



CPRA ACPL

GREEN JOBS INITIATIVE

Success Story

Green Job Connects Indigenous Youth to BC Trails

A S AN INDIGENOUS YOUNG ADULT, Damyn Libby has always been passionate about working with, for, and alongside other Indigenous people.

When he learned the Trails Society of British Columbia was hiring an Indigenous Youth Engagement Coordinator, he jumped at the chance to apply.

“It means a lot (to have this opportunity). It’s huge for me,” says Damyn, who was hired for the position that was created thanks to the CPRA Green Jobs Initiative, which is funded in part by the Government of Canada’s Youth Employment Skills Strategy program.



TRAILS SOCIETY, VANCOUVER
BRITISH COLUMBIA

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Damyn Libby, Indigenous Youth Engagement Coordinator

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Richard Campbell, development manager for the Trails Society of British Columbia

Based in central Okanagan, Damyn coordinates the Trails BC Indigenous Youth Engagement Project. This project helps connect youth to cultural supports – such as Elders and knowledge keepers – within the Syilx community who help them re-connect to their culture while accessing trails.

“I did my BA in Indigenous Studies and history, so it’s really applying a lot of what I’ve learned,” Damyn says. “It’s really great to learn a lot more and just offer my voice as well. I think that’s a huge privilege.”

Damyn has also been given many other responsibilities including coordinating trail tours with Indigenous youth, Elders and community members, planning outreach at public events, and serving as a mentor to the organization’s Indigenous Youth Engagement Assistant – which is another CPRA Green Jobs Initiative-funded position.

“I’ve always been the mentee, not the mentor. So it’s great to be on this side, and just being able to help someone else out,” he says. “I think being a mentee and a mentor both teach you about what you need to build a professional relationship.”

The job has also given the 25 year-old his first experience in project management. He would like to work for the provincial government someday, and says the skills he learned through this opportunity will be beneficial when he starts applying for full-time employment.

“Just being in this environment is teaching me a lot about what professional environments are like, and allowing me to diversify my skill set. I think it will help me reach that end goal,” Damyn says.

Richard Campbell, development manager for the Trails Society of British Columbia, worked alongside Damyn and served as his mentor. But Richard says he has also learned a lot from Damyn.

“There’s so much to learn about the lands, about Indigenous people, and the problems that have been caused as a result of colonization,” says Campbell. “We have much to learn from (Indigenous people). They have used trails forever, and for different purposes and reasons than we would consider. So it’s a different perspective and a really valuable, more holistic kind of perspective that we as an organization and as a society need to move towards.”

Richard adds that Damyn’s role brought a positive energy to the organization.

“Having young people involved certainly brings a lot of excitement and ideas to the organization which is super, super valuable,” he says.

Richard also says the funding has allowed the Trails Society of BC to offer this program for the first time, and he hopes to see it extended to other areas of the province. 🍁