

Sussex woman earns spot in leadership program

By Tamara Gravelle
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SUSSEX — One Sussex business owner will be learning how to improve her business from some of the biggest companies across the Maritimes.

Laura Araneda is one of 16 Atlantic Canadians who were accepted into the Wallace McCain Institute's Entrepreneurial Leaders Program. She is president of Vic Progressive Diamond Drilling Inc.

Over 400 Atlantic Canadians applied for a position in the program.

Araneda got to meet the 29 finalists during the final elimination period and said she was surprised when she found out that she made it into the program.

"Just the calibre of people we have in the Maritimes made it no sure thing," Araneda said. "I'm really happy that I'm getting this chance."

For the next year, Araneda will be doing monthly workshops in Miramichi with the other participants.

Mentors and speakers from across Atlantic Canada will be coming in for the weekend to work with the participants. Each weekend will be dedicated to working on one specific aspect of business.

This is the program's sixth year and Araneda said she really sees the benefit from the program.

"I've met the last five groups that have gone through (the program) and they're just amazing business people," Araneda said. She said she knows this program will help her business and herself grow.

"It's one of those things that will hold us accountable," Araneda said. "I'm sure that I'm not going to be able to forget it."

She thinks the reason why this program is in existence is to help jump-start the Atlantic economy.

"They're focusing on some businesses they see and are saying 'okay, these are businesses that we can take and help out through mentoring,'" Araneda said. "There are some amazing mentors there. They're brilliant"

Araneda said those mentors are there to help push busi-

nesses to become better.

"These are successful business people and they're all donating their time," Araneda said. "They're giving of themselves to try and build the Maritimes up."

"I think that's pretty impressive."

Businesses include but are not limited to the McCain's, UNB representatives, Major Drilling, and others.

"There are big names here and they're all supporting this," Araneda said.

She said the program is mainly about making contacts with people across the Maritimes and it'll be a good place to talk about any problems people might be having with their business.

"There's always problems, it's never simple," Araneda said. "It's nice to have a group that you can say 'hey, this is what's keeping me awake at night. How have you guys dealt with this in your experience?'"

"It's fantastic to get that roundtable effect and to hear how other people dealt with the same kind of challenges."

The session Araneda is most looking forward to is in August and concentrates on change and innovation in business.

"I really think we need that in the Maritimes," Araneda said. "We need to look at those things and try to figure out how to bring work into the Maritimes and keep it."

Araneda also said that session will speak on how to keep workers in the Maritimes. She said there are a lot of skilled, educated workers in the province but the problem is that



Gravelle/KCR

Laura Araneda sitting in front of her office on Vail Court. She is president of Vic Progressive Diamond Drilling Inc.

they're all leaving.

"That's a massive challenge," Araneda said. "If we can turn that around and get some of these people back into the

Maritimes, we would benefit greatly from that."

The first session is in July and will be an introduction to the program.

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER

"That's true, Shauna. But you see Mr. Penny dug up lots of holes. Every day he went outside and dug a new hole. There were so many holes in the yard that no one knew where his money was hid. He even dug holes in his wife's garden. One day Mr. Penny came home and he sat in his rocking chair. He took his handkerchief out of his pocket and he wiped his forehead. Mr. Penny was sure he had a fever. "What's the matter?" Mrs. Penny asked

her husband. "Are you sick?" "Yes I think I am. I definitely don't feel well." "Maybe I should call Dr. Thomas." "No, no, I don't want to pay him. Besides it's not that kind of sickness. I'm sick because I forgot where I put my money." Now Mr. Penny had the biggest problem in the entire village. He went outside and looked at all the holes. But he could not remember where he hid his money. He saw holes everywhere he looked. He

would have to dig in everyone of them." "Did someone ever find the money, Grandpa?" Shauna wanted to know. "Yes, they did but you will never be able to guess where they found it. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll write you a message in secret code and when you find out the code, you will know where Mr. Penny found his money.

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