



COCO Café is a Social Enterprise with a mission to provide employment, training, and socialization opportunities for people with developmental disabilities. Their business model is unique to them. Most similar community programs are just that, “community programs” where people with developmental disabilities are given the opportunity to participate in a workplace setting, not necessarily being paid and often being part of more of a social and recreational program. At the Coco Café all their employees are paid industry-standard wages or higher and offered a full benefits package. All their employees are part of the team and contribute to the success of the business. This is especially important for those employees with developmental disabilities to feel the rewards of contributing to their workplace success and being part of their community.

Recognition of the accomplishments of COCO Café is wonderful for their committed team “who work hard to maintain the focus of effort on a daily basis to provide a supportive work environment.” Equally as important, winning this award raises the profile of the organization, its mission, and the possibilities of running a successful and truly inclusive workplace.

In 2017 the COCO Café introduced new efforts in their commercial retail food department incorporating new products such as healthy family meals, stuffed Yorkshire puddings, and chicken enchiladas to their already popular hand-folded potpies and soups. These meals are sold in their retail food freezer on sight and through local grocery stores. They are excited to be expanding their opportunities by opening a new commercial kitchen space dedicated to meeting the demand of their growing catering and commercial retail operations. This new kitchen will create a space to allow them to meet the demand for their product and provide more supported employment opportunities.

Check out their website at [www.cococafe.ca](http://www.cococafe.ca), like them on Facebook at Coco Café & Cedar Opportunities Co-operative, or follow them on Instagram at @cococafecedar