



Slate of Nominees – STEP Board of Directors October 21, 2021

Ms. Rhonda Ekstrom **Regina, Saskatchewan**

“It is an exciting time for the STEP organization and I am honored to be nominated to serve a third term on the Board of Directors. I welcome the opportunity to offer continued support to Saskatchewan exporters and contribute to the health and vibrancy of our province.

Born, raised and educated in the province, I have spent the last 30 years helping companies in Saskatchewan build profitable growth through innovative business strategies, streamlined operations and customer-focused solutions. My career spans Fortune 100 multi-nationals, entrepreneurial start-ups and public sector agencies across IT, agriculture, value-added processing, and supply chain industries. In addition to North American markets, I bring international business experience from broad geographies including China, Asia, India, Europe and Australia.

As a current member of the STEP Board, I am proud of the team and our member's accomplishments. I look forward to further advancing the services and program our members need to successfully expand into global markets.”

Mr. Mike Popowich **Yorkton, Saskatchewan**

“As the Vice President and General Manager of TA Foods Ltd since 2013 I have been able to experience, firsthand, the variety of benefits to being a STEP Member while participating in the Agriculture and Value-Added Food Sector (and specifically in our export business).

I grew up on the farm in rural Saskatchewan just west of Yorkton. The Popowich family has been involved in the Agriculture and Agri-Food Industry in Saskatchewan for generations as farmers, and then as seed cleaners, and then evolving to a 150-person oat processing company (Popowich Milling Ltd.,) prior to the sale to Grainmillers in 2003, and now to TA Foods Ltd. as specialty oilseed processor and food packager. We now distribute our oilseed products in both bulk and retail forms in Canada and throughout the world, with exports focused on China, the USA, and South America.

I have a Bachelor of Science in Engineering (Civil Engineering) from the University of Saskatchewan and have board experience serving as a Yorkton Chamber of Commerce Director for 6 years (along with 1 term as President in 2018), and also 7 years (ongoing) on the Infrastructure & Planning Committee at the City of Yorkton.

It's an honour to be nominated to continue to serve on the STEP Board and contribute to the organization and to Saskatchewan's export economy”



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Mr. Scott Sawatsky Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

“I would be honoured to continue to serve on the STEP board and be nominated for a second term. I believe Saskatchewan has the resources, world-class businesses, and prairie ingenuity to compete on a global stage. With STEP and the Government continuing to support Saskatchewan businesses, we will all benefit from our export growth and continue to create a province we are all proud to live and work.

As the VP of Sales of Crestline Coach, I have had the opportunity to build relationships and contribute to growing our business around the world, exporting to more than 33 countries over the past 46 years. I have a business degree from the University of Saskatchewan (B.Comm, Marketing) and over 30 years of experience in manufacturing specialty vehicles, managing sales, marketing, and developing a bus distribution business. Our organization has always embraced the vision that we will prosper through trade outside our province, and as a result Crestline has been a strong supporter of STEP since its inception.

For the past three years I have had the privilege of serving on the STEP board, and for the past two years I have chaired the Governance and Nominations Committee. I would welcome the opportunity to continue to serve on the STEP Board, sharing my experiencing, continue learning, and helping our members wherever possible.”

Mr. Marlin Stangeland Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

“STEP has a 25-year history of making a significant contribution to Saskatchewan’s exporters and it is an honor to be nominated to continue to serve on the board. As CEO of Shercom Industries Inc. I have experienced the value that STEP brings to its members.

I am a Chartered Professional Accountant with a B.Comm. from the University of Saskatchewan. Over my career I have had the opportunity to serve on several corporate and not-for-profit boards and it has been a pleasure to serve on the STEP board.

I have a wide variety of experience in my career including owning and operating some start-up companies that benefited greatly from STEP’s services and advice. My first involvement with STEP was in the mid 1990s when I was an owner of a company that designed and built equipment for the fibre optic industry. STEP was very helpful in helping us through the maze of selling to international companies located in India, South Korea and the USA.

Throughout my career STEP has provided an excellent source of assistance and advice and it is a real pleasure to be considered for re-election for a second term with the board. I hope to continue to share the things I have learned in a way that gives Saskatchewan exporters the best opportunity to succeed.”