



Halloween party activities, Ville de Sainte-Marie

Everyone wins in Sainte-Marie

THERE ARE DIFFICULT YEARS FOR organizations. Periods when staff turnover and maternity leaves result in a number of vacancies that are sometimes difficult for companies and organizations to fill.

That being said, these vacancies provide opportunities for young people to be provided with an internship possibility or a job in their desired field. This was the case for Maude, a student in museum studies, who was offered a position as a recreational events planner through the Youth Employment Experience program in the municipality of Sainte-Marie in the Beauce region, south of Quebec City.



VILLE DE SAINTE MARIE,
QUEBEC

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Maude Poirier, Recreation Manager

An Easy Choice

At the start of summer 2021, the municipality of Sainte-Marie wanted to offer an internship opportunity, so it went looking for a person who could take on the responsibility of leading recreational activities. The hiring criteria matched with those of the Youth Employment Experience program, so the team quickly turned to Maude, a familiar candidate who had encountered difficulties finding employment in her field and at her skills level.

As a matter of fact, Maude, for whom sports and recreation are in her heart, was familiar with the environment as well as the staff since she had previously led cultural workshops in the city.

The six month internship began at the end of the summer and Maude found herself tasked with stimulating projects. For example she was organizing Halloween festivities and special Christmas events. For each of these celebrations, she had to make sure to organize the different events, activities and workshops for the community, recruit and work with volunteers, and set up online contests. All this had to be done while also observing Covid-19 health measures, which represented a real challenge.

Apart from these huge tasks, the intern lent a helping hand to her colleagues by assisting in other events, such as the 2021 Grand défi Pierre Lavoie.

The last project to be assigned to Maude before the end of her internship has been the weeklong spring break program in 2022.

Management and Teamwork

It was Josée Rivest, manager of recreation, culture and community life in the city of Sainte-Marie who took the new recruit under her wing. With the many hats that she wore every

day, the mentorship and management of the young recruit were real challenges.

In fact, it was no surprise that the huge responsibilities assigned to the intern needed close supervision. Even though it was difficult to hold weekly meetings, they just proved necessary. Rivest always made herself available and depended on her team to support, as much as possible, Maude in her work. The frequent discussions and adjustments since her hiring seemed to have paid off. Rivest observed a certain balance when the intern got her bearings and grew in confidence.

Everyone Wins

Despite the challenges and needed energy that come from training a young intern, both parties left as winners in this adventure. For Maude, it was a golden opportunity to beef up her resume with an experience that was both rich and relevant. On the personal side, she gained some maturity, confidence and a sense of responsibility through the different projects that were assigned to her.

For the municipality, it allowed for sustainable knowledge transfer by passing on tasks to a young worker who truly is interested in the field and who is probably interested in joining the organization.

Rivest wholeheartedly recommends the Youth Employment Experience program, which allowed her to provide a quality internship experience for Maude. She considers this opportunity beneficial on all levels and hopes that in the future she can repeat this experience by offering this opportunity to other young people who, for a variety of reasons, may not be able to find a job and who wish to have an enriching experience in the workplace.

A Word About the Program

The new Youth Experience Employment Program, backed by the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) supports employment access for youth between 15 and 30 years old, and especially those who face barriers to employment.

Targeted at local administrations, such as cities, villages, municipalities and Indigenous communities, the program provides direct financial support via 100% wage subsidies.

Through this program, the CPRA wishes not only to provide youth with hands-on work experience but also with a mentor, so that they can find stability in the field.

Maude is one of some 250 young people who will be able to access an actual internship opportunity in the field of recreation during the three-year program by its end in 2023. 🍁