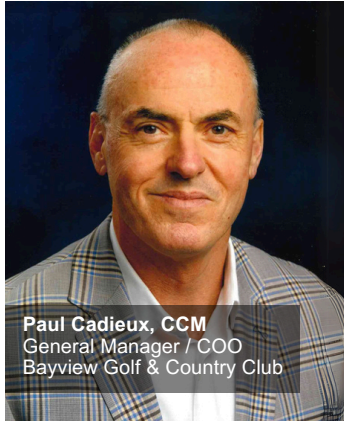
# SPEAKERS AND SESSION DETAILS



TUESDAY, MARCH 4

## Mastering the Distinction Between Critique and Feedback

9:45 am - 10:45 am | 1 NE



**Paul Cadieux, CCM**  
General Manager / COO  
Bayview Golf & Country Club

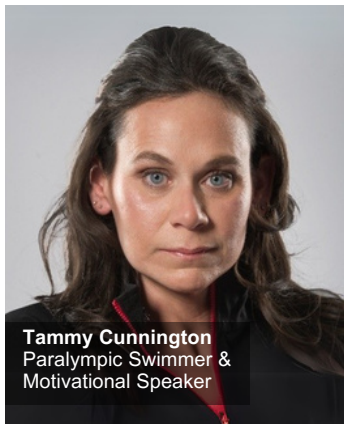
Paul Cadieux, CCM, has more than 25 years of experience at some of Canada's top multi-sport, social and family clubs, such as the Granite Club, Boulevard Club, Toronto Cricket Skating and Curling Club, Island Yacht Club, Toronto Ski Club, and Badminton & Racquet Club of Toronto. Paul is currently the Chief Operating Officer at Bayview Golf & Country Club.

Throughout his career, Paul has demonstrated exceptional leadership in enhancing member experiences, driving operational excellence, and spearheading transformative capital projects. Paul is recognized for his expertise in strategic planning, governance, facility management, and financial stewardship.

He actively contributes to the industry through volunteer roles, including serving on the Ontario Board of Directors for the Club Management Association of Canada and chairing national committees. He has been a regular speaker at CMAC and CMAA Conferences and a contributor in Club Manager Quarterly.

## My Fight Song

10:45 am - 11:45 am | 1 NE



**Tammy Cunnington**  
Paralympic Swimmer &  
Motivational Speaker

Tammy survived a plane crash at the Ponoka airshow in 1982, overcoming near death at six years old to become a Paralympian at 40 and again at 45. Her journey is one of perseverance, resilience, and determination, which she shares as an inspiring public speaker.

She became involved in para sports at a young age, excelling in wheelchair basketball and winning gold with the National Team at the World Championships. After stepping away from competition for a time, she returned to para-triathlon, which ultimately led her to para-swimming. In her short but remarkable swimming career, she represented Canada at the 2015 and 2017 World Championships, the 2015 Para Pan Am Games (winning three medals), the 2016 Rio Paralympics, the 2018 Pan Pacific Championships (winning two medals), and the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics. Over eight years with Team Canada, she set four Canadian records and one world record.

Now retired from elite competition, Tammy has shifted her focus to coaching, traveling, and taking on new challenges—like bungee jumping. She is a passionate advocate for health, fitness, and sport, volunteering with organizations such as Fast and Female, the Rick Hansen Foundation, and the 2019 Canada Games. She also gives back to her community through Canadian Blood Services and the Ronald McDonald House. Tammy believes in pushing boundaries and inspiring others to do the same. Her motto, Passion = Victory, reflects her dedication to overcoming obstacles and encouraging those around her to strive for their goals.



# VENUES AND SOCIAL PROGRAM



## Welcome Reception

Saturday, March 1 - 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

**Location**  
Glen Arbour Golf Course  
40 Clubhouse Lane  
Hammonds Plains, NS B4B 1T4

**Dress Code**  
Business Casual (Nice denim permitted)



## Club Tour

Sunday, March 2 - 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

**Location**  
Oakfield Golf & Country Club  
6055 NS-2, Enfield, NS B2T 1C6

**Dress Code**  
Business Casual (Nice denim permitted)



## Traditional East Coast Kitchen Party

Monday, March 3 - 6:30 pm - 10:00 pm

Get ready to kick up your heels to live music, join in a traditional jig, and indulge in delicious local food—all while sharing laughs and great company around the table. This event is all about relaxed, down-to-earth fun, so leave the suits at home and embrace the East Coast casual dress code. Pack your dancing shoes, bring your best energy, and prepare to make new friends, fill your belly, and leave with a tune or two stuck in your head!

**Location**  
The Westin Nova Scotian  
1181 Hollis St, Halifax, NS B3H 2P6

**Dress Code**  
East Coast Casual



# GENERAL INFORMATION



## National Office Team

**SUZANNE GODBEHERE**  
Chief Executive Officer

**AMANDA CORMIER, CAE**  
Chief Operating Officer

**JESSICA LITT**  
Membership & Operations Manager

**PETULA PERDIKOULIAS**  
Manager, Events & Communications

**ALLYSON ZARATE**  
Administrative Assistant

**CMAC NATIONAL OFFICE**  
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Telephone: 416-979-0640  
Email: [national@thecmac.ca](mailto:national@thecmac.ca) | Website: [www.thecmac.ca](http://www.thecmac.ca)

## Dress Code

**WELCOME RECEPTION** - March 1  
Business Casual

**EDUCATION SESSIONS** - March 2-4  
Business Casual (Nice denim permitted)

**CLUB TOUR** - March 2  
Business Casual (Nice denim permitted)

**KITCHEN PARTY** - March 3  
East Coast Casual

## Conference Bus Transportation

Transportation to the social events is included in the fees for registration.

## Disclaimer Regarding Videos and Photos

Please note that photos will be taken throughout the conference and associated events and may be posted on social media.

## CMAC Social Media

**INSTAGRAM:** @clubmgmtcanada

**LINKEDIN:** club-management-association-ofcanada/

**FACEBOOK:** ClubManagementAssociationofCanada/

**X:** @clubmgmtcanada



# CONFERENCE SPONSORS

