



YOUTH EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Success Story

The photo captures the excitement and energy of the camp, captured after the kids finished their play, which they helped create, rehearsed, and performed for parents. It captures the final day's performance, showcasing the camp's theme.

Bathurst youth helps create lasting memories for summer campers

ELYSE DEGRACE WANTS TO WORK IN

finance, and has built a solid foundation for a career in this sector after working a summer recreation job for the City of Bathurst – learning problem solving skills, leadership skills, and gaining confidence.

During the summer of 2023, Degrace worked as a summer camp counselor in the New Brunswick community, which was a position funded from the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association's Youth Employment Experience (YEE) program. This program, funded by the Government of Canada, is designed to build skills and remove barriers to employment for youth. The program further builds capacity in the parks and recreation sector by providing mentorship support to each youth throughout their work experience.



CITY OF BATHURST,
NEW BRUNSWICK

Canada

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During a camp nature project, children were led by a nature reserve guest to discover "critters" in the waterways around Daly Point. They learned how to take samples for observation and further testing.

“Our demand for summer camps is growing post-pandemic, and we saw the demand being much larger this year... Having this funding opportunity was just huge, and allowed us to ensure that we can keep these things going and keep costs for the families at a reasonable price.”

Jacob Button, the Recreation Programmer with the City of Bathurst

“I’ve worked with kids through babysitting and teaching piano, and it’s always so engaging working with them,” Degrace says. “I was really glad I got the opportunity to work here.”

Throughout the summer, Degrace worked as one of three counselors for city-run camps held at the community’s Daly Point Nature Reserve and Youghall Beach Park.

As part of her job, she planned and led activities for the campers based on each week’s different themes, and made sure they enjoyed a positive and safe experience at the camp. Degrace says she learned a lot on the job – including how to solve problems that arise among children and communicating with their parents – which she found extremely rewarding.

“I was always excited to go to work,” she says. “I was really happy over the summer, and seeing the kids everyday made my job a million times better. It was a really good experience for me.”

Jacob Button, the Recreation Programmer with the City of Bathurst, managed the summer camps and was also Degrace’s mentor.

He says that Degrace started a few weeks earlier than the other counselors, and had the opportunity to plan and prepare the summer camps.

“She was really well organized, and a very good leader to the other two counselors when they started. She brought them on board and made them feel like they have ownership of the camp too,” Button says.

He adds that Degrace was incredibly dedicated to the job, and the campers knew they could rely on her for support.

“She was always surrounded by kids, and when tough situations arose, she really seemed to be the one that listened to them and was there to help,” Button says. “The kids felt like they could go to her, and she was there for them. She always had their best interests in mind.”

He says that he also saw major growth in Degrace throughout the summer – and noticed she grew more confident when communicating with parents, and onboarding the other counselors when they started.

Button describes the funding as “instrumental” to the city, because it allowed the municipality to continue to offer summer recreation programming at a lower cost to families within the community.

“Our demand for summer camps is growing post-pandemic, and we saw the demand being much larger this year,” he explains. “Having this funding opportunity was just huge, and allowed us to ensure that we can keep these things going and keep costs for the families at a reasonable price.” 🍁