



YOUTH EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Success Story



Volleyball Night!

Building recreational leadership for the future

DEBRA ASHBY HAS BEEN WORKING for the Bengough Municipal Parks, Recreation & Cultural Authority (BMPRCA) for 41 years. Today, she is the Recreation Director, and although she remains passionate about her role in supporting an active community, she is also thinking about the future.

That means she is sharing her knowledge and the benefits of her decades of experience with Kennedy Gauley, who is the Recreation Assistant as well as a Youth Worker.

“I am in my sixties, and I am going to retire at some point,” says Debra. “Kennedy is helping me in a significant way to manage my responsibilities, and I am thinking about succession planning as well – training Kennedy to do everything I do and carry on in this role if she chooses.”



RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF BENGOUGH,
SASKATCHEWAN



This project is funded by
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Play School participants having craft time!



Youth Tie Dye Night

“It’s great to be in this role, and I think this is where I want to stay for a long time. I am building something here and I’m excited to continue”

Kennedy Gauley, Recreation Assistant and Youth Worker, BMPRCA

Bengough is located in southeastern Saskatchewan, about 150 kilometres south of Regina and not far from the U.S. border. The BMPRCA is responsible for a full range of sports/recreation facilities and community programs that are greatly valued in the Town of Bengough and in the surrounding Rural Municipality of Bengough, where farming and ranching are a foundation of the economy.

As Debra describes it, being a small-town Recreation Director requires being a “jack of all trades.” The organization is responsible for managing programming and facilities that include a skating rink, curling rink, regional park and swimming pool, and the Bengough Community Centre and Bengough Youth Council.

“In rural communities like ours, we don’t have budgets for a lot of staff. We rely very heavily on community volunteers to help us run facilities and deliver programs,” Debra explains.

“Having Kennedy assist me has also taken a lot of pressure off our community volunteers. A lot of them are getting older too, and it’s great to have Kennedy working with the Youth Council to train and inspire young people as future volunteers.”

Kennedy is from Bengough, and she was motivated to be active in sports and recreation from an early age. “Essentially, I grew up being involved in this aspect of community life,” she says. “My mom used to work with Debra on some programming, and my first job at 15 was a summer job with BMPRCA.”

Now 24, Kennedy continued to spend her summers working there as she earned her Bachelor of Sport and Recreation Studies at the University of Regina, majoring in Sport and Recreation Management. She graduated in 2019 and is now a full-time employee.

Her employment has been supported by funding from CPRA’s Youth Employment Experience program. Among its objectives, the program supports the hiring and mentorship of young people to prepare them for potential work in the sports and recreation sector.

Kennedy is learning about every aspect of being in that “jack of all trades” leadership position, including facility maintenance and scheduling, program planning, fundraising and promotion, grant applications, budgeting and financial reporting, and supervision of seasonal staff. “I love the variety, being involved in different activities every day.”

And she is also enjoying her Youth Worker role, she says. “I have a passion for working with children and youth, and I enjoy coming up with innovative programming ideas to get them all engaged.”

“I set my career path when I was quite young,” Kennedy says. “It’s great to be in this role, and I think this is where I want to stay for a long time. I am building something here and I’m excited to continue.” 🍁