

The Acadia S.M.I.L.E. Program

THE INSIDER

November 2016



Snoezelen Room Update

July was an exciting month as the first phase of the Snoezelen room was installed! The funding for the project was received from Sun Life, Tim Hortons smile cookie sales, the graduating Kinesiology Class of 2012, Mud Creek Rotary, and Team Heidi and the Launchers Throwing club. Thank you to all who have contributed to the installation of the first phase. A special thank you to Andreas Dutkewych for taking such an incredible lead on the project from the start!



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Team Heidi & Launchers Athletics Donation



We are so excited about a recent \$4000 donation to the Snoezelen Room, which was made by Team Heidi and Launchers Athletics! Heidi Wohlmuth is a longtime S.M.I.L.E. participant whose friends and family realized the positive impact that the program had on Heidi's life and wanted to give back to it. Together with Launchers Athletics, a local track and field throwing club that is coached by Heidi's father Steve, Team Heidi organized numerous fundraisers, which included a bake sale, 'Throw for Autism' event, fun fair and silent auction, from which all of the proceeds went toward funding the construction of the Snoezelen Room. Thank you to Team Heidi, Launchers Athletics and the Wohlmuth family for the generous donation!

2015/2016 S.M.I.L.E. Appreciation Ceremony

On Friday, May 13th of Graduation Weekend this past spring, we held our annual S.M.I.L.E. Appreciation Ceremony, in which we honour all of the graduating student volunteers, Acadia staff and members of the community who made a positive contribution to the program throughout the year. At the ceremony, the following awards were handed out:

The Founders Award for Commitment to the Acadia S.M.I.L.E. Program:

Joan & Jack Craig

The recipient of this award demonstrates ongoing outstanding contributions to The S.M.I.L.E. Program.

The Jack Scholz Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Acadia S.M.I.L.E. Program:

Lillie Coolen & Mick Leahy

The recipient of this award has demonstrated outstanding leadership in The S.M.I.L.E. Program throughout his/her student career. They have a strong passion for working with individuals with disabilities and contribute to research in the field of adapted physical activity.

The Krista Robertson S.M.I.L.E. Spirit Award:

Storm Balint, Mattea Cacchione, Morgan Dalrymple, Evan Elliot, Emily Isbill, Sheldon MacDonald, Suleiman Semalulu

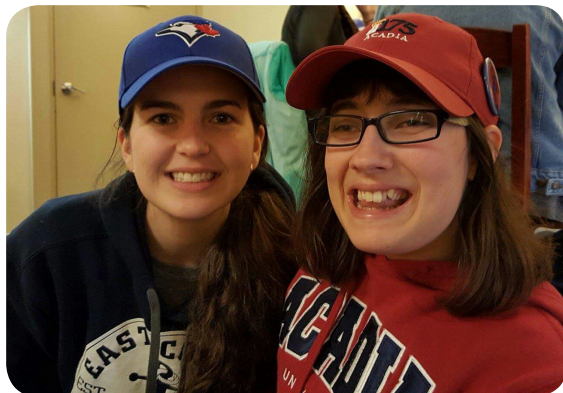
The recipient of this award demonstrates passion and enthusiasm for working with persons with disabilities in a physical activity setting each week at The S.M.I.L.E. Program. The student volunteer is creative in his or her approach to the physical activity program development for his or her S.M.I.L.E. buddy and is committed to promoting a spirit of success in their buddy's life.



A Letter from Jenna Northcott

For many students joining a club, team or volunteer program is in their nature and for others it is a time to discover new talents, passions and make new friends all while giving back to the community. Eighty percent of Acadia students volunteer their time, knowledge, assistance, leadership and support for a cause that goes beyond our degree programs. What allows for the greatest success for our clubs, programs and groups is the support and community kindness we have here at Acadia. The spirit of giving back and contributing to our local and greater community is embraced and promoted.

I, along with almost 400 other exceptional volunteers, have had the pleasure of being involved in the S.M.I.L.E. program. I had the opportunity to volunteer as an instructor with two different participants before becoming a leader and then co-student director alongside Holly Barss and Jessica Tinawi on Friday evenings as part of the teen and adult program. Every moment I spent working with my buddy or with the team of fabulous leaders, instructors, and directors was such a rewarding experience. As ambitious, driven students inside the structured classroom, the S.M.I.L.E. program takes you outside of your element. The program challenges the volunteers to listen, adapt to different needs and preferences of the participants, problem solve and become more patient and attentive.



To quote Dave Bambrick, or Bambi as he is known to many of us, a former participant from the S.M.I.L.E. program and currently ranked 2nd in Canada and 15th in the world for Paralympic shotput, "It's not what we can teach the kids, it's what the kids can teach us." This is absolutely correct! Offering up just a few hours of our time each week to spend with a child, teen or adult means so much to the participants and to us, the student volunteers. It's the little things, those small actions that can mean so much to an individual. When the participants arrive each week with a big smile, we are just as excited to see them as they are to see us. The volunteers get so much out of the program: we learn to see the world from different perspectives, and to eliminate the use of labels because all participants within the program should be treated equally, with the respect and integrity that they deserve. We

also quickly learn that there are no boundaries and that for each participant there are endless opportunities for learning, growth and success. For these reasons we form a strong bond with the participants and the program for years and years to come!

I, along with many other students have graduated this year but as we enter the world of work or future studies, my fellow S.M.I.L.E. volunteers will take with them all of the amazing S.M.I.L.E. memories they had over their time at Acadia. We will all greatly miss being a part of the program each week but S.M.I.L.E. will be with us forever! S.M.I.L.E. not only stands for Sensory Motor Instructional Leadership Experience it also stands for, Special Memories I will Love forEver!



Jenna Northcott, Co-Student Director 2015-2016

2016 Graduate Recognition

Graduating Student Directors:

Holly Barss, Lillie Coolen, Emily Gaunce, Sarah Healy, Mick Leahy, Jenna Northcott, Vanessa Robertson, Jessica Tinawi

Graduating & Outgoing Leaders:

Leah Bennett, Jessica Boone, Ryan Bunker, Lauren Cole, Lacey Cox, Ryan Densmore, Mike Dodge, Luke Edgar, MC French, Charlotte Fuller, Olivia Genereux, Hope Goddard, Gabrielle Haidar, Rachel Hammond, Troy Harrison, Louise Johnson, Jodi Langley, Sarah MacDougall, Mitch MacDougall, Chelsea Penney, Emily Rogers, Emily Sweeney, Rebecca Taylor, Paige Zwicker

Graduating Instructors

Dylan Anderson, Gabrielle Andrews, Ruth Anne Arnett, Victoria Archer, Storm Balint, Kayla Barry, Leah Bennett, Alison Birdsall, Gen Bittorf, Randi Black, Jon Blades, Lauren Blinkhorn, Tamara Boucher, Breanne Buchanan, Tessa Bulmer, Sarah Campbell, Evan Carr Kinnear, Mike Cazzola, Thora Christiansen, Nikolina Coric, Morgan Dalrymple, Cassie Devine, Rebecca Deware, Louise Dionne, Jacqueline Dubeau, Lauren Ellens, Evan Elliott, Alana Farley, Zach Franco, Maddie Fray, Charlotte Fuller, Page Gallant, Melanie Golbeck, Shea Goreham, Suzanne Gray, Haley Green, Rachel Hammond, Braydon Hart, Megan Hersey, Emily Isbill, Justin Kearney, Amisha Khiraya, Melanie Killen, Jon Kinney, Matthew Kolsun, Mick Leahy, Candis Lepage, Sharon Li, Jazmin Logue-Prest, James Logue-Prest, Heather MacAulay, Sheldon MacDonald, Mitch MacDougall, Sarah MacDougall, Savannah Mahoney, Jenna Marinigh, Jazmine Mayell-Frank, Jenna Mayhew, Brianna McClocklin, Erin McConnell, Jennifer Mont, Jacob Moore, Ben Moore, Daramfon Morgan, Nicole Morley, Haylee Nauss, Alison Paul, Jason Powell, Julia Pyke, Chloe Raitt, Travis Randell, Emily Redekop, Vanessa Robertson, Emily Rogers, April Rossiter, Corbin Rowlings, Sara Scovil, Tanisha Sellers-Bezanson, Sou Semalulu, Ashley Sherman, Jasmine Smith, Shaquille Smith, Hannah Smith, Andrew Snyder, Julia Steeves, Emily Sweeney, Claire Swinamer, Linnea Swinimer, Rebecca Taylor, Brett Thompson, Jill Thurber, Chelsea Turner, Jenalle Vanhie, Rose Walls, Shida Wang, Racheal Weagle, Will Wojcik, Jacob Zelman



Equipment Room Clean-Up

Our equipment room was due for an enormous cleaning after the 2015/16 year ended, as it was showing the effects of having two very large programs like S.M.I.L.E. and Kinderskills making use of it. Through the hard work of some of our own S.M.I.L.E. family and a generous donation of time from some local Pepsico employees this past July, the equipment room was thoroughly re-organized and we were able to find a new home for all of the unused items that we had collected throughout the years. The photos speak for themselves!

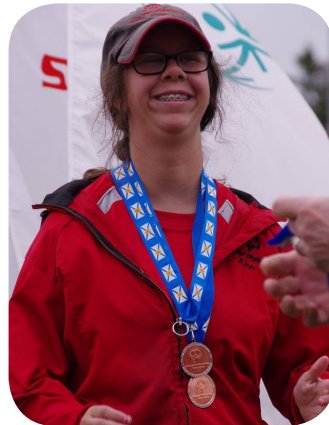
We would like to send a big thank-you out to all of the Pepsico employees and everyone from S.M.I.L.E. (especially Annie MacArtney) who were involved with the clean-up! We would also like to give special recognition to Dan Pettersson and Stephen Woodworth, two S.M.I.L.E. volunteers from this past year and Pepsico employees, who were responsible for organizing their co-workers assistance with it. All of your efforts were much appreciated!



Special Olympics Nova Scotia Provincial Games



Karsen Bourque

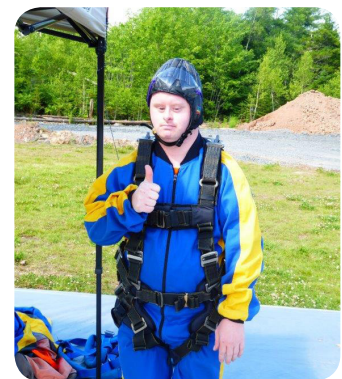


Kelsea Heudes

Congratulations to all of the athletes who took part in the 2016 Special Olympics Nova Scotia Provincial Summer Games, which took place at Acadia University from July 8-10. S.M.I.L.E. was well represented in many of the competitions!

What Did You Do This Summer? Cameron Cook

This past July, Cameron Cook embraced his adventurous spirit and tried his hand at skydiving! Cameron, a L'Arche Homefires core member and participant in our S.M.I.L.E. for Adults program, had previously overheard some L'Arche assistants discussing this wild activity and decided that jumping out of a plane was something that he just had to try! Perhaps he was just following in the footsteps of his Uncle Tommy, who also used to enjoy skydiving. So with two assistants accompanying him for the trip, Cameron headed to Maitland, NS, where he and his skydiving instructor would launch themselves from the safety of their plane, and with the aid of a parachute, gently float back to Earth!



Axes In Action 2016



On September 10th, many Acadia students came together once again in support of the annual Axes in Action Charity Day, which is part of the Acadia Student Union's fundraising initiative to support The Acadia S.M.I.L.E. Program and L'Arche Homefires. On that beautiful Saturday morning, Acadia students could be seen throughout Wolfville, New Minas, Kentville and Coldbrook collecting donations from the public for the fundraiser. When all was said and done, the event raised over \$8000! A big thank you to the Acadia Students' Union for organizing the Charity Day, to all of the Acadia students who volunteered to make it happen and to our Annapolis Valley community for the support!

Call For Volunteers: An Incredible Turnout!

It was a full house at our Call for Volunteers, which took place on September 9th. Over 500 students packed the Huggins Science Hall auditorium in order to learn about the program and begin their journeys as part of the S.M.I.L.E. family by signing up to be instructors. We were so excited to see so many returning faces, as well as the many new students who were eager to get involved. With a turnout like this, the 2016/17 S.M.I.L.E. year was off to a fantastic start!



2016/2017 Leader & Instructor Training

With each September comes S.M.I.L.E. Instructor and Leader training, where our new volunteers begin to learn the tools and gain the knowledge necessary to be effective in their positions and our returning volunteers get a refresher course in these areas. We have many new S.M.I.L.E. Leaders who are donning yellow Leader t-shirts for the first time in 2016/17 and they were excited to learn about about the expectations and responsibilities which come along with their new positions within the program. Our instructor training was expanded in many different ways this year and we were extremely happy with how our volunteers responded to it. We would like to thank Canada's Para Soccer National Team Coach Drew Ferguson for taking the time to speak to our Saturday instructor group during training about his team and the enjoyment and fulfillment he gets from working with these athletes with disabilities.



Volunteer Profile: *Trevor Seyforth*

Trevor Seyforth, born in near-by Kentville, NS, is a man of many hobbies. He enjoys exploring the outdoors, jogging, kayaking, swimming and hanging out with friends. Most of all though, he enjoys spending time in the gym. Trevor was born with cerebral palsy and he began to struggle with his balance at a young age, as he found one of his feet pointing inward every time that he took a step. About 4 years ago though, Trevor began a fitness journey after working out in a gym for the first time. Since then, he has seen his balance significantly improve, is able to run 8 km with ease and finds himself describing the gym as his home.

A significant moment on this fitness journey occurred two years ago, when he had the opportunity to meet a para-athlete named Ben Brown, who competes in wheelchair racing and represented Canada at this past summer's Paralympic Games in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil. Ben had approached Trevor to see if he had any interest in becoming a para-athlete himself. Trevor was very excited by this opportunity and since then, he has trained in shot-put, discus and javelin but now focuses on wheelchair racing. He is currently training to improve his speed in the wheelchair, with the goal of competing in next year's Canada Games.



Returning to school in order to further his education was always a goal of Trevor's as well. He had heard from many friends who had attended Acadia University that this was a great school and in the Fall of 2015, he enrolled at Acadia as part of the Axxess Acadia program, with a focus on taking kinesiology courses while here. Axxess Acadia is a post-secondary education program for persons who self-identify as having a disability. Trevor says that being at Acadia as part of the Axxess program has opened up so many doors for him and has resulted in a noticeable increase in his confidence. While previously he always struggled with talking to new people, he now has little issue with striking up conversations with others and he even recently gave a speech about his para-athletic training in front of over 100 persons! He also developed his confidence enough to volunteer as an instructor in S.M.I.L.E., which is significant, as he once was a participant in the program as a young child. Trevor points out that his work as an instructor only served to build his confidence in himself and his abilities further and he loved being able to spend time with his S.M.I.L.E. buddy Mitch. Though he was unable to volunteer with the program this semester, Trevor is adamant that he will be rejoining S.M.I.L.E. again as an instructor, as soon as the opportunity presents itself!

Where Are They Now? *Ian Morrison*

Since graduating from Acadia and the S.M.I.L.E. Program for the second time in 2009 with a Bachelor of Education, I have been busy teaching in the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board. My teaching road has brought me to a variety of great schools and communities around the Valley including NKEC, Horton and West



Hants Middle School and I now call Avon View High School in Windsor my teaching home. Besides teaching, I still love being physically active, I am often found hacking it up along the rough of a golf course in the summer and on the ski hill or rink in the winter. Currently I live in Beechville, Nova Scotia with my wife Allison and our labradoodle Mogey.

Reflecting back on my time at Acadia the S.M.I.L.E. program was the single most important thing that I was involved with. Starting as an 18 year old in the fall of 2002 I was involved with this program in a variety of different capacities; S.M.I.L.E. volunteer, S.M.I.L.E. leader, S.M.I.L.E. Student Director, S.M.I.L.E. Program Coordinator. This was a tremendously humbling, rewarding and positive experience, it created bonds and friendships that will last a lifetime and directly led me to pursue a career as an educator. As a teacher in the Valley I have had and continue to have a unique connection with the S.M.I.L.E. program that most don't get to enjoy. Students who I once knew as four, five and six year old S.M.I.L.E. participants are now very successful sixteen, seventeen and eighteen year old high school students. When I see these students daily as independent and confident young adults, I honestly can do nothing but smile. In my mind that is what this wonderful program is all about.

2016/2017 Student Directors



Tuesday & Thursday Directors:
Eileen Haskett & Lillie Coolen

CK/West Hants Directors:
Emily Meehan & Jodi Stinson



Friday Night Directors: Annie MacArtney & Erin Welsh

Friday Night Adult Director:
Lucas Coxhead



Saturday Morning Directors:
Emily Sweeney & Leah Bennett



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