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2015

Youth Leadership Pipelines Project

ENVIRONMENTAL SCANS
BC REAL ESTATE ASSOCIATION

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BCREA YOUTH LEADERSHIP PIPELINE

ENVIRONMENTAL SCANS

As part of the BC Real Estate Association's Youth Leadership Pipeline Project, the following environmental scans are included in this document:

1. Youth Leadership Pipelines Programs
2. Recruiting Young Leaders for Boards of Directors
3. Young Professionals Networks
 - a. Outside of Organized Real Estate
 - b. Within Organized Real Estate

Research included reviewing existing literature, investigating web information, and conducting telephone interviews with implementers of Young Professionals Networks in the Real Estate industry in Canada and the United States.

Each of the environmental scans includes the most current information available about the programs, their purpose and mandates, and where possible, policies, procedures, resources and best practices.

1. Environmental Scan: Youth Leadership Pipelines Programs

Youth Leadership Pipelines

There are many Youth Leadership Pipeline programs, particularly in the United States. They focus on providing leadership training for children and adolescents, usually in underprivileged societies. They are usually located in inner-city areas which are populated by cultural minorities, and where opportunities for education and jobs are seriously lacking.

They work to build a leadership pipeline for social justice by (1) engaging young people from the most marginalized communities into youth organizing; (2) supporting the holistic development of young people; and (3) facilitating young people's transition to higher education, meaningful employment, and advanced leadership opportunities in social justice organizing.¹

While these Leadership Pipeline projects focus exclusively on youth, what might be relevant to the purpose of bringing young professionals into the area of leadership and governance is an article related to the Effective Communities Project (USA) which defines leadership and discusses effective leadership training:

In her article, *A Model for Community-based Youth Leadership Development*², author Susan Doherty talks about leadership as “a complex system involving the skills, abilities, and knowledge of the *leader*, the skills, abilities and knowledge of the *followers*, and the context in which all interact.” While her program focuses on older adolescents, the notions of leadership apply to older young people as well. She, and her project, advocate training designed to incorporate two specific areas: leadership skills and knowledge of issues.

Leadership skills

- Includes dealing with change, improving communication, managing conflict, making decisions, building effective groups, managing meetings, planning and strategizing, and problem solving.

Knowledge of issues

- Focuses on examining all sides of an issue, and the implications of the issue. This might include participation in debates, discussions with experts, etc.

Application

Application of the leadership knowledge and skills gained through training is seen as essential, and is done through a guided-mentorship model and through community service.

As will be discussed in the following environmental scans, this guided-mentorship model is a common component of leadership training and of getting young persons involved in administration activities in any industry.

¹ Funders Collaborative on Youth Organizing <http://fcoyo.org/regenerationsleadershippipeline>

² Susan Doherty, *A Model for Community-based Youth Leadership Development*

Leadership Pipelines

Research on “Leadership Pipeline” reveals further information, focusing not on youth specifically, but on business and effective ways to inform succession planning. The literature looks at a particular model of training and promoting management from within the organization³.

Developing Your Leadership Pipeline, by JA Conger and Robert M Fulmer discusses a combination of skills training and leadership development:

*The fundamental rule...is that succession management must be a flexible system oriented toward developmental activities, not a rigid list of high-potential employees and the slots they might fill. By marrying succession planning and leadership development, you get the best of both: attention to the skills required for senior management positions along with an educational system that can help managers develop those skills.*⁴

In the corporate world, the leadership pipeline model involves picking the right person for advancement, ensuring that person has sufficient support – often through a mentorship arrangement with senior management – and sufficient training and time to develop the needed skills. Throughout this pipeline model, participants are assessed and provided additional support, if needed. The model is “owned” by senior management, who make the decisions about who participates and at what level. It focuses on leadership, skill-building, and succession-planning through all levels of management, up to the C-level (CEO, COO, etc.).

Currently, board membership in the corporate realm seems to be at a, separate level. Trustee positions do not seem to be filled by employees, but by external experts, and there is a lack of information about corporations bringing young professionals into senior management or governance. However, there is a push coming from the young professionals themselves, who want to participate in governance.

The International Young Governance Professionals (IYGP)

The International Young Governance Professionals (IYGP) is an independent, global community of young leaders dedicated to cultivating fresh perspectives in corporate and non-profit governance.⁵ This organization came about because of the fact that failures in governance have become increasingly public and more and more young people have become interested in corporate and non-profit governance as a field of research, theory and practice.

Since 2013, IYGP has held an annual summit, which brings together young people wanting to know more about governance best practices, how they can be improved, and how young people can become engaged with governing bodies and structures. This successful summit was held in Vancouver this year, and the seminars and workshop focused on leadership topics such as:

- Governance policies and strategies
- Tools and techniques for effective leadership
- Finances and budgets

³ Charan, Drotter, and Noel, *The Leadership Pipeline* (2011). Mind Tools Ltd.

⁴ <https://hbr.org/2003/12/developing-your-leadership-pipeline/ar/1> (Harvard Business Review)

⁵ <http://iypg-summit.com>

- Effective decision making
- Risk management
- Board diversity

Participants of the IYPG Summit have the opportunity to:

- Learn about a variety of perspectives, models, best practices, challenges, and innovation in board governance theory and practice.
- Gain tools to improve their effectiveness as a governance professional or director.
- Meet and learn from a wide range of governance experts and peers.
- Find out about opportunities to become a director/trustee.

The IYPG also provides networking and community building for young professionals interested or involved in governance, throughout the year. It is operated by volunteers from the group who are currently working on new events, webinars, and seminars.

Summary:

From reviewing Youth Leadership Pipeline projects, and Leadership Pipeline documentation, as well as the International Young Governance Professionals movement, the following becomes clear:

1. Leadership, at whatever age, requires training on both leadership skills and knowledge, as well as the application of those skills and knowledge through participation and guidance in leadership activities.
2. It is important that participants are provided with support, time, assessment, and feedback on their progress.
3. Guided mentorship is a good way to provide that support and feedback.
4. Young professionals are becoming more interested in governance and in developing leadership skills.

2. Environmental Scan: Recruiting Young Leaders for Boards of Directors

While the research has not uncovered information about business corporations actively recruiting young leaders to sit on boards of directors, or even on senior management committees, a review of the literature regarding non-profit organizations reveals a number of non-profits who are actively trying to recruit young members do just that.

This environmental scan reviews the following non-profits, who have focused on developing training materials or programs to engage young professionals in governance, and show organizations how to, and why to, include young people on their boards and senior management committees:

- Alberta Culture and Community Spirit: Board Development Program
- The Cooperative Housing Federation of Canada: Young Member Engagement Strategy
- Leadership Waterloo Region: Youth on Board Program

The Alberta Culture and Community Spirit: Board Development Program⁶

The Alberta Culture and Community Spirit's Board Development Program (2008) has developed training materials, in conjunction with Grant McEwan College, the Wild Rose Foundation and a number of volunteers, to help non-profit organizations increase the effectiveness of their boards. This material, titled *Board Building: Recruiting and Developing Effective Board Members for Non-profit Organizations* does not focus specifically on recruiting young people to the boards, but does say that paying attention to the future needs of the organization is important. It also says that evolving a board is important to:

- Better reflect the diversity of the community.
- Create new opportunities for others, including youth, to share diverse perspectives.
- Provide opportunities for leadership and development.

What will young people get out of participating in boards? Board members are volunteers, who get opportunities to contribute, make effective use of their skills, and networking with others. They may also get opportunities to further their leadership training goals, explore career options, participate in the community, add balance to paid work, feel personally fulfilled, pursue a personal focus, and/or repay the organization.

Recommendations:

The training materials suggest that organizations should:

- In terms of training for young members, the board may need a mentorship model, providing a coaching, supervising, and managing role.
- Make an effort to give young people, within the organization, responsibilities based on their ability and willingness to contribute. These responsibilities might include:
 - Leadership roles
 - Develop Board internship opportunities
 - Advisory committee members
 - Executive members of youth groups

⁶ <http://culture.alberta.ca/community/programs-and-services/board-development/>

- Encourage participation in the board by providing young people with opportunities to assist with special events or projects, and serve on AD Hoc or standing committees.
- Provide opportunities to allow interested individuals to work in a variety of roles, with varying degrees of leadership responsibility.
- Encourage growth and development of individuals through involvement in special events, leadership training, committee membership, and shared leadership positions.

One of the best ways to help a new board member is with orientation documentation, orientation sessions, mentors, and coaching. Training includes:

- information sessions
- in-service workshops on special issues
- retreats, external workshops and conferences
- teleconferences and online material
- progressively more varied and responsible assignments

Recognition is a critical aspect of board development and retention. Participants need feedback on their performance. Recognition might include:

- thank you letters
- verbal recognition
- special events and social opportunities
- awards
- more challenging assignments
- education/training opportunities
- opportunities to share (blog newsletter)

The Cooperative Housing Federation of Canada: Young Member Engagement Strategy⁷

The Cooperative Housing Federation of Canada: Young Member Engagement Strategy looks at a variety of age groups. For young people between 16-29 years, the strategy is “Young Member Engagement in Governance”. The focus is on leadership development and having more young leaders involved in governance. Actions include recruitment, support and mentoring of young leaders.

A board of directors should represent the diversity of its members, including young ...members. Co-ops, regional federations and CHF Canada, should actively recruit young members to their board, and support and mentor them as directors.⁸

Strategy:

- Identify and invite young members to run for the board.
- Set goals for young member engagement in leadership.
- Consider what might be barriers, identify strategies to overcome those barriers.

⁷ http://www.chfcanada.coop/eng/pdf/Young%20Member%20Engagement%20Report_final.pdf

⁸ Young Member Engagement Strategy. The Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada. 2013.

- Mentor young people as a key aspect of retaining engagement. Mentorship should be a two-way process, where new directors can learn board roles and responsibilities, and experienced directors get feedback and hear new ideas.
- Activities such as co-chairing meetings, participating in regional events, and having young member networks available are important.
- New young board members should be given the opportunity to receive formal training on leadership and their role as board member.

Recommendations:

- Clarify the vision and mission of the board. Invite young members to join in the process.
- Consider term limits for board and committee positions so young members can experience a variety of roles and responsibilities.
- Help young members take part in governance by having flexible meeting schedules.
- Establish a board mentoring program.
- Ensure that you provide adequate professional development and training in governance and leadership

Measure success:

- Track number of young board members.
- Post success stories online or through newsletters, of having young members on your board.

Leadership Waterloo Region: Youth on Board Program

Leadership Waterloo Region is a social profit organization providing community focused leadership development opportunities. Their vision is to be the definitive provider of leadership development in their community, and their mission is to provide experiential leadership development, challenge people to view their community through a different lens, and foster connections with active and emerging leaders creating positive change.⁹

They have a core program and a *Youth On Board* program. The core program provides leadership training for those working in business, government, and social profit sectors. The *Youth on Board* program is for young leaders between the ages of 18 and 23.

Youth on Board is a program for young leaders between the ages of 18 and 23. Young leaders are matched with mentors who sit on local Boards of Directors. They learn about board governance and, with the assistance of their mentors, actively participate in the governance of a local social profit organization for a minimum of six months.

Youth on Board can help young leaders to:

- Develop and enhance leadership skills.
- Gain hands-on experience in board governance.
- Understand the issues faced by social profit organizations.

⁹ Report to the Community 2013/14. Leadership Waterloo Region.
<http://www.leadershipwaterlooregion.org/content/youth-board>

- Connect with established leaders in the community.

Boards of Directors gain by:

- Connecting young leaders to local community initiatives
- Gain a youth perspective at the board level
- Expand emerging leaders' knowledge of board governance practices
- Grow the pool of potential board members

Summary:

The three non-profit organizations designed to actively recruit young professionals to participate in governance (senior management or boards of directors) focus on:

1. Training and developing training materials.
2. The need for a guided mentorship or coaching model for young professionals.
3. Providing recommendations to non-profit organizations for recruitment, support and mentoring of young professionals.
4. Offer leadership training programs.

3. Environmental Scan: Young Professionals Networks

A. Young Professionals Networks Outside of Organized Real Estate

There are a number of Young Professionals Networks (YPN) in Canada, outside of organized real estate. They represent industry sectors, government agencies, non-profit organizations, and communities.

This environmental scan reviews the following selection of Young Professional Networks in each category.

Industry sectors:

- The Association of Consulting Engineering Companies (Canada) Young Professionals Network
- The Canadian Council for Public-Private Partnerships Young Leaders in Infrastructure
- Canadian Water Network's Student and Young Professional Committee

Government agencies:

- The Statistics Canada Young Professionals Network
- Standards Council of Canada Young Professionals Network

Non-profit organizations:

- The United Way Young Professionals Network
- The Young Non-profit Professionals Network

Communities:

- The Young Professionals of Nanaimo
- The Young Professionals Network of Ontario

While there are other YPNs, these provide a good cross-section of what's available for young professionals outside of organized real estate. Young Professionals Networks focused only on socializing, or those dedicated to providing assistance to world travellers, for example, are not included in this research. All of these YPNs are focused on improving the professionalism and capabilities of the young professionals within the mandate of the organization, and with the communities involved.

Industry Sectors

The Association of Consulting Engineering Companies (Canada) (ACEC)

The Association of Consulting Engineering Companies (ACEC)¹⁰ is a pan-Canadian YPN, directed towards individuals in ACEC member firms who are under the age of 41. ACEC's pan-Canadian YPN is a united

¹⁰ http://www.acec.ca/about_acec/YPN.html

network of the various provincial and territorial YPNs across the country. The focus is on leadership through training seminars, hosted by the various YPNs, and on networking across the country.

The objectives of the ACEC YPN are to:

- Promote a better understanding of the function, role and business of ACEC Member Organizations.
- Understand, promote and grow relationships between clients and consultants.
- Create a network of cross discipline among young professionals within the engineering consulting industry.
- Promote mentoring opportunities.
- Interact with similar YP organizations within other industries to help promote consulting engineering, exchange ideas, and identify mutually beneficial opportunities.
- Advocate on behalf of YPs to promote their interests within the consulting engineering industry.
- Increase awareness of ACEC Member Organizations and consulting engineering to stakeholders and the general public.
- Contribute by supporting a dynamic working environment.
- Promote involvement in various ACEC Member Organization committees and at events.

The Canadian Council for Public-Private Partnerships: Young Leaders in Infrastructure

The Canadian Council for Public-Private Partnerships calls their YPN the *Young Leaders in Infrastructure*¹¹. Its mandate is to engage and create relationships among the next generation of Canadian leaders in the infrastructure sector.

Through networking and education opportunities, the Young Leaders in Infrastructure (YLI) will guide the growth of infrastructure and the P3 model for future generations through the following 3 pillars:

Connect

- Attract and retain talent
- Traditional and interactive events
- Use social media to communicate and facilitate networking
- Connect to other groups and associations

Educate

- Mentoring and career assistance
- Knowledge sharing across disciplines
- Understand more than transactional nature of infrastructure investments

Influence

- Advocate for intelligent infrastructure investment
- Publish opinions/positions through team initiatives
- Create working subcommittee

¹¹ Young Leaders in Infrastructure. The Canadian Council for Public-Private Partnerships. 2015. <http://pppcouncil.ca/about-ccppp/young-leaders-in-infrastructure.html>

Canadian Water Network's Student and Young Professional Committee (SYPC)

Canadian Water Network's Student and Young Professional Committee¹² (SYPC) is comprised of emerging water leaders from across the country who are keen to facilitate networking and collaboration with water as the central element.

The SYP committee members are selected based on merit, with an effort to have representation across Canada, across disciplines, and with a balance of graduate students and young professionals.

The committee focuses on professional development by:

- Organizing regional networking and education events.
- Developing cross-sector virtual events with guest speakers.
- Sharing information about the Canadian Water Network and its activities.
- Act as Canadian Water Network ambassadors within their regions.

The committee includes a president, vice-president, webinar coordinator, social media and communications coordinator, and regional representatives from the Pacific, West-Central, Ontario, Quebec, Atlantic and Northern Territories regions.

Activities:

- Committee members serve for 18 month terms, although the president's term is extended for an additional three months in an advisory capacity.
- Each representative works with others in their region, as well as the President, Vice-President and Coordinators, to organize and promote SYPC activities.
- Committee members meet via teleconference. National meetings are held monthly, regional meetings may occur more often depending on event planning and other activities in the regions.
- Regional representatives are expected to both organize and participate in SYPC events held in their area.
- Committee members are encouraged to support SYPC activities using social media.
- Estimated time commitment is 5-6 hours per month.

Opportunities for SYPC members include:

- Networking – An expanded professional network, with new contacts from across water sectors.
- Collaboration – An opportunity to collaborate with outstanding peers and Canadian Water Network staff.
- Training – SYPC members learn about events organization and promotion, and how to use social media effectively.
- References – Involvement with Canadian Water Network's SYPC is highly regarded in the water industry across Canada.

¹² <http://www.cwn-rce.ca/young-professionals/>

Government Agencies

Statistics Canada Young Professionals Network

The Statistics Canada Young Professionals Network¹³ (SYPN) exists to foster innovation and create opportunities for networking among Statistics Canada's employees and act as a mechanism to create a working space for the exchange of ideas between Statistics Canada's young professionals and management. The objectives of the network are to:

- Support Statistics Canada's business objectives by representing its young professionals and promoting innovation and collaborative decision making through intergenerational partnerships within the Agency.
- Create awareness of network and corporate initiatives among young professionals and stimulate their engagement in the workplace community.
- Collaborate with senior management in finding new and effective ways to successfully attract, develop and retain young employees as well as integrate them in the Agency as a whole.
- Act as a two-way communication liaison between senior management and the young professionals in the workforce.

The network is actively engaged in many different initiatives, both within Statistics Canada and across the public service. Some initiatives include:

- A panel of advisors made up of Statistics Canada senior managers.
- A working group devoted to career development of young professionals.
- Discussions on knowledge transfer and succession planning.
- Hosting events like the Statistics Canada Info Fair and monthly social events.
- Networking events with other young professional networks in other government departments and agencies.

Standards Council of Canada

Information from the Standards Council of Canada is brief. They define young professionals in their network as:

- Young and dynamic managers, engineers or technicians aged from early 20s to mid-30s.
- Experienced in working with or developing standards or are involved in conformity assessment activities.
- Involved with a company, business or industry that uses or benefits from standards.
- Interested in becoming more involved in ISO/IEC related activities.

They encourage young professionals to join their YPN so that:

- Their voice will be heard in the international arena and help shape the future of global standardization and conformity assessment.

¹³ <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/employment/pride/young>

- They can participate in networking opportunities and help cultivate a long-term environment for the involvement of young people from all over the world in international standardization.
- They will be part of the successful transfer of knowledge from one generation of Canadian standards professionals to the next.
- They will develop awareness of the IEC's work and benefit from being involved in international standardization.

Non-Profit Organizations

United Way Young Professionals Network

The United Way Young Professionals Network focuses on young professionals between the ages of 21 and 40. It develops and prepares future community leaders through community engagement and professional development.

Community engagement activities include:

- Hosting charitable events.
- Hosting candidate forums during election years.
- Providing opportunities for young professionals to serve on local boards/committees, such as for non-profits, businesses, schools, and city events.
- Encouraging young professionals to attend city/county meetings that impact the community.

Professional development activities include:

- Hosting power lunches where business leaders, government leaders, and community leaders will share their secrets of success.
- Offering career-related mentorship programs, where young professionals are teamed with a mentor who will help them to achieve professional goals.

Recognition:

- “12 under 40” award – each month, a young professional will be publicly recognized for significant accomplishments in their chosen career field, as well as their commitment and contribution to the community.
- Emerging Leader award – one 12 under 40 recipient is selected to receive this award and be recognized at the annual meeting.

The Young Non-profit Professionals Network (YNPN) (USA)

The Young Non-profit Professionals Network¹⁴ (YNPN) activates emerging leaders by connecting them with resources, people, and ideas.

YNPN activates emerging leaders and helps them acquire the skills and awareness they need to be effective change-makers. With these leaders, we're building a diverse and powerful social sector that can support and strengthen our communities.

¹⁴ <http://www.ynnpn.org/>

The very first YNPN chapter was founded in the San Francisco Bay Area in 1997 when a small group of young non-profit professionals gathered to commiserate about their shared experience in the sector. Their challenges included low wages, little professional development or respect, few opportunities for advancement, and their desire to build more effective and sustainable careers.

They soon realized that they weren't alone in these experiences and sought out other young professionals for support and development. They put up some flyers, made a few phone calls, and organized a meet-up at a local bar. They had high hopes that maybe a dozen people would join them. Instead, more than 100 people showed up that night and eventually, along with several hundred more people, became YNPN's first chapter. Over the years chapters have spread across the USA as members of existing chapters relocated to new cities and other young non-profit professionals looking to connect heard about YNPN.

For many years YNPN was an all-volunteer organization with a working National Board that provided support and programming for chapter leaders. In 2011, they hired their first Executive Director and began to expand their staff as well as their chapter support, programming, and national voice work.

Today the YNPN network serves more than 50,000 members with chapters in 42 cities across the USA.

Communities

The Young Professionals of Nanaimo

There are a number of Young Professionals Networks associated with communities rather than particular organizations, and they are very similar. The YPN of Nanaimo is a good representative of that group, and is local to British Columbia.

The Young Professionals of Nanaimo¹⁵ is a not-for-profit organization for young professionals in the Nanaimo area who wish to network, socialize and continue to develop professionally. Their mission is to create a vibrant and connected young professional community in Nanaimo.

This YPN focuses on four pillars:

1 Professional Development

The YPN creates multiple opportunities for members to develop and broaden their skills. Professional development events vary from bringing in local business leaders to having members present on their areas of expertise. Topics range from strategic business planning and goal setting, to leadership training, investing, and technology.

2 Community Involvement

The YPN strives to make the community a better place to live, work, and play. As leaders in the community, the YPN members value community involvement and continue to take on ambitious community projects, which are connected locally within the community, economy, environment, and are in support of youth. Some projects have included:

- Saving the Nanaimo Train Station.

¹⁵ <http://www.ypnanaimo.com/>

- creating the YPN Community Gardens
- Supporting the Nanaimo Child Development Centre Silly Boat Regatta.
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Vancouver Island
- Relay for Life.

3 Business Networking

The YPN encourages members to get to know each other in a more meaningful way through our signature events – "Meet & Greets", speed networking nights, corporate functions and social gatherings.

The YPN has been very successful at creating an environment for business referrals and many members have developed strong business connections within the group.

4 Social Networking

Social events are designed to provide a more casual atmosphere for members to get to know each other on a personal level. They also have group functions designed to provide a more casual atmosphere for members to get to know each other on a personal level, including a bi-weekly happy hour (cornerstone social event which varies locations at pubs and restaurants throughout Nanaimo on every second Friday). Other events include indoor rock climbing, curling, tennis, hiking, and family friendly barbecues.

The Young Professionals Network of Ontario (YPNO)

The Young Professionals Network of Ontario¹⁶ (YPNO) is designed to connect and engage Young Professional Networks across the province. As a central hub, YPNO supports successful and dynamic professionals under the age of 40 to network, do business, advocate, engage in professional development, have a voice at provincial and national tables, and build economic development opportunities.

YPNO's core purpose is to:

- Be the Voice of Young Professionals Networks and their respective Young Professionals across Ontario to ensure their involvement and engagement in the overall success of the province.
- Act as a resource centre for communities, organizations, chambers of commerce and employers who are looking to develop an environment of engagement for their Young Professionals.

YPNO's approach is to moves people to action through six pillars:

1. Community Engagement
2. Social
3. Business and Economy
4. Environment
5. Personal and Professional Development
6. Provincial Connectivity

They focus on topics such as:

- Ontario Provincial deficit & debt.

¹⁶ <http://www.ypnontario.com/>

- Programs/incentives for the attraction & retention of talented Young Professionals.
- Economic development and the creation of employment opportunities.
- Effective partnerships with educational institutions to offer programming based on workforce demands.
- Infrastructure planning at municipal, provincial and federal levels.

By having a collective voice, YPNO aims to engage and inspire solutions for government, and other political or socio-economic influencers, that benefit the province and communities.

Summary:

Young Professional Networks from industry, government, non-profits, and communities reviewed in this environmental scan all focus on increasing professionalism and capabilities of their Young Professionals through:

- Professional development
- Networking
- Providing resources and support
- Opening up opportunities for young professionals
- Community involvement
- Mentoring
- Advocacy

B. Young Professionals Networks Within Organized Real Estate

In Canada, there are currently two Young Professionals Networks (YPN) within the real estate industry. Both are provincial networks, one in Ontario and one in Saskatchewan. Both are affiliated with the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) Young Professionals Network in the United States. A third Canadian YPN was started in Victoria, BC, but has since been incorporated into the Advancing the Profession committee in the Victoria Real Estate Board.

The Association of Saskatchewan REALTORS® (ASR)

The ASR YPN¹⁷ is affiliated with the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) YPN, and participates in their conferences and retreats. ASR YPN is a provincial network of about 600 members. The average age of the ASR YPN members is mid-20s. There is no actual age limit, but they try to encourage new REALTORS® from their first to fifth year in the industry.

ASR YPN is successful in that it draws members from all across Saskatchewan, although most are from Saskatoon and Regina (the major population centres). It is a challenge to attract members from the more rural regions, because of the large geographical size and small populations.

ASR's YPN began the planning stage in 2009, and really got on its feet in 2012. They have recently had a consultant work with them to create a strategic plan for the YPN.

ASR manages the YPN, but the YPN committee is made up of volunteers and they mainly meet through teleconference. They are operating with a very small budget which covers some small events. Most of their events are geared towards fund-raising. However, none of the money raised goes towards operating the YPN, it all goes to providing donations to local and community charities. CREA participates in some events as well, helping to raise awareness of new members.

ASR provides approximately 15 hours per month of staff time to the YPN. This position does some organizing of association-hosted events to bring in new YPN members, creates a newsletter, and writes press releases. ASR runs some fund-raising and awareness-raising events, inviting YPN members to receptions, government relations events, and they send the YPN Chair to the NAR retreat.

ASR YPN uses social networking applications for their communications, including Facebook, linked-in, and they have a private blog/message board on the ASR website. There is no specific training or education offered as part of the YPN, but all of their education courses are available to new members.

In terms of marketing, ASR sends a YPN Kit to new REALTORS®, they send out a newsletter, engage in social networking, and are currently creating a new logo for the YPN.

YPN on Boards – each person on the YPN committee is assigned to other governance committees. One will sit on the board, and others on task forces and other committees. They encourage anyone who is interested in participating in governance. Committee members report back to the YPN committee at their conference calls which take place every two months.

¹⁷ <http://saskatchewanrealestate.com/youngprofessionals/>

Best Practices/Recommendations:

- It is very important that the YPN is involved in the community. All funds raised go to community charity and legacy projects. This promotes young/new REALTORS® in the community, which increases chances for referrals and boosts their careers, as well as promoting the community.
- Be sure to do sufficient analysis and create a formal structure. Have a clear strategic plan in place before you start.
- Join NAR, they can really help.
- Send YPN Chair, Vice-Chair and representatives to NAR conferences and retreats.
- OREA needs to develop young professionals to become leaders. This is very important.
- The network takes time and resources to be effective.
- Stress the benefits of volunteering and community involvement to the young professionals. They can really boost the person's career. Those on our committee are excellent and very involved.

The Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA)¹⁸

The OREA YPN is three years old. It is a provincial network supporting regional networks (10 regional networks currently, expect to be 14 by end of 2015). There are approximately 1100 Young Professionals in the network.

The challenge of developing and supporting regional networks is that the local boards don't have the funds to run their own YPNs and OREA has had to contribute, help sponsor events, and participate in regional events. OREA requires the regional YPNs to do the work, and they will sponsor up to \$500.00 per event. The YPNs are self-managing. They are made up of volunteers, and are working committees. They decide what to do and then do it. There is no staff assigned to do the work of the committee, they do it themselves.

The OREA YPN is part of its Membership Engagement department. It is marketed through social media and events (see www.orea.com/emerge) as well as leadership awards like "5 under 40".

The YPN promotes volunteering in the community. Prior to the formation of the YPN, there weren't enough young professionals involved in volunteer work. Volunteering promotes the career with positive benefits (e.g., connecting, mentoring, and referrals). The YPN gets new REALTORS® started with volunteering.

OREA defines young professionals as under 40, although it is a grey area. They are still discussing what "young" professional means. Currently it includes those under 10 years in the business.

Structure – the OREA YPN committee is large, made up of volunteers. OREA brings new REALTORS® onto the YPN committee first, then encourages them to participate in the board and other committees locally.

¹⁸ www.orea.com

Board participation – in Ontario, the boards are elected. YPN helps with training and encouraging the young professionals to run for election. Some are getting elected and they are starting to see more of a mix of ages and experience, especially at the committee level.

Training – a separate OREA Leadership department does training for all REALTORS®, and Young Professionals are included. Their Leadership training includes EO training, board training, and specific governance training. While none of this is pointed specifically at young professionals, some is available at conferences and retreats.

Budget – OREA YPN budget is approximately \$12,000 and is used to provide the \$500 support grants to the regional events.

Support – OREA supports local boards to chair their own committees, and again provides small contributions to help support events. They also provide for 2-3 meetings per year, and manage some social media from their website (e.g., Facebook page, blog, and newsletter)

Best Practices/Recommendations:

- Get involved in NAR
- Really important that the YPN members know they will be doing the work

National Association of REALTORS® (NAR)¹⁹

NAR is of particular importance, because it is the organization that provides information and assistance to new YPNs, both in the US and Canada. Its value proposition is:

The Young Professionals Network is a dynamic entry point for real estate professionals striving to become more successful in their careers and gain leadership experience. By providing this entry point, NAR is building a new, diverse generation of leaders, strengthening members' affinity for the REALTOR® brand early in their career, and gaining a valuable perspective on generational shifts. YPN's growth has been driven by REALTORS®. YPN has evolved from a magazine offshoot to a determined, passionate, savvy group of members who use social media effectively and transparently and who are committed to strengthening the REALTORS® brand.²⁰

The National Young Professionals Network is different from the state YPNs. There are over 350 local and state YPNs, including OREA and ASR in Canada, associated with NAR's YPN. Each local/state YPN must be part of their own association, not just a licensee or group of licensees. There are currently approximately 15,300 YPN members.

While there is no age restriction, for benchmarking purposes YPN's are generally under 40.

Support – NAR supports the YPNs in many ways:

- They have representatives from each of the 13 US regions appointed by the NAR president.

¹⁹ <http://www.realtor.org/>

²⁰ Robert Reuter, NAR YPN, August 20, 2015

- NAR staff help make recommendations to the advisory board, which is currently establishing a strategic plan with one, two, and three year goals (to be unveiled in San Diego at their conference in November, 2015).
- They are rolling out an “event bank” online database of YPN events, which can be submitted online by each local/regional/state/provincial YPN.
- They provide social networking platforms which include: blog, YPN lounge, tweets, monthly online newsletter, etc.
- Political advocacy
- Executive have 4 staff. They host quarterly conference calls with all liaisons on those calls (between 70-100 participants). The NAR agenda covered, then is open to all to share.

Marketing – NAR hosts 2 annual conferences and mid-year meetings in Washington DC. One of the annual conferences moves from city to city, allowing YPNs to network extensively and allowing NAR and local associations to market YPNs.

At annual conference host 4 awards networks can apply for: small, medium, large, and a state award.

Funding – Nar YPN has a small budget, they cannot give funds to sub-networks, who are responsible for their own funding. NAR funds meetings and receptions, but gets sponsors to help cover costs and for some events at conferences (e.g. receptions) charges an entrance fee to help cover catering and infrastructure (rooms, video etc.) costs.

Leadership – hosts YPN Leadership Retreat (2nd year) by invitation only (157 people invited). Current Chair, Vice-chair, and liaison for each network, including CREA and OREA. More of a workshop with roundtable events. Focus on “greatest hits” topics such as business building and leadership.

Best Practices/Recommendations:

- Larger, more urban areas have more people to draw from for their networks. Even small YPNs are welcome to join NAR.
- The real success for the networks is the association leadership buy-in. The association has to believe in it and want it, that’s huge.
- The state/provincial YPN is challenging because of the size of the territory covered. Need to establish a committee or advisory board and invite representatives from each local committee to sit on that committee. Need state/province-wide chairperson and vice-chairs.
- Divide up the responsibilities across the province.
- Use telecommunications media (not webinars – synchronous doesn’t work with busy people).
- Have a Young Professional on each committee/board if possible. The point is to get this generation more involved in the governance of the industry. Get new realtors introduced to governance through the YPN.
- Establish good quarterly conference calls, and record them and send them to people who missed them.
- Use Facebook and other social media.

Victoria Real Estate Board (VREB)²¹

The Victoria Real Estate Board (VREB) started their Young Professionals Network in 2010, with the purpose of increasing professionalism among younger or new REALTORS®. Activities included tours of the community/region, meetings with different ethnic groups, reviews of local amenities, and meetings out in the public, to raise awareness of the VREB YPN members as to what they could present to their clients.

The more experienced REALTORS® in VREB were not happy about the focus on young REALTORS®, and wanted to participate in the professional development activities, so the network was changed to include everyone, and called The Professional Network (TPN).

The Professional Network, although working without a budget, had developed their own website, email address, and Facebook page and ran for about 5 years.

However, in a review of VREB committees, the directors realized that there was extensive overlap between The Professional Network and the Advancing Profession Committee. The Professional Network was rolled into the Advancing Profession Committee. The same activities take place, with the entire VREB membership, and it is managed by VREB staff.

However, there is still no budget, so that the events must be funded by the registration fees of the participants.

Best Practices/Recommendations:

- Remember that burnout is a very real issue with volunteers who are also full time REALTORS®.
- The network and events are really time consuming to organize and host.
- Senior REALTORS® were extremely offended by the “young” label and wanted to participate in the professional development events.
- Making the network all-inclusive encourages all REALTORS® to participate.

Canadian Real Estate Association

The Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA) is in the process of implementing a pan-Canadian Young Professionals Network. CREA’s YPN would be affiliated with NAR, and would be designed as a support network for provincial or regional YPNs. The CREA YPN would maintain a seat on NAR’s YPN advisory committee and would send representatives to NAR retreats and conferences. CREA intends to strengthen relationships with NAR through the YPN.

CREA is looking at a phased approach to implementation. They have only recently received approval from their board to proceed. Social medial applications can be ready to use quite quickly, and they expect to host their first annual retreat/event in 2016. This event would bring YPN members together. The focus would be on building leadership skills, developing communications etc.

CREA intends to communicate with each provincial association with regards to participating in the Canadian YPN very soon. Existing provincial YPNs in Ontario and Saskatchewan have expressed interest

²¹ <http://www.vreb.org/>

in CREA's YPN, while New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Manitoba are interested in starting YPNs but have not yet started the process.

One issue that has arisen is the label "Young". The term seems to be a limiting factor in building the network. They are considering a name change, such as "Your" PN instead of "Young" PN.

September 2015 - UPDATE: CREA held a YPN conference call on September 24. Chairs: Carly and Nicole from CREA – who conducted the environmental scan and CREA proposal

CREA Proposal:

- CREA's role in YPN
 - Impetus – CREA President's daughter is chair of OREA's YPN; very interested in youth leadership; she is looking at a new position for CREA as a proactive player in Canada's YPN movement. Passed in August. See infographic. Current name proposal: Gen R (not YPN)
 - Sensitivities around term "young"looking at name Gen R to deal with that sensitivity
 - Not a "party network"
 - Could be exclusionary for older, new REALTORS® and the Professional networks at regional and local levels that choose to include them
 - NAR also is concerned with their current use of the term, YPN
 - Many of the groups on the call are also struggling with this
 - Many people talked about the focus really being on under 35, and purposely so – to attract young and new people to get involved in the industry and in ORE
 - I represented that we stayed with a focus on "youth" for the same reasons
- Activities
 - National event – once a year to bring YPNs together
 - I indicated BCREA would be very support of this as a great program opportunity for members
 - National forums?
 - Provide tools to existing YPNs
 - REALTORLINK page to provide a YPN starter kit; YPN directory and events; template and programming ideas; speaker directory and reviews; board to board sharing about best practices and experiences
 - I conveyed our enthusiasm for the idea – that we would contribute our efforts, but recognize that we would gain much value (and check some to-dos off our list!) by having access to these CREA resources
 - Timeline for development – they will send us a URL for the current page under development for any suggestions. Hope to have it live by mid-October
 - Also has a dedicated channel for YPN leadership development – still very much a TBD, but could be some sort of peer-to-peer leadership development network; how do we feel about a social media national network for YLP?
- YPN Leadership and members events
 - Annual YPN leadership and YPN member retreat being thought about, to be coordinate with the Western, Central and Eastern Connection events – we'd like to partner with YPNs in those networks to organize the events and make it a collaborative effort. Is this the right set of events to partner with?

- Engagement and Thought Leadership
 - Been in discussion with NAR YPN and creating a Canadian Rep on the NAR YPN board
 - Grow the YPN stream on CREA Café (which already exists)
 - An annual survey for the YPN demographic – what are they interested in? What do they want to get? How are they progressing through their business?
 - Youth Leadership Pipeline being targeted for CREA committees and taskforces (very aligned with BCREA’s hopes for the YLP)

Best Practices and Recommendations

In summary, the Young Professionals Networks within ORE include the large National Association of Realtors YPN in the United States, which also includes, as sub-networks, OREA YPN and ASR YPN in Canada. Within Canada, these are the only existing provincial Young Professionals Networks, although in Ontario, with its large population, OREA supports its own sub-networks. These are associated with local boards and are increasing. A local YPN was established in Victoria, but was incorporated into VREB’s professional development program.

Each of the interviewees from NAR, OREA, ASR, and VREB provided recommendations for BCREA in terms of best practices for starting and operating a BCREA YPN. Summarized, these recommendations include:

Planning:

- It is important to do sufficient analysis and have a clear strategic plan in place before starting the YPN. Association buy-in is really important to the success of the plan.
- Become part of NAR YPN, as they have resources and are able to provide assistance. In terms of implementation, they invite representatives to attend their events and retreats, which can help enormously.

Budgets and support:

- All of the interviewees indicated that their YPN operated with very low budgets. OREA, for example, has a budget of approximately \$12000 per year, and that is used to support local events with a grant of \$500 per event.
- Staff time is important. ASR provides approximately 15 hours per month of staff time to managing the YPN and hosting/creating the social media (newsletter, Facebook page, etc.). This is not included in the YPN budget, which is minimal and is used to support events. All fund-raising is used for local community charities and projects, none is used to support the YPN.
- NAR charges registration fees for events, to try to cover the costs of venues, catering, and media. Their small budget is used to host meetings and teleconferences, and support the social media applications.

Succession planning:

- All of the interviewees were more than helpful, and are willing to provide more information or assistance as the planning/implementation of a BCREA YPN progresses. They all felt that ORE needs to develop young professionals to become leaders and have the opportunity to participate in governance, providing the industry with a pool of leaders who can take on

responsibilities as more senior REALTORS® retire. In some cases they are finding that younger REALTORS® are beginning to sit on boards as well as on other committees in their local boards.

Implementation Issues:

- The network takes time and resources to be effective. The network and events are really time consuming to organize and host. Burnout is a very real issue with volunteers who are also full time REALTORS®.
- It is challenging to develop a YPN in small populations. Larger, more urban areas have more people to draw from for their networks. Therefore, it may be important to have a provincial YPN that can support regional or local branches associated with their boards.
- Think about being inclusive. In Victoria, senior REALTORS® were extremely offended by the “young” label and wanted to participate in the professional development events.
- Making the network all-inclusive encourages all REALTORS® to participate, but doesn’t focus on bringing young or inexperienced REALTORS® into governance.

Best Practices:

- The provincial YPN is challenging because of the geographic scale of the province. Involve the regional/local boards in the development of sub-networks and provide some support to them.
- Establish a provincial YPN committee or advisory board and invite representation from each local board to sit on that committee. Divide up the responsibilities across the province. Assign a province-wide chairperson, vice-chair, and include local representatives.
- Stress the benefits of volunteering and community involvement to the young professionals. They can really boost the person’s career. It is very important that the YPN is involved in the community. All funds raised go to community charity and legacy projects. This promotes young/new REALTORS® in the community, which increases chances for referrals and boosts their careers, as well as promoting the community.
- Get new REALTORS® introduced to governance through the YPN. Have a young professional on each committee/board if possible. The point is to get this generation more involved in the governance of the industry.
- Communication/meetings need to make use of teleconference technology and social media. Use Facebook, linked-in, blogs, newsletters, etc. to save on travel costs and to support the network.