



## Tasha Sutton, Pat Dellacecca, Levina Collins Skandia House:

I AM READY... To Build New Networks!

At a young age, Tasha Sutton, Patricia Dellacecca, and Levina Collins all shared a life long dream of becoming their own boss. As a teenager, Tasha always dreamed of owning her own tea room or café that looked out over the pristine waters of Nipigon. Patricia's passion for health and wellness gave her the drive to start her own business upon graduating from University in therapeutic services. And Levina, originally certified as an executive housekeeper at the Nipigon hospital, eventually became Development Officer of the hospital directing their \$4.3 million capital campaign.

Tasha Sutton,  
Pat Dellacecca,  
Levina Collins  
*Skandia House*

In 1999, Tasha, Pat and Levina joined forces to set out on an entrepreneurial journey. Their goal was to create a new career path that would afford them a rewarding lifestyle. Their path began with the PARO Centre for Women's Enterprise and its Peer Lending Circles. Tasha, Pat and Lavina all knew what they were willing to do to make their idea of a bed and breakfast work but needed financial, business, and programming assistance. Each one of them found a different experience at PARO that complimented their individual strengths and learning needs. Tasha found success with mentoring and support programs, personal loan options and women's development partnerships at PARO. Patricia found success with PARO's Northern Opportunities for Women and the workshops, presentations and events from the PARO on Wheels program. Both Tasha and Patricia are Accelerator Program participants. Levina was first introduced to PARO through joining the peer lending group, New Beginnings. With assistance from PARO and the peer lending group, she was able to fully market herself and her consulting business across the region.

Once finding PARO, their new business venture seemed like an ideal and natural fit for their lifestyles and not just a dream... The women purchased a historical building in Nipigon, ON and created a one-of-a kind bed and breakfast called Skandia House. Tasha, Pat and Levina have been overwhelmed by the support of their peers and mentors at PARO. "The Women's Enterprise Centre program assisted us with our business plan and marketing. The Business Accelerator program provided brainstorming sessions focused around our regional business needs," says Patricia.

"It was a lengthy 9-month process and we still have more work to do. I believe women face different challenges than men when venturing into business. Marketing is a big challenge when owning a bed and breakfast but with the assistance from PARO we have overcome these hurdles. By PARO continually believing in and supporting us, we were able to challenge ourselves emotionally, socially and somewhat physically with our venture. And we continue to feel connected with PARO even being located 2 hours away," says Tasha Sutton.

Tasha, Pat and Levina's future direction for the Skandia House is to continue to grow the bed and breakfast into a thriving tourist destination. With assistance from PARO, Skandia House is looking to expand their marketing ideas internationally and by hosting weekend wellness seminars for community residents and PARO members.

Tasha, Pat, and Levina still belong to their original Peer Lending Circle; New Beginnings. Patricia and Tasha are also involved in the Accelerator program at PARO by looking to grow the Skandia House regionally through defined tourism markets and Levina is a member of PARO's Accelerator Advisory Panel and actively sits on PARO's Board of Directors as Treasurer.

"Skandia House is located in a very quiet community but it seems everyday someone new walks through our doors. Right now, it's not a big dollar maker but it does give us great satisfaction meeting the people we meet and being a part of our community by preserving the history and culture in the Nipigon and Red Rock area," says Levina Collins. "Skandia House fosters good community relationships and I know with the assistance from PARO, we will meet our goals and feel supported along the way."

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