

TOP FINALISTS **2017** MOMPREENEUR® AWARDS presented by **TRISHIELD** INSURANCE



Transgender Entrepreneur Michelle Emson selected as a finalist for the 2017 Mompreneur® Momentum Award

Muskoka's Own Michelle Emson of Sanctuary Studios is proud to announce that they have been named a finalist for the 2017 Mompreneur® Momentum Award. The winner will be announced at The 2017 National Mompreneurs® Conference on Saturday, March 4th, 2017.

For Immediate Release:

January 13, 2017 – Bracebridge, ON – The Top 22 finalists have been selected for the fourth instalment of The Mompreneur® Awards brought to you by Mompreneur Showcase Group Inc. and ParentsCanada Magazine. Every year this award gets bigger and recognition gets more renowned as the achievements and contributions of women and their businesses in Canada grows. This year two new awards were added to include women across all areas of business.

Local Mompreneur Michelle Emson, of Sanctuary Studios Inc., has been named a finalist by her peers and the business community. The task of determining who will win one of the four Awards being presented at this year's 2017 National Mompreneurs® Conference will now be left up to an expert panel of judges. The winner will be chosen based on a select set of criteria for each award including track record of success; product innovation of business idea; growth potential and scalability; revenue; inspiration to others; and impact on the community.

Sanctuary Studios is a full-service digital agency providing female entrepreneurs with worry-free Web Design and Hosting, professional Photography, Video Production, and Podcast recording, and Business Process Management services. In addition, the Studio is a social enterprise supporting LGBTI advocacy and activism work by its founder and CEO, Michelle Emson who also produces human rights documentary films. The Studio seeks to employ talented transgender people who are unable to work in their chosen field due to discrimination and prejudice.

Founder and CEO Michelle Emson, herself an openly-out transgender woman, created Sanctuary Studios after finding it difficult to secure employment following her own transition. Her mantra is "When Passion Meets Purpose" and the Studio allows her to combine her "passion" for supporting entrepreneurs with their web presence and her "Purpose" of creating LGBTI human rights documentary films that make an impact.

Regarding the Mompreneurs® nomination, and succession to finalist, Michelle explains, "It is an honour to be recognised by my peers for the work that we do. Not only are we determined to deliver outstanding value to our clients but we are a heart-led company that actively seeks opportunities to give-back to the community. Being a finalist for the Mompreneur® Momentum Award will undoubtedly raise our profile enabling us to engage in even more human rights work."

After meeting her partner, Ukrainian LGBT activist Olena Semenova, in 2014 at the World Pride Human Rights Conference in Toronto, the pair collaborated on "Pride of Ukraine", a documentary that explored the rise of the Pride movement in the country. Screened in Canada and 5 countries across Europe, the film launched Sanctuary Studios into documentary filmmaking and elevated Emson's role in international activism. The Studio's second film "Transgender Life in Slovenia", which won Best Film at the Ljubljana International LGBT Film Festival, was recently screened at the ILGA World Conference in Bangkok where Emson also presented a workshop on the role of film in activism to an international audience. Locally, Emson's work includes advocating for transgender visibility and rights in school boards, professional organizations, public speaking engagements, and local events including a recent appearance on the CBC TV show "Hello Goodbye" where she shared a little of her journey.

The 2017 Mompreneur® Awards presented by TruShield Insurance will be handed out at the 2017 National Mompreneurs® Conference taking place over 2 days during International Women's Day Weekend, Friday, March 3rd, and Saturday March 4th 2017. The conference will take place at the Sheraton Airport Hotel & Conference Centre - 801 Dixon Rd, Toronto, ON.

To interview Michelle about being a finalist, or to provide commentary on being a Mompreneur® and business leader, please contact:

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For more information on the Conference & Awards, to obtain a Media Pass or to speak to CEO Maria Locker please contact:

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- 30 -

About Mompreneur® Showcase Group Inc.

Mompreneur® Showcase Group Inc. (www.TheMompreneur.com) is the trusted national network that supports, educates, and empowers moms in business across Canada. With close to 20 satellite locations in Canada supporting over 17,000 women entrepreneurs, the company also includes Mompreneur® Magazine and Mompreneurs® Momentum Enterprise of Canada (non-profit) under its umbrella of properties.

www.themompreneur.com

About ParentsCanada

ParentsCanada Magazine is one of Canada's leading resources for parents of newborns to teens. Its focus is on providing parents the tools they need to make positive choices for their families. www.parentscanada.com

About TruShield Insurance

The TruShield Insurance solution was specifically created to provide Canadian small businesses with the insurance coverage they need. TruShield Insurance is the small business division of Federated Insurance Company of Canada, a leading specialized insurance provider. A 100% Canadian owned company, Federated Insurance has been part of the Fairfax family of companies since 1990. Learn more about TruShield Insurance at www.trushieldinsurance.ca.