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CMMF: Moving in new directions

by M. Eisner

For the last 38 years, the Canadian Mining and Metallurgical Foundation (CMMF) has been nurtured and run by a dedicated group of industry professionals. Relying on volunteers has its positive side — virtually all funds raised go to drive the Foundation’s mission to support educational activities — but it also has its challenges. Recent events have allowed the Foundation to rise to those challenges with a winning solution.



Marlene Eisner

“A substantial gift from McIntosh Engineering was received, as well as a bequest from the Hurd estate and help from CIM,” explains CMMF manager, Deborah Smith-Sauvé. “Those three things gave the Foundation the support it needed to hire someone, so I came on board in April.”

With 25 years of experience in administration, communication and fundraising under her belt, Smith-Sauvé is exactly what the Foundation was looking for to help move it forward to new levels. Upon her arrival, she evaluated the situation and decided it was time for a major overhaul. “When I looked at what needed to be done, I said ‘everything,’” she says with a chuckle.

The main objective was to update communication and marketing tools to spread the word about the Foundation and promote its work. “People have to know what we do, who we represent, how their funds are going to be managed and why they should give to us,” explains Smith-Sauvé. “They want to know why your charity is worth their support.”

“There was no one here to take care of it,” she adds. “I am a professional fundraiser and I love it. I also love people, and fundraising is about people and about making friends.”

Smith-Sauvé has launched the first edition of the CMMF newsletter, and the new website will soon be up and running. She has also initiated the first official “giving campaign” where the Foundation will actively go and ask people to give. Within the campaign is a component called gifts of security — such as flow-through shares, stocks and bonds, which Smith-Sauvé is excited to promote.

“Flow-through shares are a great gift since they have extra incentives and are particular to the industry in the area of mineral exploration,” she says. By transferring stock, donors receive a greater tax benefit, while the Foundation can then decide to

keep the stock, or sell it immediately.

“Each portfolio is different and I always send people to their stockbrokers or portfolio managers so they can advise them,” she adds. “I want what’s best for the donor, so they can give the best gift that’s good for them.”

Looking forward to 2011, the Foundation will be examining its scholarships, and Smith-Sauvé says the goal is to expand and promote them, as well as raise funds to support more requests by organizations.

“Next year, we want more people to apply to all of our scholarships so we have a better pool to award the scholarships to,” she says. “The goal is to be as instrumental as we can be, more front and centre, more present, and participate more in conferences, so people can come and meet with us.”

Communication, outreach, promotion and education — this is a solid pathway towards helping the Foundation grow.

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