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Weather



TODAY:
MAINLY SUNNY

HIGH OF -13
LOW OF -19



TUESDAY:
SCATTERED
FLURRIES

HIGH OF -3
LOW OF -10



WEDNESDAY:
CLOUDY WITH
SUNNY BREAKS

HIGH OF -4
LOW OF -14



THURSDAY:
SCATTERED
FLURRIES

HIGH OF -8
LOW OF -18



FRIDAY:
A MIX OF SUN
AND CLOUDS

HIGH OF -7
LOW OF -15

National Professional Services Firm, MNP, the right “fit” for Duke CPA



THE SCOOP MABLE HASTINGS

For over 50 years, Duke CPA (Chartered Professional Accountants) has been offering a variety of assurance, accounting, tax and advisory services to small and medium sized businesses and not for profit organizations. When William D. Duke founded the original Duke accounting firm located in Cowansville in 1959, his son “Bill” was one year old. Today, Bill Duke is one of three partners at the firm, which recently merged with MNP, one of the largest full-service chartered professional accountancy and business advisory firms in Canada.

“Back in the day, long before there was an autoroute, my dad used to commute back and forth from his part-time work in Montreal to finance his practice in Cowansville located in our basement at the time,” said Duke. “From that point he grew his practice, moved into a real office and in time, the name “Duke” gathered recognition all over the townships.”

The years brought new faces to the company with Geoff Webber becoming a tax partner and then Anita Fowsar joined the firm. In 2014, Anita, Geoff and Bill bought out their Sherbrooke partners and became, “Duke CPA Inc.” At that time, as a partner Fowsar implemented a high level of quality controls and assurance in the firm and took it to another level of client service and quality.

For Anita Fowsar, who deals with things with a hands-on approach instilling transparent communication to meet the needs

of their diverse clientele, joining the team and becoming a partner has been a full circle experience.

“My first degree was in criminology and I then did a degree in community and public policy

because I wanted to work in the not-for-profit sector,” she said. “If I wanted to eventually become a director of an organization, I needed to have financial skills, so I enrolled in the McGill graduate program for accounting to do a class or two, and then I finished the diploma and started to work in public practice, she explains. “I continued on to do the classes for my designation. My parents are immigrants and from a young age they emphasized the importance of education to me and my siblings.”

“Over the years, we have added employees and greatly expanded our client base,” explained Duke. “In 2021 we began looking at ways to take the firm to another level in order to expand the quality and quantity of services to clients,” he continued, “And, we wanted to have support to assist our staff in a time of great uncertainty given the pandemic and global labour shortages, etc.”

The three partners concluded that a merger with National firm MNP would be the best way to acquire a vast number of resources and support in moving forward. Therefore, Duke CPA Inc, merged with MNP on February 1, 2022 and entered a new era.

MNP’s head office is in Calgary, Alberta, and has offices from Vancouver Island to St. John’s. With over 7,100 employees, MNP is one of the largest professional service firms in Canada.

The three former partners of “Duke”, Anita, Bill and Geoff will continue as the team in the Cowansville office at the same location, 127 Rue Principale. The firm is part of the “Quebec-South” region of MNP with the Sherbrooke, Granby, and Farnham offices of MNP however they have resources right across all of MNP’s Canadian network.

Fowsar does quality control at the firm right now, making sure they



COURTESY

comply with the standards that are in place and she is of course, very involved in client relations. She stated that what really drew the firm to MNP is the culture and values which are very aligned with theirs making the amalgamation a smooth transition and forming one team all working together.

“We’re very excited to attract more resources and experienced professionals,” she said. “Just being able to be part of a bigger team and having access to the support that’s there is a real plus,” she added.

Bill Duke summed up our interview with the following reflection.

“When you are motivated to provide the highest level of services to existing and future new clients and this is your primary function, your aim is to keep the public informed of any changes and assure them that the values and priorities remain the same,” Duke emphasized. We deal with many different industry sectors such as agriculture, retail, manufacturing, tourism, wholesale, charities, CPE childcare and more and we do that by having a high level of knowledge, training, staff excellence, and resources behind us,” he continued. “I feel very confident in saying that I think my Dad would be proud of how the company has evolved and where it is going.”

Ben by Daniel Shelton

