

Around the Office

Infusing Leadership & Innovation into our Creative Ventures this Spring!



Above from left: Heather Brissenden, Sandra Cina, Linda Thomas, Luiza Sadowski & Steve Haviaras

Persevere to greater heights by infusing some leadership and innovation into your art! That is the theme of this edition of MAC's Spring magazine. Take action and amplify your creative ventures into new heights by escalating them to the next level. Whether it's a visual or literary arts project, musical or dance performance, try incorporating it into a multifaceted element, ideally in the form of a multimedia project. There's no better way to create more BUZZ surrounding your event than turning it into a video and sharing it across a myriad of social media platforms. With today's explosion in social media, the possibilities are endless! Spirit Magazine (formerly known as Mississauga Life) recently published a captivat-

ing article on *Leadership 2.0*. There was one quote that really resonated with me. It was by President and CEO of Trillium Health Partners, Michelle DeEmanuele who mentioned that, "Great leaders create great work environments and great work; I think that's why I never really chose a job, so much as I've chosen leaders to work for." I can attest to that while working in Communications for MAC for the past year! I have essentially been able to choreograph a lot of the duties in my position,

which has made it an extremely rewarding year for me. Last summer, I was proud to implement the inaugural *Meet the Media Makers Event* at the Living Arts Centre in Mississauga. This year, we are bringing it back with an eclectic twist to it. Read about the *2013 Media Summit* on page 17.

There's been a lot of changes around the MAC office over the last few months. In December, we completely renovated our offices, giving us a FRESH new perspective in the New Year!

MAC started off the year with its annual Lime-light New Year's Eve Block Party at Celebration Square, featuring artists like Vibonics, Matt Mill-

er, Sheldon De Souza & Illana Luigi, attracting over 30,000 people in attendance.

Soon after, we moved right into the MARTY Awards season- accepting nominations and gearing up for the show on May 9. Thanks to the promotional video we created to generate some BUZZ, we were invited to appear on Omni TV's Polish program, *In [Kultura]*. I represented MAC on the national broadcast on January 26, 2013. To watch the full segment, go to www.omnitv.ca/ontario/tv/inkultura and click on Season 1, Episode 17.



Bruce Kachuk

I would also like to take this opportunity to bid adieu to our Arts Scene podcast broadcaster, Bruce Kachuk. Bruce has been recording MAC's podcasts since June 2009. "I was delighted when I was introduced to the Mississauga Arts Council's 'Arts Scene' publication. I was also amazed as I learned about the quality of talent in the Mississauga area - talent nurtured and developed by the efforts of MAC. May I wish MAC much success in the future and assure all those involved that your efforts are indeed making a positive difference in the arts community of Mississauga." We would like to wish Mr. Kachuk all the best in his future endeavours!

Follow Luiza on Twitter @LuizaSadowski. ☺

Dancing to the Beat-Volunteering with MAC

Introducing Communications Volunteer, Melika Ramkissoon

As a new volunteer with the Mississauga Arts Council (MAC), I am looking forward to providing communications support, as the feverish pace of preparations for the 2013 MARTY Awards continue. Through a deep personal interest in fine art and a passionate professional interest in the area of arts communication, I value the work of organizations like MAC. They sustain the health and well-being of our local creative communities. The opportunity to volunteer with MAC will provide me with a greater exposure to and a better understanding of Mississauga's diverse and vibrant arts community. As a result, this experience will not only strengthen, but broaden my existing skills in the areas of graphic design, media relations, and social media. In addition, it will assist me in continuing to build my portfolio around the broader theme of culture. I have had the privilege of working at other arts focused or-

ganizations, and I have found that each has its own "rhythm". While this includes the obvious — assigned responsibilities, policies, procedures, and deadlines — it also entails something less tangible. It encompasses a uniquely creative environment, which, in turn is dependent on the talent, ingenuity, and dedication of highly experienced staff. However, it also involves the way in which the personal and professional stories of staff are woven into the way they relate their organizations' broader narratives. I hope to "dance" to MAC's rhythm, and to benefit from the wealth of its staff's professional experience; and in so doing, make a small, yet meaningful contribution to its evolving narrative.

Brief Bio: Melika Ramkissoon completed Sheridan College's postgraduate Corporate Communications program in 2011. Along

with her volunteer work at MAC, she is a member of the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC). Currently, she is working on a freelance communications project for a visual artist. ☺



Melika Ramkissoon

BE AN IABC INSIDER:



FOR AN IABC/TORONTO **PORTFOLIO!**

Soon after joining IABC/Toronto in fall 2011, I began attending the Munch 'n' Mingle events, with the goal of meeting and talking to fellow public relations professionals. I eventually realized that I wanted to get a more in-depth understanding of how IABC/Toronto works. As a new member, I felt that volunteering would make my membership experience more meaningful, and make me feel more connected to, and involved, in the organization.

Late in 2012, I met Beverly Fairclough, Vice President, Awards, at a Munch 'n' Mingle event. She was still recruiting volunteers for the 2013 OVATION Awards team, for which I was eager to get on board. The Awards portfolio was a logical choice for me, since the OVATION Awards are the centerpiece of IABC/Toronto's event calendar, and an excellent way to meet and learn from a diverse cross-section of PR practitioners.

Although I joined the team fairly late in the planning stages, the immense volume of work that needed to be completed in this portfolio meant that an extra pair of hands would be put to good use. For the uninitiated, the OVATION Awards portfolio requires the tremendous effort and unique expertise of individuals, divided into four separate teams: Awards, Gala, Marketing and Materials.

I was a member of the Materials group, which was charged with overseeing the production of all materials related to the gala: the host's speech, the PowerPoint presentation, the OVATION Awards Gala program, event

signage cards, and the Winning Entries booklet. I assisted with writing and editing, as well as with the set-up on the day of the event.

During the months leading up to the OVATION Awards Gala, the benefits of volunteering for a specific portfolio became apparent. While I expanded my professional network, I also gained a better understanding of the inner workings of IABC/Toronto. Perhaps more importantly, my volunteer experience gave me a significant sense of personal and professional fulfillment.

Once the OVATION Awards were over, and I had a chance to reflect on the experience, I was able to fully appreciate what I had learned. I came away with a better understanding and respect for what the planning of such a large-scale event entails. My fellow IABC/Toronto members and volunteers each brought with them specialized skills and experience, creating a wonderful atmosphere of learning and collaboration. Moreover, I realized that the OVATION Awards are much more than the gala event. It is a program that celebrates the ingenuity and brilliance of accomplished PR professionals.

Volunteering with the Awards portfolio represented the accomplishment of a personal and professional goal I set for myself at the beginning of this year. I would highly encourage all new IABC/Toronto members to get involved and volunteer for a portfolio that interests them. It will enrich their membership experience, contribute to their professional growth, and make them feel more connected to this vibrant IABC chapter.



Melika Ramkissoon completed Sheridan College's postgraduate Corporate Communications program in 2011. Currently, she is working as a freelance communications consultant.