



Cultivating Growth and Inclusivity: Brie's Journey with CPRA's Green Jobs Initiative

Brie, a full-time student at Emily Carr University of Art and Design and passionate advocate for outdoor education and community building, found her calling through CPRA's Green Jobs Initiative. Hailing from a background in education and a deep love for gardening and the outdoors, she embraced the role of Nature School Educator and Garden Manager at Terra Nova Nature School in British Columbia.

"When my cousin sent me the application for this job, it seemed like a match made in heaven: Gardening and teaching," shares Brie, whose position was made possible by the Green Jobs Initiative, which is funded by the Government of Canada's Youth Employment Skills Strategy (YESS) program. Her dedication to fostering environmental stewardship and her alignment with Terra Nova's land-based outdoor curriculum made this opportunity the perfect fit.

In her role, Brie crafted enriching outdoor programs, fostering a love for the natural world among the children with whom she worked. From woodworking to cooking and place-based exploration, every day brought new opportunities for learning and growth. Beyond the classroom, Brie's afternoons were dedicated to the garden, where she meticulously planned and managed harvesting, weeding, and planting cycles.



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This experience significantly impacted Brie's personal and professional growth. "I have grown so much in this position. Like the children, I have been able to learn through observing and exploring," she reflects. Her newfound confidence and knowledge extend to childhood development, education, and garden management, setting the stage for a promising future.

Emily, Brie's supervisor and one of the Coordinators of Terra Nova Nature School, highlights the indelible mark Brie left on the school and the community. "Brie has enriched the lives of the children and youth in her care. She is exceptionally warm, bright, and creative," notes Emily. "She brought a multitude of innovative ideas to each class. Her gentle guidance and ability to bring a group together enhanced our daily programming."

In her role, Brie was able to provide some guidance to strengthen the inclusive nature of Terra Nova's programs, another remarkable achievement. Brie, being a queer and neurodivergent person, emphasizes the importance of inclusivity. "I felt proud to become part of a team that was not only inclusive of me but of people from all walks of life," she shares. The school's commitment to creating an open and accepting learning environment resonated with Brie, who actively contributed to making the outdoor nature-based programming inclusive for all participants.

"Brie's self awareness and reflection on her own life has brought a new lens to our team," notes Emily. "Our school has been focusing on social equity and inclusion, and Brie has helped us develop in this area." Looking ahead, Brie sees this opportunity as a catalyst for her future endeavors. "This opportunity has already impacted my future. I continued to work as a part-time educator at Terra Nova Nature School after my summer position ended," she states. As she pursues a degree in Critical and Cultural Practices and envisions a career as a child and youth counselor, Brie is grateful for the valuable experiences and confidence gained through CPRA's Green Jobs Initiative.

For Emily, Brie's contributions have been instrumental in shaping the school's direction. "Brie's contributions have furthered our growth in many areas and supported the development and implementation of a consistent gardening programming" says Emily. The Green Jobs Program, with its financial support, enabled the hiring of a recent graduate like Brie, bringing new ideas and perspectives to a role that may not have existed otherwise.

Brie's experience exemplifies the profound impact of CPRA's Green Jobs Initiative, not only on the individual participant but also on the community and the organizations involved. Through empowering youth, fostering environmental stewardship, and promoting inclusivity, CPRA continues to play a pivotal role in building a sustainable and vibrant future for communities across Canada.

