



Youth Worker Brings Tantramar Community Together Through Recreation

ALEXA ESTABROOKS HAS ALWAYS stayed physically active through sport and recreation.

Throughout the summer and fall of 2023, she was able to bring that passion to her role as an Active Living Coordinator in New Brunswick's Tantramar community – a role funded thanks to 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.



TANTRAMAR,
NEW BRUNSWICK

Canada

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the Government of Canada



Jailbird 10K from the Sandpiper Festival in Dorchester



Adult Hiking Group on the Medicine Trail in Fort Folly First Nations

“I thought it would be a good job opportunity, and I didn’t really have any prior experience with this type of work,” explains Estabrooks. “This was a really great experience, and I’m very thankful.”

As Active Living Coordinator, Estabrooks was responsible for developing, delivering, and evaluating recreational programs within Tantramar. She also created promotional material for these programs, as well as encouraged residents to get more active. Under her leadership, the community won second place in New Brunswick for ParticipACTION’s Community Challenge - a national physical activity and sport initiative that encourages everyone in Canada to get active throughout the month of June.

“Alexa brought her own beliefs about the importance of physical activity to her role,” says Matt Pryde, the municipality’s Director of Active Living and Culture who mentored Estabrooks alongside the community’s program coordinator.

Pryde adds that Estabrooks’s role came at a particularly helpful time for the community. In January 2023, the Town of Sackville and surrounding communities became the Municipality of Tantramar – which doubled in size and needed more staff to run programming.

“Being able to hire Alexa for the summer helped us to expand programs in other parts of the municipality,” he says,

adding that the role was very valuable to the community. “Municipalities can’t always afford to hire people. This funding program helped us hire students like Alexa that we otherwise may not have been able to hire.”

Estabrooks says that the job also helped teach her important skills that she will use in her future. She hopes to become a nurse someday, and says that the communication skills she learned on the job will help her in her career.

“I learned the skills needed to work with the public – how to talk to people and how to communicate with them,” she says, adding that the job also showed her what goes on behind-the-scenes when hosting an event. “I learned a lot about organizing and planning. I didn’t realize there was so much work to do before an actual event.”

Pryde says that the job helped build Estabrooks’s confidence, and that the funding gave her and other youth in communities across Canada the opportunity to learn something new.

“This funding gives young people a chance to work,” he says. “I’m a big believer in giving young people an opportunity to get a job. They are the future of the country, so they need to get some quality experiences – or else there’s not much hope.” 🍁