



## TRAVEL INDUSTRY COUNCIL OF ONTARIO 2025 ANNUAL MEETING

### **Election of Directors – Candidate Biographies** (Alphabetical by last name)

#### 1. **Industry Directors**

Members will choose one (1) of the following industry candidates for the Board of Directors. The candidate with the highest number of votes will serve for a three-year term.

The candidates are:

#### **Dean DACKO, President, Uniglobe Travel Canada**

I have worked at the senior and executive levels in the travel industry in multiple countries, for multiple airlines (including Air Canada and Malaysia Airlines), and most recently have acted as the President of Uniglobe Travel Canada and its affiliated agencies for over seven years. Uniglobe Travel Canada and its affiliates have travel sales volume in excess of \$900M CDN dollars. Uniglobe Travel Canada has over 50 locations across Canada, and several in the USA, providing travel management and advisory services to a broad range of clients from governments, professional and amateur sports, large and small business clients, and leisure travel consumers. Uniglobe Canada has business relationships with over 40 travel industry partners including Airlines, Cruise Lines, Tour Operators, Technology service providers, etc. Uniglobe Travel Canada is part of the Uniglobe Travel International Group, headquartered in Vancouver Canada, with travel sales volume in excess of \$4.5B, over 4,500 travel professionals, and locations in over 50 countries.

#### **Andrew DAWSON, President, Sunwing Vacations**

With over 30 years of experience in the leisure travel industry, the majority based in Ontario, I have experience from both a wholesale and retail perspective to contribute to TICO and advocate for our industry. With my origins as a Management Accountant in the UK, through many senior roles and Board positions, I have accumulated a broad range of the experiences and key competencies which are key to being a productive TICO Board member. TICO is going through change, and the reduction of Provincial barriers could

possibly spark greater change. I'd love to be able to continue to serve and represent our whole industry on TICO's Board and graciously ask for your support in achieving this.

**Lisa, EGAN, Manager, Expedia Cruises**

I've always had a passion for discovering new destinations and diving into the world of travel—both literally and figuratively. In 2018, I decided to make it official by obtaining my TICO license and stepping into the business of selling travel. Since then, I've been steadily building my knowledge base, and in 2024, I made the decision to shift my focus full time to the travel industry. It's a move that reflects my commitment to turning this passion into a thriving career—proof that new directions can be just as exciting as the destinations themselves.

Joining the TICO Board of Directors feels like a natural next step. It offers a chance not only to deepen my understanding of the industry, but also to contribute to meaningful conversations that help shape its future. I see it as both a learning opportunity and a way to give back to a field that's always inspired me.

**Mike FOSTER, Travel Consultant, Nexion Travel Group Canada**

I recently retired after my 45-year career, starting as a front-line advisor, then building an agency that became Nexion Travel Group-Canada, growing it to over 600 advisors. Having navigated every major industry disruption—from 9/11 and COVID-19 to recessions, disease outbreaks, and the digital revolution—I bring extensive operational experience and crisis leadership to TICO's board.

Now an independent travel advisor, industry writer, consultant, and investor in emerging travel support services, I remain deeply connected across all industry segments while mentoring travel professionals nationwide.

My proven governance experience includes previous TICO board service, bringing both agency-owner and front-line advisor perspectives. I served on multiple committees, including Education, Regulatory and Business Strategy, and Governance and Nominations, helping shape industry policy and professional development.

I also served on both ACTA Canada and Ontario boards for over 25 years.

As a Fanshawe College graduate, former instructor, and Distinguished Alumni award recipient, I was recently inducted into the 2025 Canadian Travel Hall of Fame. I've witnessed our industry's transformation from supplier-focused distribution to client-centered travel planning, giving me unique insights into regulatory challenges facing an industry virtually unrecognizable from 45 years ago.

My expertise spans marketing, management, regulatory affairs, and personnel development. Having dedicated my career to this industry's growth, I'm passionate about helping TICO better serve consumers while supporting an ever-changing industry through thoughtful regulation.

I'm committed to ensuring TICO navigates future opportunities while protecting all stakeholders, and have the time, passion, and proven experience to make meaningful contributions as a board member.

**Alain GUERTIN, Owner, Phoenix Voyages**

I'm a bilingual travel industry professional and systems strategist with over 20 years of experience building businesses and leading innovation. For more than eight years, I operated Expedia Cruises Ottawa, which I grew into the largest franchise in Canada under the Expedia brand. Most recently, I launched Phoenix Voyages, a new TICO-registered agency that I built from the ground up—giving me direct, hands-on experience with the full registration and compliance process.

Alongside my travel work, I lead Systemsaholic, where I design and develop SaaS platforms focused on automation, performance, and regulatory alignment, including secure environments that meet HIPAA and PCI-DSS standards. My background bridges day-to-day travel operations with scalable tech execution.

I've served on the boards of Guild Stationers and the Kapuskasing Board of Trade, and I'm currently active with the Orléans BIA, supporting local business engagement and commercial development.

I have a strong interest in emerging technologies—particularly cryptocurrency and AI—and how they're changing the way travel is researched, priced, and transacted. I believe these innovations will have a lasting impact on the industry, and that TICO should be at the forefront of understanding and guiding their influence. While I'm optimistic about their potential, I also recognize the risks they present if not approached thoughtfully. I'm motivated to bring this balanced, future-focused perspective to the TICO Board.

**Suhaib Mohammad KIDWAI, CEO, Fly Global Inc.**

Worked at American Express Travel Saudi Arabia as Sales Manager

Worked at Al Fanar Travel Bahrain as General Manager

Worked at Global Travel & Tours Bahrain as CEO

Working at Fly Global Inc Canada as CEO

Board Member of ABTTA for 6 years in Bahrain.

Executive Board Member, SKAL Club, chapter 370, Bahrain.

Active member of Toaster Master's Club, Dammam, Saudi Arabia.

Mini MBA	-	Entrepreneurship - Byster Institute, USA.
Post Graduate Diploma	-	Travel & Tourism Management
Master of Commerce	-	Marketing Management.
Bachelor of Commerce	-	Office Management.
Submitted dissertation on	-	Tourism Advertisement.
Published articles on	-	Management

My job profile is as follows:

- Maintaining and serving our existing clients: This involves persistent sales & marketing efforts, market research, relationship & competitor's analysis.
- Sales Budget: For sense of direction to our efforts, I formulate annual sales budget. This helps to motivate us & to calibrate our progress.
- Sale Strategy: I prepare an appropriate action-plan to achieve the sales budget including SWOT analysis.
- Targeted Accounts: Identify the potential clients using 80-20 formula for adequate involvement in business.
- Segmenting the Market: Segmentation is important to implement the right approach towards any business.
- Servicing the existing clientele: Top quality service is mandatory to retain our loyal customers.
- Coordination with the Airlines: It is essential to maintain close coordination with Airlines for accomplishment.
- Receivables Follow-up: Realizing timely revenue to the company may be a key to success

### **Mandi NELSON, Risk & Legal Manager, Flight Centre Travel Group**

With over 14 years in the travel industry, I bring a strong foundation in corporate governance and commitment to consumer advocacy. As the Paralegal Manager at Flight Centre Travel Group (FCTG), I have led our Legal Team in Canada for over a decade, driving critical projects across the country to enhance corporate governance.

Consumer protection is my priority. Navigating regulatory challenges like the APPR (Air Passenger Protection Regulations) demands a balanced approach that supports consumer needs while ensuring industry compliance. As the industry shifts towards home-based work environments, TICO must adapt swiftly to maintain consumer safety and trust.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, I managed complex issues such as furloughs, closures, relocations, credits, vouchers, and policy changes - all putting the consumer's best interests first. Recently, my leadership in the Global Envoyage project established a new regulatory framework that integrated diverse agencies, always considering consumer impacts.

My drive to join the TICO board comes from a genuine desire to be a positive force for change. I want to use my voice to shape the future of travel regulation, ensuring a fair and informed marketplace for Canadians.

My international governance experience has taught me to collaborate effectively, proposing alternatives that meet regulatory requirements and business objectives, always with consumer interests at the forefront.

If elected, I will ensure that both consumer and registrant perspectives are equally considered, fostering mutual buy-in to advance TICO's objectives without compromising consumer protection.

**Akam PACHACHI, CEO and Founder, Traveronto**

As a travel tech entrepreneur with over 20 years of global leadership experience across travel, logistics, and e-commerce, I bring a results-oriented, cross-industry perspective to the TICO Board. I am the CEO and Founder of Traveronto Inc., a Canadian-based travel technology platform offering integrated B2B and B2C booking solutions. Under my leadership, Traveronto has expanded into multiple international markets, integrated over 50 suppliers, and built partnerships with major airlines and hotel chains.

Previously, I served as General Manager at Talabat Mart (Delivery Hero), where I launched and scaled last-mile operations across seven cities, generating over \$100 million in annual revenue and serving thousands of customers daily. I also founded and expanded Travelostic, a multi-million-dollar online travel agency operating across the Middle East.

As a TICO-certified Travel Manager and Counselor, I understand the critical role TICO plays in upholding consumer trust, industry integrity, and regulatory compliance. My motivation to serve stems from a commitment to protecting travelers, supporting registrants, and driving innovation in a fast-evolving sector.

My expertise spans supplier negotiations, travel retail, cross-border operations, compliance, and digital transformation making me well-positioned to contribute actionable insights and governance oversight. I'm passionate about helping TICO adapt to the future of travel while preserving the high standards that make Ontario's travel industry resilient and respected.

I look forward to contributing to TICO's mission through transparent, accountable, and forward-thinking leadership.

**Shadi SHAAFI, Founder and President, Abeona International Inc.**

For more than a decade, I have been at the forefront of transforming Canada's private aviation sector — making it more accessible, compliant, and client-focused. As Founder

and President of Abeona International Inc., I have built and scaled aviation operations from the ground up, led regulated service businesses, and served as President of a provincially regulated condominium board. These experiences have strengthened my skills in governance, fiduciary responsibility, and consumer protection - values that align directly with TICO's mission.

My aviation journey began with a private jet operations and management company, where I expanded operations and strengthened compliance systems. At Abeona International, I pioneered a flight-matching service that connects clients with existing flights to reduce empty legs, improving efficiency while advancing environmental and economic sustainability. I work closely with regulators, senior stakeholders, and community leaders, always championing transparent, ethical oversight.

Beyond the boardroom, I mentor entrepreneurs at Wilfrid Laurier University and speak at business events, sharing lessons from building a business in a highly regulated industry. I hold the Project Management Professional (PMP) designation and am completing executive coursework in Leadership & Management at Harvard Business School.

I am running for the TICO Board because I believe in fair, forward-thinking regulation that protects travellers while fostering innovation. As travel evolves rapidly, I want to apply my leadership, industry knowledge, and governance experience to uphold public trust, strengthen consumer confidence, and ensure Ontario's travel sector remains both competitive and accountable.

#### **Andrew SAID, CFO, Butterfield & Robinson**

Over 25 years experience in Finance and Accounting, over 15 years in the travel industry. I've held industry roles at Tour Operators, Travel Agents, as well as DMOs - with both newer startups and mature organizations. Working alongside TICO since 2008.

## **2. Public Directors**

Members will vote for, against or withhold their vote in regard to the election of Heather COLQUHOUN as a Public Director of the Corporation for a three-year term.

#### **Heather COLQUHOUN**

A bilingual (English/French), transformational human resources (HR) executive, I am known for being results-oriented, future-focused and collaborative. I have held progressive HR leadership roles, including Global HRBP, Country Head of HR, Talent executive, and CHRO, following 13 years of human capital consulting. My background in human capital management, organizational behaviour, policy creation / implementation / compliance, and change management is complemented by internal communications and ESG/sustainability experience in my most recent executive role.

As a strategic and collaborative board director, highlights of my 18 years of governance experience include committee and board chair roles as well as leading a significant governance review resulting in updated Board Policies, Investment Policy Statement (IPS), new Corporate By-laws, ONCA compliance, and a shift to competency-based board. Additionally, as a member of the TICO Board of Directors for the past two years, I bring a strong understanding of the DAA requirements, risks, and consumer protection mandate necessary to provide meaningful governance for TICO going forward.

My professional experience began in the travel industry, where my passion for travel and languages landed me a role as a German-qualified flight attendant. I remain passionate about travel and often say “I haven’t been everywhere, but it’s on my list.” I earned a master’s degree in organizational diversity and have taught organizational behaviour at the Schulich School of Business at York University.