



## YEE student brings recreation ideas to life

**S**HANE RAY HAS A LOT OF IDEAS TO UNITE communities through parks and recreation. Unfortunately, the Director of Recreation Services for the RM of Ritchot doesn't always have the resources he needs to bring those ideas to life.

But in 2023, Ray was able to hire Danielle Peters to implement some of these ideas — as well as provide support for recreational programs within the community.



MUNICIPALITY OF RITCHOT,  
MANITOBA

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Mc'ing our first Homegrown Harmonies, music in the park event in St. Adolphe.



Mc'ing our second Homegrown Harmonies, music in the park event in Grande Pointe.

*“With recreation, there are so many different roles and different life paths you can take... This was a really nice way for me to see if I enjoy municipal recreation.”*

Danielle Peters, Recreation Management and Community Development student at the University of Manitoba

The municipality hired Peters as its Coordinator of Community Engagement and Activation thanks to funding from the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association's Youth Employment Experience 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.

“I can't emphasize enough how much this grant has supported us,” says Ray. “It was huge.”

As part of her role, Peters was responsible for community outreach and implemented various recreation programs within the RM of Ritchot to bring the community together.

These events included recreation drop-in programs, as well as a highly successful Music in the Park event held during the summer that drew more than 300 people.

“I don't think we ever would have run a Music in the Park event, because we didn't have somebody who could spearhead it,” Ray explains. “Our regular programmer, especially during the summer, is busy with our summer camps and things like that. So it was great to be able to bring Danielle on board, and bring these ideas to life — and, see the impact it's had on our community.”

Peters, a Recreation Management and Community Development student at the University of Manitoba, says she learned about the position from Ray who was one

of her professors. Peters knew as soon as she saw the job description that she wanted to apply.

She also had some experience working for the municipality the previous year as a skating and hockey instructor.

“It was something I knew I'd be very good at,” she says, adding that she gained valuable on-the-job experience — including attending council and staff meetings, community meetings, creating briefing notes, and posting to social media.

Peters even successfully applied for two grants — one of which was for the Music in the Park event.

“Grants, especially, aren't really something we learn to write in school, so it was very exciting,” she says, adding that the opportunity opened her eyes to recreation work within a municipality. “With recreation, there are so many different roles and different life paths you can take. This was a really nice way for me to see if I enjoy municipal recreation.”

Peters adds that as a lifelong resident of the municipality, she has fond memories of enjoying recreational activities while growing up in the small town. This job opportunity, she says, showed her a different side to recreation.

“Being a part of putting it together, and being behind-the-scenes and what goes into it, was very rewarding,” she says. “Recreational activities impacted me as a kid, and now, I get to impact the rest of the community as well.” 🍁