Above and beyond the call

Engineering alumnus, J.P. Deveau, volunteers as chair of the Halifax 2011 Canada Winter Games
An opportunity to make a difference

The Chair of the Board for the Halifax 2011 Canada Games is a busy man. Jean-Paul Deveau runs one of Nova Scotia’s most successful and innovative companies, Acadian Seaplants, and serves on several boards including BioNovo and the Council of International Seaweed Association. He also leads volunteer efforts to maintain the popular glades trails at Ski Wentworth, where he is an avid skier during the winter months. As if all this wasn’t enough, in 2009, Mr. Deveau graciously accepted the volunteer role of Chair of the Board for the Halifax 2011 Canada Games.

“Everything is on track,” says an energetic Mr. Deveau. “We have nearly half of the 5,000 volunteers we need already on board, construction of the Canada Games complex is on schedule, and we are meeting our target goals.”

The 2011 Canada Games will take place in Halifax from February 11 to 27 of next year. The games will draw 2,700 athletes competing in 20 sports, and are expected to generate $90 million in revenue for the city.

Mr. Deveau, a Moncton native with roots in Nova Scotia’s south shore, completed a bachelor of science at Dalhousie University in 1979, followed by two years at TUNS where he completed a degree in industrial engineering. He then set off for McGill University where he received his MBA.

In 2002, Mr. Deveau assumed the role of president and CEO of Acadian Seaplants, the company his father, Louis Deveau, BEng ’57, founded more than 40 years ago. Louis Deveau now fulfills the role of chair. Today the company, with its head office in Dartmouth, employs 330 people in eight countries, exports to more than 70 countries, and grosses more than $30 million in revenue annually.

Mr. Deveau credits much of his ability to effectively lead a national sporting event while managing a thriving company to his industrial engineering background.

“This will be the first Canada Games where project management technology is being implemented,” explains Mr. Deveau. “We are looking to advance the technology used in order to effectively transfer knowledge, and ensure all 46 staff members and over 500 planning volunteers are on track.”

In February, Mr. Deveau travelled to the Vancouver Olympics on his own dime to get a feel for the sporting event, and to generate excitement for the Canada Games, where many Olympic athletes will be competing. Although the Canada Games are smaller scale, they too will leave a lasting impression on the host city of Halifax.

“The Games will leave behind a legacy including the $40 million Canada Games Complex in Clayton Park, and $15 million of upgrades on existing facilities. They will help build a trained volunteer community, and of course it will be a great show,” says Mr. Deveau.

“Each province hosts the Canada Games only once every 40 years. This is an opportunity to make a difference and I am honoured to be able to make a contribution and give back.”

I.P. Deveau (right) on a visit to the 176,000 square-foot Canada Games Centre in Clayton Park. The centre, still under construction, will serve as a venue for the games, as well as a multi-purpose recreation facility for the community.

Acadian Seaplants harvests a variety of wild Atlantic Canadian seaweed species to produce a number of products ranging from feed to fertilizer. The company exports products to more than 70 countries around the world.