Meet Michael Caplin!

Refresh Annapolis Valley & Henry Schein

Mike Caplan cares deeply about the growing tech sector in Nova Scotia. An advocate for tech, Mike has helped introduce young people to digital tech through his work with Refresh Annapolis Valley. He wants parents and teachers to encourage youth to join extracurricular activities that will teach them about computer science, web design and development, programming, and other useful skills in tech. In addition to championing Refresh Annapolis Valley, which helped to promote digital education in Annapolis Valley, Mike manages a software development team for the health care products and services company, Henry Schein.

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Teachers in my high school didn't know much about computer science when I was in school. My interests in digital emerged post-high school – I've always been very community minded and I was regularly involved with different community-based issues. At that point of time, I used online media platforms to describe the issues that we tried to tackle in our community. From there, I became very enamoured with web development, and that was how I first discovered the world of the Internet, and all that is possible within it.

The early era of home-based computing was also a pretty big influence on me. Getting a home-based computer, looking at the source code of games, and being able to reverse engineer how different games were built, was amazing. In the late 90s, those who were getting into web design and web development were mostly kids who were learning by themselves, as that was an acceptable learning trajectory for the field. Being one of those self-taught kids myself, I built my early tech skills by building web applications, and learned as I coded.

Getting into IT wasn't a moment for me, but was more of an evolution. Part of my evolution and commitment to my chosen profession was founding Refresh Annapolis Valley – a professional association that helped grow the Valley's technology industry. We provided community services to encourage the next generation of computer scientists, as well as support our current digital tech sector.

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I believe it is important to describe to young people that computer science is an incredibly creative profession for problem solvers, but it is hard for kids to visually see how they can solve a wide range of important problems with computer science. I really enjoy working with the next generation to help them solve problems that are important to them, through the lens of computers science.

In addition to volunteering, I am a Lead Software Developer for a division of Henry Schein, which is a Fortune 500 company based in New York City that focuses on dental and medical services and products. We have a satellite office in Nova Scotia, where we develop software related to the dental industry. Today, the dental restorations industry is becoming increasingly digitized, which is a big change because historically the industry has been about ceramics, chisels, and all sorts of torturous devices. I'm super excited to be a part of the development of these new digital solutions, that are resulting in better health care delivery.

I'm originally from Montreal, and when I moved to Nova Scotia 13 years ago there were not many jobs in my sector. Today, it's completely different,

as Halifax has become a popular place for ICT start-ups in Atlantic Canada. These are pretty exciting times, as upcoming ICT companies have greater resources available for them to try and build something for themselves right here in Nova Scotia.

If students are interested in careers in digital tech, they should look at extra-curricular organizations, like Hoist Halifax, where students in grades 6-12 can learn about all the amazing things you can do with computers.

About Henry Schein
Henry Schein is based in New York City that focuses on dental and medical services and products. The company has satellite offices in Nova Scotia where Henry Schein develops software related to the dental industry. The company also runs Henry Schein Global Innovation Center where they investigate technology currents that have a possible application within dentistry and medicine.