



Canadian tech execs on trade mission in Bay State

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by [Ryan McBride](#)

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Lynn Casey and Trisha Coady were working nurses, having a hard time finding continuing-education courses to fit into their busy schedules. So the two Canadian entrepreneurs launched a web-based company, MedSenses Inc., to provide online courses to nurses.

New Brunswick-based MedSenses is among at least five technology-driven firms from Canada that plan to send executives to Boston next week as part of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency's trade mission to promote 17 women-owned businesses from the country, officials said.

Casey, executive vice president and co-founder of MedSenses, said she plans to meet with representatives of five New England hospitals during the trade mission and hopes to gain contracts to offer her company's online services in the region. The company went live with its website last July and counts nurses in the Bay State among the hundreds of people who have already taken its courses.

Other technology companies joining the trade mission include biotechnology firm Newfound Genomics Inc., online marking firm AppleCore Interactive, IT service provider In Corp Solution Providers and multimedia gym franchiser Bulldog Interactive Fitness Inc.

Holly Bond, president and founder of Bulldog Interactive, said she plans to find potential franchisees to open one of her company's youth gyms in Massachusetts. The gyms -- which are exclusively for youths -- feature exercise bicycles linked to Playstation 2 video-game systems that let kids race each other while staying fit.

"This year's initiative features a strengthened focus on the technology sector, which despite its strong growth potential, is under-represented by women," said Ann Janega, vice president of the Nova Scotia division of Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters, an organizer of the trade mission.

Salem, N.H.-based Good Leads has lined up meetings for Bond and her fellow entrepreneurs during the trade mission, slated to begin Feb. 25. And the group is also expected to visit with veteran entrepreneurs at an event at Wellesley College jointly sponsored by the Center for Women and Enterprise.