



CPRA ACPL

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Success Story

Windsor Waterfront Skatepark, West Hants

YEE Equitable Program Intern Makes Lasting Impressions on West Hants

THEN GRAYSON TITCOMB WALKED INTO his interview for an Equitable Program Intern position with the West Hants Regional Municipality, Bekah Craik was instantly impressed.

“As soon as he walked into the interview room, and opened his mouth, all of us sat back – but also leaned forward to learn more about him,” she remembers. “Grayson brought a calmness to the room, but also invited conversation. That’s been huge in the work that he’s been doing, because he has connected with so many people. He has a special gift to connect with people and make everyone feel welcome.”



WEST HANTS,
NOVA SCOTIA

Canada

This project is funded by
the Government of Canada



Mentorship Team

- Bekah Craik - West Hants Regional Municipality
- Kimm Kent - POSSE Project
- Jessica Atwell - Big Brothers Big Sisters Annapolis Valley
- Emilie Smith - AVRCE SchoolsPlus

Community Partnerships

- Autism NS Annapolis Valley
- Acadia University
- Community Health Board
- Valley Recreation Committee

“This funding has given us the opportunity to do a needs assessment of our community, and realize what sort of foundational work needs to happen to meet the needs of our diverse community and marginalized populations.”

Bekah Craik, West Hants Regional Municipality

Grayson’s natural ability to work with others made him perfect for the job, which was a position funded by the Government of Canada as part of the CPRA Youth Employment Experience program.

He worked with four mentors who came together as a team to support his role, which included Bekah, Emilie Smith with the Annapolis Valley Regional Centre for Education SchoolsPlus, Kimm Kent of the Peer Outreach Support Services & Education (POSSE) Project, and Jessica Atwell with Big Brothers Big Sisters Annapolis Valley.

Working together with his mentors, he supported successful programs and equity seeking groups in the community that focus on reaching vulnerable populations, such as at-risk youth.

“I had a very diverse, flexible workday,” he says. “It was very fluid, and there wasn’t necessarily any set day that was repeated twice. Because of that, I feel like I got to experience a lot of amazing and unique opportunities.”

In his role at the Annapolis Valley Regional Centre for Education’s SchoolsPlus program, he provided counseling supports for elementary, middle and high school students. His work with the POSSE project in West Hants, as well as Big Brothers Big Sisters Annapolis Valley, also allowed him to work with organizations that promote peer support and harm reduction among vulnerable youth.

In his role as an Equitable Program Intern, Grayson has also made a lasting impact on the West Hants Regional Municipality that will have ripple effects for years to come. He developed a training manual about inclusive intersectional language – which will be piloted for West Hants and the Town of Kentville’s summer staff and town councils this year.

“I feel like we’ve really built something here, and I’m really looking forward to seeing how it continues to grow,” Grayson says.

Bekah adds that Grayson’s work in developing inclusive intersectional language training for staff has given the municipality the opportunity to dive into the community’s immediate needs.

“It’s given us the opportunity to do a needs assessment of our community, and realize what sort of foundational work needs to happen to meet the needs of our diverse community and marginalized populations that are a part of our society,” she says.

Grayson hopes the training will help encourage others from marginalized groups to work for the municipality.

“We know there are more people who want to work for the municipality, and my time here will most likely make it easier for those people,” he says.

Grayson adds that as part of his job, he also sat on Annapolis Valley’s various committees, advisory boards and recreation groups and worked alongside recreation and community development professionals – which led to a new job offer in summer recreation management within the nearby Town of Kentville.

“I think I’ve grown an immense amount through working in this role,” he says. “This experience was meaningful to me because of making connections and networking, but also, just knowing that the work I was doing was important.”

While Bekah officially worked as Grayson’s mentor, she also considers herself a mentee and learned a lot working with Grayson.

“I am very honoured to have been able to work with Grayson, and the other mentors as well,” she says. “We’ve all taught each other a huge amount. With Grayson, it’s been a very reciprocal relationship where I have learned just as much as I have offered.” 🍁