

Phenomenal Woman honoured

■ Cathy Sweet, owner of Comztar Commercial Properties, wins 2014 Phenomenal Woman Award

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Nancy Allen's professional journey is proof that a woman's life story is "forever changeable".

From working as a mental health and disability counsellor, to going back to school at 34 and becoming a graphic design artist in the marketing industry for a few years, and now, a successful Moncton-based entrepreneur and jewelry artist, Allen says life holds opportunities and things happens for people, not to people.

"Make your story suit the life you want," Allen, the keynote speaker at Tuesday's Phenomenal Woman Award Gala and Luncheon, told a room filled with 140 people, mainly women, of all ages and professional backgrounds at the Republic Room at Crystal Palace. "If it isn't working, change it, adjust it, until it serves you in where you want to go."

Professional changes, whether intended or out-of-the-blue, are what make many prominent business leaders in New Brunswick.

With the Phenomenal Woman Award, the New Brunswick branch of the Community Business Development Corporation's Women in Business honours exceptional accomplishments, both personal and professional, of one southeastern region woman a year. These endeavours must have contributed to the well-being of the residents of the region, as well as to the economic welfare of their own communities.

The 2014 recipient of the award is



Community Business Development Corporation of New Brunswick hosted an awards luncheon yesterday to honour this year's Phenomenal Woman. Lise Caissie, left, of Ernst and Young presents the award to Cathy Sweet of Comztar Commercial Properties, a company that specializes in developing and leasing properties. PHOTO: GREG AGNEW/TIMES & TRANSCRIPT

Cathy Sweet, owner of Comztar Commercial Properties. Comztar offers industrial warehousing, and commercial and office space of multiples sizes ranging from 2,400 to 40,000 square feet in the Metro Moncton area, Miramichi and Bathurst, with plans for expanding in Nova Scotia. It has been in operation since 2003.

As she accepted her award, Sweet said an event like the awards lunch, that brings together women in different fields, is important to the vitality of the local and provincial economies.

"We need to grow the economy of New Brunswick and I think networking is a great way to achieve this," she said. "We need to think of it as co-operation

and not competition."

Adjusting her life's narrative brought Allen all the way to Hollywood and back last year for the Golden Globes Awards. She was the first New Brunswicker ever to be invited to the gifting suites portion of the world-renowned awards show, where she met, mingled with and sold pieces to many celebrities, actors, screenwriters, athletes and more.

But it's not just the trip to Hollywood that made Allen realize she had made it in this chapter of her life. It was the recognition and pride displayed by her peers, clients and complete strangers at home in the Maritimes that made it that much sweeter.