

CANS 2024 HONOURARY LIFE MEMBER



Larry Gibson

FloorsPlus Commercial

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Larry Gibson's influence in the construction industry is a testament to visionary leadership, steadfast commitment to community and a profound dedication to philanthropy. His journey is marked by an entrepreneurial spirit, a philosophy of setting small goals to achieve monumental aspirations and a focus on reinvesting in both his business and community.

Larry's career began in his teenage years with odd jobs in flooring installation. His dedication and entrepreneurial drive soon led to the co-founding of Install-A-Flor with his wife, Patricia, in 1988. This venture evolved into Floors Plus, a company that, under Larry's stewardship, has expanded to encompass seven retail locations, a robust commercial division, and a global distribution network. Floors Plus's investment of over \$100 million in labour within Nova Scotia underscores Larry's unwavering commitment to local economic growth and employment.

Larry's involvement in community projects, including Chain Lake Place, Miller Lake West, Perry Lake Developments, Perry Lake Estates, Stewiacke River Crossing and the Akerley Centre, highlights his dedication to enhancing local infrastructure and community spaces. "Building Stewiacke River Crossing, a residential and commercial area, has been like building a small city," he explains. The project, spanning 120 acres, already includes residential spaces, a plaza with coffee shops, a grocery store and a glass manufacturing facility — creating 20 local jobs. Larry finds fulfillment in watching a community grow from a bare piece of land to a vibrant neighbourhood, where families move in and take care of their properties.

Philanthropy has been a cornerstone of Larry's career, reflecting his commitment to societal well-being. His leadership roles on boards such as the Halifax Mooseheads Advisory Board, the Partners for Care QEII Foundation and the Heart and Stroke Foundation demonstrate his active engagement in supporting health and community initiatives. Larry's contributions have been widely recognized through numerous prestigious awards, including the Bowman Award (awarded to FloorsPlus Commercial (Install A-Flor Ltd.) in 2013), the Harry Jerome Award for Excellence in Business, the Hector Jake Entrepreneurial Award, and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Award. These accolades serve as a testament to his outstanding achievements and the profound respect he commands within the industry and broader community.

Larry's perspective on Nova Scotia's construction industry highlights a promising future marked by both challenges and opportunities. He recognizes that the industry is at a critical juncture, where the demand for skilled workers far outstrips the current supply. This gap presents a golden opportunity for those with the right expertise to find steady, lucrative employment and advance rapidly within the industry. "The skill set required in this industry offers unbelievable opportunities. There's a significant shortage and demand for skilled workers, especially those who excel at what they do," he notes.

For young entrepreneurs looking to make a positive impact, Larry emphasizes the importance of setting small, manageable goals.

“ A lot of people set big ones and then get disappointed. My wife and I used to set weekly goals and reward ourselves when we achieved them. Don't just talk about your dreams; go out and do it! ”

Larry's philosophy of reinvesting in the business has been simple but effective. "Whenever I got paid, I took half of it and bought new tools. I believed in doing whatever made my job easier, more efficient, and more profitable," he explains.

During our interview, Larry seamlessly switched between the conversation and his responsibilities on-site. As the dump truck's beeping resonated in the background—a familiar sound on any job site—Larry effortlessly provided quick instructions to the driver before returning to our discussion. With a chuckle, he remarked, "That's another thing you can't lose sight of – multitasking," underscoring an essential, often overlooked skill in construction.

Larry Gibson epitomizes the values and spirit of the Construction Association of Nova Scotia. His lifelong dedication to innovation, industry advancement, community service and global impact make him an exemplary candidate for Honorary Life Membership. His legacy will continue to inspire future generations in the construction industry and beyond.

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