

# SERVICE LEARNING

2020 - 2021 Newsletter

Issue 23 September 2021



## Community Connection During the COVID-19 Pandemic Community Support Coordinator, Arlyne McGrath

2020-21 was a year we will not forget. As a program based on addressing community needs, the Service Learning team wanted to find creative ways to fill community needs while keeping everyone safe and following public health protocols. At some points during the pandemic, that meant staying home as much as possible, but as the pandemic stretched into 2021 and we found new ways of operating, we continued to look for creative solutions to connect with our community.

In February 2021, I applied to become a Butterflyway Ranger with the David Suzuki Foundation Butterflyway Project. The Butterflyway Project is a resident led movement creating and advocating for pollinator habitat across Canada. This year, the program has exploded with over 1000 rangers in over 400 communities across Canada.

We do not have time to waste. Many pollinators are endangered or on the brink of extinction. We have lost over 75% of insect life in the last 20 years, and Monarch Butterflies in particular have lost over 90% of their numbers. There are many reasons for this – intensity of storms and fires increasing, invasive species, rapid urbanization...the list goes on, but loss of habitat is a major contributing factor. It is all very overwhelming but doing nothing is not an option. This is a major problem, but one we can work to fix. A Butterflyway is an area of 12 contiguous pollinator patches. I know Antigonish, and I know we can make many of these patches if people hear about the program.

I contacted Mary Partridge, a horticultural therapist in the Recreation and Spiritual program at the RK MacDonald Nursing Home to see if we could put a pollinator patch at the RK. I was delighted to learn the RK MacDonald already has a Canadian Wildlife Federation Certified garden that includes Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias Incarnata*), one of the plants that is essential for the survival of the Monarch Butterfly. They lay their eggs on this plant, and the caterpillars eat it exclusively before they become the iconic Monarchs we know and love.

Mary suggested that we give milkweed seedlings as a thank you to the front-line staff who have worked so hard this last year to keep the residents safe during the pandemic, and as a way to spread the word about how to help pollinators in our community and create our very own Butterflyway in Antigonish. So, currently, 140 seedlings are growing under the grow lights at the RK, waiting for their new homes after the first full moon in June.

Although we will not be able to return to the RK in person until public health restrictions are lifted, it feels good to say thank you to some of our dedicated front-line workers, while taking steps to protect a species at risk.

Interested in creating your own pollinator patch? Check out the Antigonish Butterflyway Facebook page at [Facebook.com/antigonishbutterflyway](https://www.facebook.com/antigonishbutterflyway) for planting guides, pollinator habitat tips and more, or contact Arlyne McGrath at [amcgrath@stfx.ca](mailto:amcgrath@stfx.ca) for more information.

# SERVICE LEARNING AWARD WINNERS



## Community Engaged Scholar Award, Spring Convocation 2021

This prize recognizes a student who has completed one or more Service Learning experiences and has demonstrated a personal commitment to community development.

This year's 2020-2021 recipient of the Community Engaged Scholar is **Andrew Boyle**. Andrew lives in Afton, Nova Scotia. Graduated in May 2021 with BSCHKIN.

Andrew has been actively involved in the community throughout his time at StFX. Andrew did placements with various community agencies including, StFX MAX Program; Antigonish Challenger Baseball Association; Antigonish Atom AA Bulldogs and with Antigonish Para Sledge Hockey.

**Andrew had this to say about his experience with Service Learning:**

“During my past 3.5 years attending StFX, I have been able to become involved with several different organizations within the town that have made a significant positive impact on my undergrad experience.

Being involved in this amazing community has also gifted me in being srecognized nationally by Hockey Canada, as the Hockey Canada Champion, for community involvement and leadership this year.

Having the opportunities to work within Antigonish and meet so many great kids, parents, and friends, is one that I will never take for granted and the lessons I've learned, experiences I've had, and memories made will be ones that I continue to share. Antigonish is a top-notch community, where inclusion of all abilities is of upmost importance, accessibility is available and community members care about one another.

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**Did You Know  
that Service  
Learning has  
TWO awards?**

### COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLAR AWARD

This prize recognizes a student who has completed one or more Service Learning experiences and has demonstrated a personal commitment to community development.

### COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH AWARD MARCH 2022

This prize is awarded annually to the best community-engaged research project presented at Student Research Day.

# SERVICE LEARNING AWARD WINNERS

## Venceremos Development Consult Recipient of the StFX Community Partner Recognition Award, Fall Convocation, December 2020



Coleman Agyeyomah

Venceremos Development Consult is an experienced provider of safe and enriching international education programs. This organization has collaborated with StFX Immersion Service Learning since 2015 to develop and offer immersive experiential learning opportunities for students in Ghana.

supports community-based relationship development in Ghana, and has been a development and local change educator for over 2 decades. As director of Venceremos, he is uniquely situated to connect Service Learning staff and StFX students with Ghanaian experiences supporting academic growth, leadership skills and the development of working relationships that can have a profound, lasting impact.

To quote a former student, she says:

“Coleman sparked my passion for education, helping others and the importance of community and local engagement. .... he helped pave my path of experiences to guide me in the right direction for my career. I became a teacher because of Coleman.”

Coleman and Venceremos have also hosted Development Studies students who completed internships and conducted Honors research in Ghana. As he has done for Immersion Service Learning courses in Ghana, Coleman facilitated these internships, gearing them to the interests and capacity of each student and safeguarding their experience: guiding them through frustrations, and supporting their wellbeing.

Coleman has also had a deep impact on StFX faculty and Canada Research Chair, Dr. Jon Langdon’s research. To quote Dr Langdon:

“His collaboration has been at the center of my many research projects in Ghana, and he has stepped into leading research efforts in Northern Ghana this year, as COVID has prevented me from travelling to Ghana during the normal research period”

For their commitment to student development, their support of the StFX Service Learning program and their ability to inspire members of the StFX community, I am pleased to present Venceremos Development Consult for the St. Francis Xavier University Community Partner Recognition Award.

# STUDENT RESEARCH DAY

## LEADING WITH TWO EYES: LEADERSHIP FAILURES AND POSSIBILITIES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF A PULP MILL'S WICKED PROBLEM



**Background:** My research focuses on the case study of Northern Pulp, a pulp and paper mill located in Pictou, County Nova Scotia. Over Northern Pulp's 53 years of operation, it was the subject of controversy in the region because it created significant employment opportunities while, at the same time, causing pollution and negative health impacts on the surrounding population. A significant problem associated with the mill was its release of effluent into Boat Harbour, which was previously enjoyed for livelihood and recreational purposes by the community of Pictou Landing First Nation. In 2014, an effluent leak initiated a blockade by the people of Pictou Landing First Nation, which was only dismantled once the provincial government promised to create the Boat Harbour Act, a piece of legislation that would prevent Northern Pulp from using Boat Harbour past the date of January 31, 2020. Although this legislation was long-awaited by the people of Pictou Landing First Nation, the situation created a wicked problem for Northern Pulp. My goal is to tell a story about leadership in the context of a wicked business problem while also offering some plausible ideas about "what could have been."

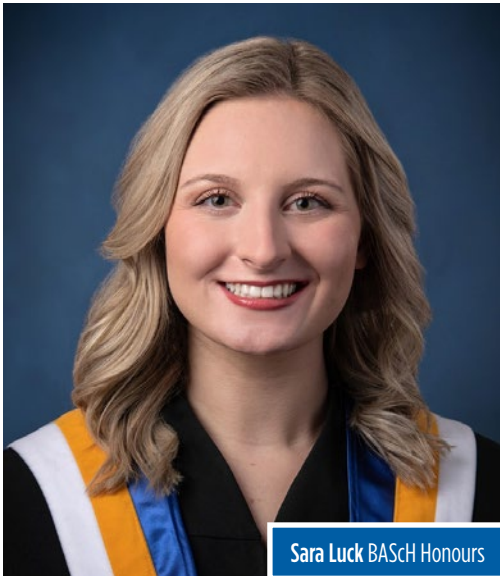
**Methods:** I conducted a qualitative content analysis of 182 public documents related to Northern Pulp's leadership approach that were published during the time period in which the Boat Harbour Act was active. After gathering these documents, I then imported them all into a coding software called NVivo where I carried out a thematic analysis of the documents using the process of inductive coding.

**Findings:** From the process of inductive coding, a total of 18 codes emerged to describe Northern Pulp's leadership, all of which suggested that Northern Pulp did not employ the type of collaborative leadership that was suggested in the literature as being necessary in the context of a wicked problem.

**Conclusions:** My research concluded that Northern Pulp failed to employ the type of collaborative leadership that is deemed necessary to tame a wicked problem. I suggest that if Northern Pulp had employed the Mi'kmaw concept of Two-Eyed Seeing to guide its leadership, Northern Pulp conceivably could have tamed its wicked problem and simultaneously engaged in a long overdue process of reconciliation with the people of Pictou Landing First Nation.

# STUDENT RESEARCH DAY

## QUALITY OF CARE AND COVID-19: UNDERSTANDING CONTRIBUTORS AND IMPACTS FOR RESIDENTS LIVING IN LONG-TERM CARE



**Background:** In times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the delivery of care to residents living in long-term care (LTC) can be significantly impacted. LTC facilities are responsible for providing care so some of the most vulnerable groups in society, including the elderly and those with chronic medical conditions. The goal of this study was to investigate contributors to delivering quality of care for residents living in LTC, and how COVID-19 may influence this from the perspectives of long-term care staff.

**Methods:** A qualitative descriptive approach was used to conduct 6 semi-structured virtual interviews with care staff at KingsWay Care Centre in Quispamsis, New Brunswick. Interview guides were framed using a social ecological perspective. Thematic analysis was the data analysis approach used to identify, examine, and explore patterns within the data, as well as categorize and explain the data in detail.

**Findings:** Four themes emerged from the analysis that identified what most contributes to quality of care including: 1) person-centered care, 2) meaningful relationships, 3) organizational culture, and 4) community engagement. Participants reported COVID-19 created barriers across all four themes identified.

**Conclusions:** These findings suggest that resident care is impacted by both proximal and distal social influences. COVID-19 policy restrictions put in place to protect the most vulnerable paradoxically impacted quality of care delivery. These insights will improve the understanding of quality of care, as well as potential barriers and facilitators to care during times of crisis.



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# Care Package for the VON



HLTH 101 class did a service learning project that involved them putting together a care package and two letters for a senior in the community.

Service Learning and HLTH 101 class partnered to offer 75+ care packages to the home visitors at the VON, Antigonish to give out to members of the VON community.

The packages were mostly gender neutral with no food items with the exception of hot chocolate and tea.

This Service Learning project was completed in order for students to better understand the social isolation many seniors and vulnerable populations are experiencing because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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## My Service Learning Experience



I am a Women's and Gender Studies student in my final year at St. Francis Xavier University. I have had extensive involvement with the service-learning program over the past five years, through placements as well as employment. I believe that service learning has enriched my undergraduate experience. During my time here in Antigonish, I have completed two course-based placements, and in my second year, I participated in an immersion trip to Guatemala. Each of these experiences supplemented by academic learning and afforded me real-world experience related to my coursework. In many ways, these experiences shaped my professional goals.

My first placement was with Kids First, during my first year. At Kids First, my role involved cleaning, preparing activities, and spending time with children at the drop-in program. My placement with Kids First challenged me to step outside of my comfort zone. This taught me the importance of positive discomfort and challenging myself. At Kids First, I gained valuable interpersonal skills, which I will carry with me throughout my professional life.

During my fourth year of studies at St. Francis Xavier University I did a service-learning placement with the Tearmann House, an organization which supports women victims and survivors of domestic violence. I spent my time at the shelter, addressing needs as the arose. This included assisting with childcare, administrative tasks, spending time with the women residing at the shelter, and general cleaning. This affirmed my professional goal of working in a women-centered field.

In addition to these SL experiences, I have spent two years working as a Service-Learning Student Leader. This position involved communicating with students and community partners to ensure that placements are running smoothly, as well as coordinating one-time events, attending community partner orientations, promoting immersion service learning to classes, and building relationships with community partners. While working as a student leader, I was able to connect with a number of organizations, including X-Project and the Breakfast Program. There was a lot of room for personal and professional growth within the SL position. Most importantly, the service-learning program fostered in me a desire to be an engaged citizen, by giving me the opportunity to build relationships with active members of the StFX community. I am really grateful for my many experiences with service-learning

# STUDENT LEADERS



**Connor Laskoski** is a 3<sup>rd</sup> year Health student from Calgary, Alberta. He began his service learning journey with a placement at **St. Martha's Regional Hospital** working in the Emergency department and has continued with his placement throughout his time here at StFX. With his connection to the **Nova Scotia Health Authority**, Connor became a member of the Antigonish Community Health Board where he works with a variety of volunteers across the county to improve health by focusing on issues like poverty, child development and food security. Connor is currently majoring in biomedicine at StFX and has completed a summer research internship at Alberta Children's Hospital to get experience in the medical field. He is passionate about health education and loves learning about individual and community health here at StFX, and plans on pursuing medical school after his undergraduate degree.



**Samara Franzky** is a 3<sup>rd</sup> year Health Science student from Calgary, Alberta. Samara is currently working on her honours on female athlete health beliefs. While at StFX, Samara has been involved with Visible@X as a student coordinator and a member of the ringette team and was a community advisor in O'Regan Hall. Samara's placements were with **Red Apple Children's Centre**, and with **KMC Blades, Learn to Skate** program at the StFX arena.



**Liam Wilde** is a 3<sup>rd</sup> year student from Calgary, Alberta. Liam is currently in the StFX athletic leadership academy playing varsity football and taking a joint major in Public Policy & Governance and Political Science. Liam did a Service Learning placement for his Developmental Studies class with the **Antigonish Badminton Club**. Liam learned a lot about himself from the unique sense of community that Antigonish holds. Liam's Service Learning experience compelled him to further involve himself in the community; Liam has partnered with the breakfast program on campus, read books to children at the local elementary school, and canvassed for the Nova Scotia Alzheimer's society with the football team.

# THANK YOU TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

4H, Antigonish  
 Adult Friendship Corner  
 Antigonish County Adult Learning Association  
 Antigonish Parkinson's Support Group  
 Belize  
 Breaking the Silence (BTS)  
 CFXU Radio  
 Community Hospital, O'Leary PEI  
 Curriculum Resource Centre  
 at the Faculty of Education  
 Dispension Industries Incorporated  
 East Prince, PEI  
 Enactus  
 Fit 4 Life

Haitian Center for Leadership and Excellence  
 (CLE)  
 Health, PEI  
 Healthcare Excellence Canada  
 International Institute for Child Rights  
 and Development  
 Kid's First Family Resource Center  
 L'Arche Antigonish  
 MAX Program  
 Nova Scotia Health  
 Nova Scotia Health Research & Innovation  
 Paq'tnkek First Nation  
 Positive Action for Keppoch  
 Real Time Medical

RIPPEN  
 SPCA Nova Scotia, Antigonish  
 StFX Department of Athletics and Recreation  
 StFX Gender and Sexual Diversity  
 Student Advisor Office  
 StFX Office of Internationalization  
 StFX Student Food Resource Centre  
 StFX Student Life  
 StFX X-Men's Varsity Basketball Team  
 StFX X-Project  
 The Belize Zoo  
 VON, Antigonish  
 Wankunds Designs  
 World University Service of Canada  
 Yarmouth County Archives

## WHO WAS INVOLVED IN SERVICE LEARNING IN 2020-2021?

- **740** Student Experiences
- **45** Community Partners
- **20** Professors

### COURSE INFORMATION

- **17%** 1<sup>st</sup> year
- **8%** 2<sup>nd</sup> year
- **33%** 3<sup>rd</sup> year
- **42%** 4<sup>th</sup> year

- **86%** Mandatory
- **14%** Optional

- **75%** Group Experiences
- **25%** Individual Experiences

- **36** Courses
- **31** Sections
- **12** Disciplines

- **1%** BEd
- **16%** BBA
- **30%** BAsHealth
- **24%** BA
- **28%** BSc
- **1%** Dip Eng



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