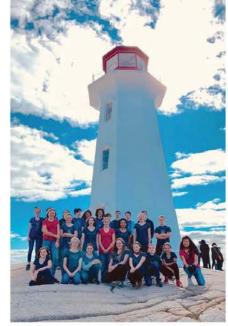






experiences EXCHANGES EXCHANGES

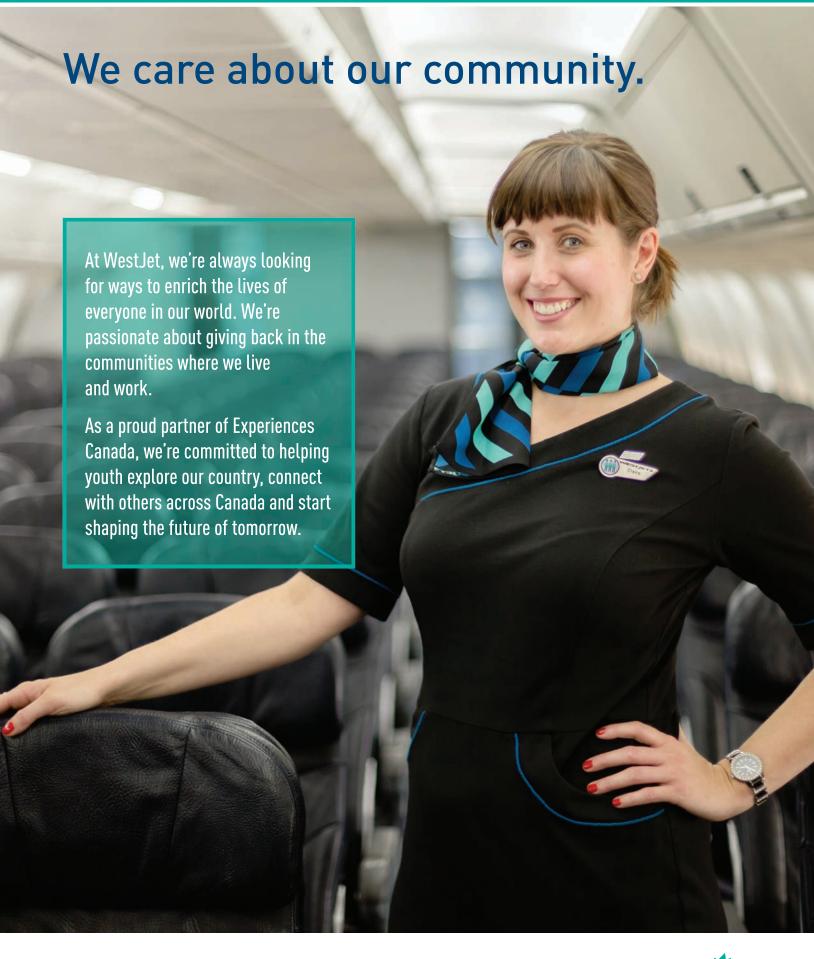




2018-2019 YEAR BOOK









CONTENTS

- 4 **ABOUT EXPERIENCES CANADA**
- A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF **EXPERIENCES CANADA**
- A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT &
- **EXPERIENCES CANADA STAFF**
- REPORT FROM THE CHAIR. AUDIT AND **FINANCE COMMITTEE**
- A MESSAGE FROM THE YOUTH **ADVISORY COUNCIL**
- YOUTH AMBASSADORS
- **GROUP ORGANISERS**
- ABOUT RECIPROCAL EXCHANGES
- **EXCHANGE PHOTOS BRITISH COLUMBIA**
- **EXCHANGE PHOTOS PRAIRIES**
- **EXCHANGE PHOTOS ONTARIO**
- **EXCHANGE PHOTOS QUEBEC**
- **EXCHANGE PHOTOS ATLANTIC CANADA**
- **EXCHANGE PHOTOS NORTHERN CANADA**
- **PARENT TESTIMONIALS**
- **SURVEY RESULTS**
- **ALUMNI / NEXT STEPS**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage.

We would also like to thank our national sponsors and program partners:

Canadä



Canadian Heritage

Patrimoine canadien





Communities Together¹













WE BELIEVE..

..In the capabilities and potential of youth.

..Learning is an adventure.

..Young Canadians need to know their own country's diverse histories, cultures and challenges first to better understand the world.

..The most memorable experiences are shared experiences.

..Exposure to new places and ideas will enable youth to see their world differently.

..Every youth deserves the opportunity to participate.

..Every youth deserves to be respected and included.

..The safety and security of youth is paramount.

..Everyone learns differently.





Experiences Canada student exchanges and forums develop community leaders and informed citizens of tomorrow.



xperiences Canada is a national registered charity that helps young Canadians to explore their country in ways they may never have imagined through reciprocal exchanges, forums, conferences and other opportunities to travel and connect with one another.

Every year, participating schools and youth organizations send 10-30 youth (ages 12-17) on exchange somewhere in Canada. On average, 4,500 youth and their chaperones per year are chosen, representing just under 200 groups. That's hundreds of thousands of young Canadians who have benefited from a student exchange experience since we began over 80 years ago.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF EXPERIENCES CANADA



another program year comes to an end, and we have this opportunity to travel our country through the photos and stories of our youth participants. I am reminded of the first time I went on a trip without my family. I was 16 and joined the militia as a summer job and headed to Camp Aldershot in Annapolis Valley NS a couple of hours from my home. I lived in a compound with 30 people I had never met before, females and males, immersed in an extremely intensive week-long training program assembling rifles, building lean-to's, camouflagingtrucks, radio equipment and of course ourselves, crawling fully geared on our bellies and elbows... Besides getting my tooth shot off by a spent casing during target practice, I have many other memories I've never forgotten.

This experience opened my mind to many things, including people from different cultures, experiences and backgrounds from myself. It gave me life-long friends, it gave me confidence in my abilities and those of others, it developed my interest in our military, and it helped me stretch in ways that I may never have done otherwise. Later in my career, as Deputy Minister responsible for intergovernmental, Indigenous and military relations, I

drew upon that experiential learning as it had provided me with a deeper respect and understanding for the complexities they faced.

Today, technology makes it a lot easier to build communities and cultivate connections online, but nothing can replace face-to-face contact, or as kids are fond of saying, "IRL."

My story isn't very different than those of the thousands of youth who have participated in our reciprocal exchanges this past year. While our exchanges and forums don't include loaded guns and ammunition, we nonetheless recognize our responsibility to ensure that these first time adventures are always positive ones. In addition to the safety and security measures we have in place, we also provide planning resources on our website for both parents hosting youth and teachers and group organisers leading the excursion.

This past year, we also implemented a new evaluation procedure in partnership with the Student's Commission of Canada. Not only will we be able to measure the many ways in which these experiences immediately impact our participants, but we will be encouraging parents

to give permission for the youth to opt into a multi-year survey that will benchmark that impact over time, and relative to other similar youth programs. This, in addition to the continuous feedback we get from group organizers, parents and youth via email helps us to continue serving the needs of today's youth to the best of our ability.

We deeply appreciate the support of our funding partners, including Canadian Heritage, the RBC Foundation, Canada Life, and Westjet; as well as the hundreds of volunteer group organizers who devote so much of their personal time and effort to facilitating these adventures for the youth in the their schools and communities. Together we help thousands of young Canadians explore a part of their country they otherwise might never see, and in so doing, we hope, help them feel more connected to it as they take their first steps in exploring a wider world with more confidence and curiosity.

Judith Sullivan-Corney

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO



en I was in grade 5, I came home from school with a permission slip that I was certain my mother would never sign, but to my delight she agreed. With a stroke of a pen, she launched me on an amazing journey to Okazaki, Japan. I still remember every detail of that trip the moments that I felt thrilled and worldly, and the moments that I felt homesick, exhausted, or confused. Most of all I remember the people I met, the kids my age as well as their warm and welcoming families. Back then we didn't have the advantages of today's communications, but we kept in touch for many years, right through high school until one too many moves resulted in our falling out of touch.

I know now that you don't have to travel across the world to have that experience. There is so much diversity right here in our own country, and I am proud to support youth having these first-time-alone travel experiences right here at home, be it through group exchange or individual travel opportunities.

We were pleased to bring back our Youth Leadership Forums this year, involving a group of 75 youth participants and youth leaders in a week-long program to learn more about diversity and inclusion – a key priority identified by the youth involved in our Canada 150&Me program. This event was the first in a planned series of annual Leadership Forums that will tackle a different theme each year. In June 2020, we head to Winnipeg with a dynamic program focused on building knowledge and leadership in the area of advancing Reconciliation, and plans are already underway for a 2021 Youth Leadership Forum on the Environment.

We have also made a commitment to developing educational and planning resources to support our group organizers. The first such resource, a classroom poster detailing Canada's Treaty and Land Claims territories, was released last November. We will be supplementing our resources related to Indigenous history and Reconciliation with a series of pretrip planning activities and classroom resources to aid those planning cultural exchanges, and launching a special group organizers' training weekend in Winnipeg next June.

While there is a steady growing interest in exploring the diversity of Canada's Indigenous cultures and

communities, still fully half of the exchanges we support are between French and English communities seeking opportunities to further their second language education. This was the founding purpose of our organization over 84 year ago, and remains a very important part of what we do. To commemorate Canada's official languages, we have published a new classroom resource map illustrating the history and cultural contributions of Canada's minority language communities. The new wall-sized map will be distributed to all group organizers involved in a linguistic exchange in the coming year, with additional copies available for purchase through our website.

Our goal every year is to offer more opportunities for more youth to travel to parts of the country they otherwise might never see. In so doing, we hope after their experience they see their own country differently – in some ways, we hope their perspective of Canada is broader, but at the same time, we also hope they see it as a little smaller than they imagined.

/ \ \ Nehorah Morrison Experiences Canada is widely recognized as Canada's leading service provider for youth exchanges. Launched in 1936 and previously known as SEVEC, Experiences Canada arranges travel, accommodation and programming for an estimated 4,000 young Canadians who participate in reciprocal exchanges and youth events annually to better explore their country's rich history, culture, and geography.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Judith Sullivan-Corney (Chair)
Arlene Van Ruiten
Stuart Coxe
Paul Ash
Greg Owen
Denise Nawata
David Ross
Melanie Martin
Dave McInnes

EXPERIENCES CANADA STAFF

Deborah Morrison—President and CEO Ellen Glouchkow—Director of Finance and Administration

Jamie McCullough – Director of Programs
Sandrine Thabet—Manager Exchanges
Program

Minh Hoa Kolie—Program Coordinator
Ashley Reaume —Program Coordinator
Ginny Byrne—Finance Assistant
Lizzy Devine - Communications Coordinator
/ Graphic Designer

Eleanor Fogolin - Communications Assistant

Experiences Canada 2148 Carling Avenue, Suite 202, Ottawa, ON K2A 1H1 Phone: (613) 727-3832 Fax: (613) 727-3831

Emai: info@experiencescanada.ca

© 2019 Experiences Canada

All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission of the publisher is strictly forbidden.

ISBN: 978-1-7751250-2-0 (English Edition) ISBN: 978-1-7751250-3-7 (French Edition)



















REPORT FROM THE CHAIR, AUDIT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE



behalf of the Audit and Finance Committee of Experiences Canada I am pleased to report the financial results for the 2018-19 fiscal year. This report is derived from Experiences Canada's audited financial statements for the year ended August 31, 2019, which are available on our website or upon request.

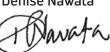
Experiences Canada completed its final year of a three-year funding agreement with the Federal Government's Exchanges Canada Program. We wish to thank the Minister and staff at the Department of Canadian Heritage Exchanges Canada for their steadfast support and commitment to our program and are pleased that a new three-year agreement for the 2019-2022 period has been renewed.

In 2018-19 revenue was up by 12% at \$5.80 million compared to the previous year's revenue of \$5.18 million. Net expenditures also increased by 12% from last year, from \$5.22 million to \$5.84 million. Special measures funding of \$95,650 was provided as additional financial assistance to ensure equal access to the exchange program.

Experiences Canada's Youth Leadership Forum on Diversity and Inclusion contributed to the increase in revenues and expenses. Experiences Canada invested \$56,725 from its own reserves towards the project. Overall, Experiences Canada ended the year with a net deficit of \$38,777.

We would like to thank our individual contributors and funding partners RBC, Canada Life, Uniglobe, Westjet and Air Canada, for their generous support of this year's programs.

Denise Nawata







\$5,843,661 IN 2018/19

76% Youth Travel \$4,472,330

20/ Marketing/PR \$124,800

70/Corporate/Other \$400,850

Program Delivery Nat'l Coordination \$750,031

Special Measures \$95,650

A MESSAGE FROM SPENCER BUBIS - PRESIDENT, YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL



'm Spencer Bubis, and I have been serving on Experiences Canada's Youth Advisory Committee for a unique and memorable three years! I have also had the honour this past year of serving as the committee's President.

I first participated in Experiences
Canada's programming through the
Canada 150&Me National Youth Forum.
Since that first experience I had in
Canada's capital, Experiences Canada
has been very near and dear to my
heart. The experiences provided
have been able to expose me and so
many others to meaningful places,
people and ideas that have all played
a part in who I am today, which I'm so
grateful for.

In the past few years, the "YAC"'s primary goal has been to promote and enhance the life-changing experiences of national travel and cultural experiences for youth that we, as past participants, have personally benefited from. To this end, our members have worked to meet locally with exchange groups being hosted in their home communities, aimed to enhance social media

presence and create promotional material, come together every year at the Annual General Meeting, and continued to give input and advice for future exchanges and forums from an essential youth perspective.

It has been amazing to lead a nationally-based team of such capable, determined and compassionate youth. While communicating between our home communities spanning from coast to coast poses its challenges, we are always learning to be flexible while developing creative ways for us to collaborate on new projects.

The formative experiences that Experiences Canada offers are so important for the positive development of values in our country's next generation of contributors and leaders. Now that I have had the pleasure of speaking with so many devoted exchange group organizers and participants, I can see that truly the most important impact of this programming is the new perspectives students gain from simply meeting people of another part of our vastly diverse nation. The

work of Experiences Canada has continually taught me how incredibly lucky we all are to be Canadians.

My hope is that future YACers and exchange and forum participants reflect on how they will choose to leave their mark on Canada going forward in their lives. Experiences Canada's programming brings out a special gift in every young person, but also highlights the responsibility to then share that gift with their communities and the world. Reflecting on the thoughtful prompt the 150&Me initiative put forth to thousands of youth nearly three years ago ("What is Canada's greatest challenge or opportunity facing your generation?"), I've realized on the most fundamental level that so many of Canada's greatest challenges can be addressed, and opportunities built upon, with the mutual understanding and openness that Experiences Canada continues to promote so well.



YOUTH AMBASSADORS

Youth Ambassadors are responsible for documenting their exchange through photos, videos and participant reflections. One participant per group is chosen to take on this leadership role. These ambassadors help us share everyone's experiences during their exchange and provide valuable feedback to develop and improve our youth exchange programs.

Experiences Canada would like to thank this year's youth ambassadors:



Précieux King Sarah Ainalik Avssa lep-Smith Jay Porter Samuel Boutin Pascale Lagace Hana Vinette Vinícius Vieira Lima Thomas Boucher Ève Demers Marilou Daraiche Sophia Villagomez Ayaan Jeraj Anaïs Demers Laurie Fortier Arianne Rousseau **Taylor Clark** Elvann Halev Katie Prince Lourdes Adante Sandy Minton-Dyke Annick Williams Hannah Cramer-Law Renaude Vigneau Marie Nourissat Gabriel Morantz Lvdia Cameau Blanche Pineault Calli Smirl Ashley Ciardullo Sharijiah Cunanan Rose Lemelin Nathan Cvr-Iones

Hannah Forsyth Sarah-Ève Prévost Erica Edwards Anaëlle Davidson Felicia Valiente Olivier Quimper Alyson Desharnais Rémi Brousseau lade St-Onge Florence Poisson Alex Lavallée Mahée Rov Loïc Turcotte Kelly-Kim Jutras-Paquin Charles-Olivier Giguère Sarah Bissonnette Anthony Camiré Jade Ahkimnachie-Chisaakav Heidi Richard Diego Munoz Jillian Ogilvie **Charlotte Roberge** Trinity Praill Antoine Houde Ophélie Larouche Seth Bowlby **Coralie Sansregret** Daphne Monro Renaud Roy Rodrigo Medina**larcic**

Jennava Patterson Éloane Thivierge Andre Ioanas Kayla Willison-Cole Chloe Henderson Andriesie Sarsfield Clara Aubin Madelaine Jorgensen Theresa Thurston Emma Mcmullin Louna Emilie Ianin Lauren Alliston Cassandra Bennett Grace Robinson **Evening Drury** Ellazora Hardy Kaia Rebane Ava Hardy Maddline Lishchynski Uitangie Usuituayuk Calahndra Brake Lucas Dimonte Nicholas Dunn **Abby Clark** Elianne Dugal Desirae Anderson **Amber Vincent** Skylar Page Harper Pingle Ben Riehl **Emily Hubert** Katelyn Stojadinov

Emma Gosselin

GROUP ORGANISERS

Experiences Canada's reciprocal exchange program relies on the hundreds of group organizers who help organize the exchanges and ensure the safety and security of our youth while they are traveling and visiting.

Whether they are classroom teachers, sports coaches, or community organization leaders, they put in countless volunteer hours to bring these experiences to life. If you're reading this and you haven't yet taken the time to thank your group organizer and chaperones for making your trip possible, it's not too late to tell them! Go ahead: seek them out and let them know!

We would like to express our thanks to the following 2018-19 group organizers:

Nathan Moore **Dustin Garrett** Martin Richard Cynthia Ramamonjisoa Natalie Claivaz Stéphanie Poulin **Heather Mcphail** Marco Asselin Christina Lorentz Leslie Rowse Mistral Dowson Pansy Wright-Simms Nyasha Kamera Sean Johnston Susan Heddle Steve Kataquapit Janay Eccles Ronald Aubrey Hawton Kari Goethe Regina Vosahlo Erin Boehm Elora Lake **Eve-Line Boisjoly** Genevieve Pelletier **lason Collard** Rosalie Toussaint **Christianne Wiigs** Colleen Prail Susan Baker Eric St-Pierre

Teresa Trimble Helen Smith-Macphail Pascal Florant Isabelle Lafrance Charlene Dobie Joëlle Legresley Sharon Lajoie Stéphane Savard Didier Lebreux Helen Clugston Iulie Pilote **Iennifer Martinez** Martin Pichette Bernardete Miranda Sietske Fichter Alex Mercredi William Morris **Dominiaue** Ouzilleau Caroline Hardy Anneke Jansen Van Doorn Silken Bruder Alex Hutcheon Georges-Michel Tamdjou Laura Bereza Marie-Eve Beauchemin **Johanne Abbis** Alain Riou Chervl Fiske

Pascal Gauthier

lanette Perron lérôme Doré **Bertrand Giroux Tommy Savard Greg Campbell** Stephanie Isaac Paul Rioux Serge Bilodeau Caleb Allred Reave Macleod Suzie Pelletier Louise Plante Laurie Magnan Marie-Claude Pouliot Natalie Lemieux David Martel **Catherine Harvey** Jeffrey Irwin Jennifer Piercey Dean Fagnan lamee Lea Watson Wendy Beaton Siubhan Drinnan Patty Chevalier Samm Marie-Josée Savard **Eve Laurin** Matthew Koeslag Valérie Doré Karine Léveillé Geneviève Tétreault Tania Desroches Stephanie Mackay

Keven Mathieu Patrice Tremblay Cathy Ann Mulligan **Dave Loubier** Nafissata Toure Emma Hart Sherwyn Solomon Alain Bilodeau Susan Kabotoff Sylvie Philippon Daram Van Oers Roxane Esch Serena Menzies Amita Khandpur Joti Singh **Jonathan Desrosiers Jack Frimeth** Joanne Hobday Joanne Lussier **Greg Davidson** Samara Worth Martin Arsenault Rene Maheux Cheryl Gagné Carl Hardy Marie-Eve Bissonnette Carl Hardy Michelle Chabot Susan Leslie

Lisa Marie Thériault

Sophie Rodrigue Diane Beulens Marie-Claude Bédard Holly Poell Lee Barter Simone Randall **Nick Anning** Joyce Leggott Danielle Leblanc Ianice Sardari **Annie Coulombe Caitlin Stewart Julie Morrice** Caroline Carrier Marc Ferron Alain Forand Corey Van Zandbergen Yvonne Leicht John Bole Kathryn Kimber Sophie Brière Maria Power Debra Woods Frances Zevenbergenloosse Michel Côté Tanya Guilbault Sandra Beland Susan Hemstreet Paula Gill

David Reimer Ronald Aubrev Hawton Ioanne Decruyenaere **Kevin Nearing** Charlee Mappin Suzanne Turbis Robert Loiselle Valérie Gingras Gina Gauvin Gwynn Norman **David Fehr** Drew Havman Nathalie Beerman Rohan Hollingsworth **David Monette** Valerie Rose Dessaint Megan Leusink Hilary Towne Mcgillivray Monique Marinier Isabelle Paquet Paul Rioux



Kelsey Wilson



experiences CANADA PORUMS RÉCONCILIATION

WINNIPEG JUNE 27TH -JULY 4TH 2020

REGISTER TODAY FOR THE CHANCE TO TRAVEL TO WINNIPEG AND ATTEND OUR WEEK-LONG FORUM ON RECONCILIATION

32 Indigenous youth and 32 non-indigenous youth between the ages of 14-18 will be selected from across Canada, to travel to Winnipeg for a week-long program to develop their knowledge and foster greater dialogue and understanding among non-Indigenous and Indigenous young people about indigenous history, culture, and the path forward to Reconciliation.

WWW.FORUMS.EXPERIENCESCANADA.CA







ABOUT RECIPROCAL **EXCHANGES**

Experiences Canada has offered reciprocal youth exchanges in Canada since 1936!

Every year, participating schools and youth organizations send 10-30 youth (ages 12-17) on exchange somewhere in Canada. On average, 5,000 vouth and their chaperones per year are chosen. representing just under 200 groups. That's hundreds of thousands of young Canadians who have benefited from a student exchange experience since we began over 80 years ago. But we know we could travel a lot more. In any given year, we receive 30-40% more applications than we can provide funding for!

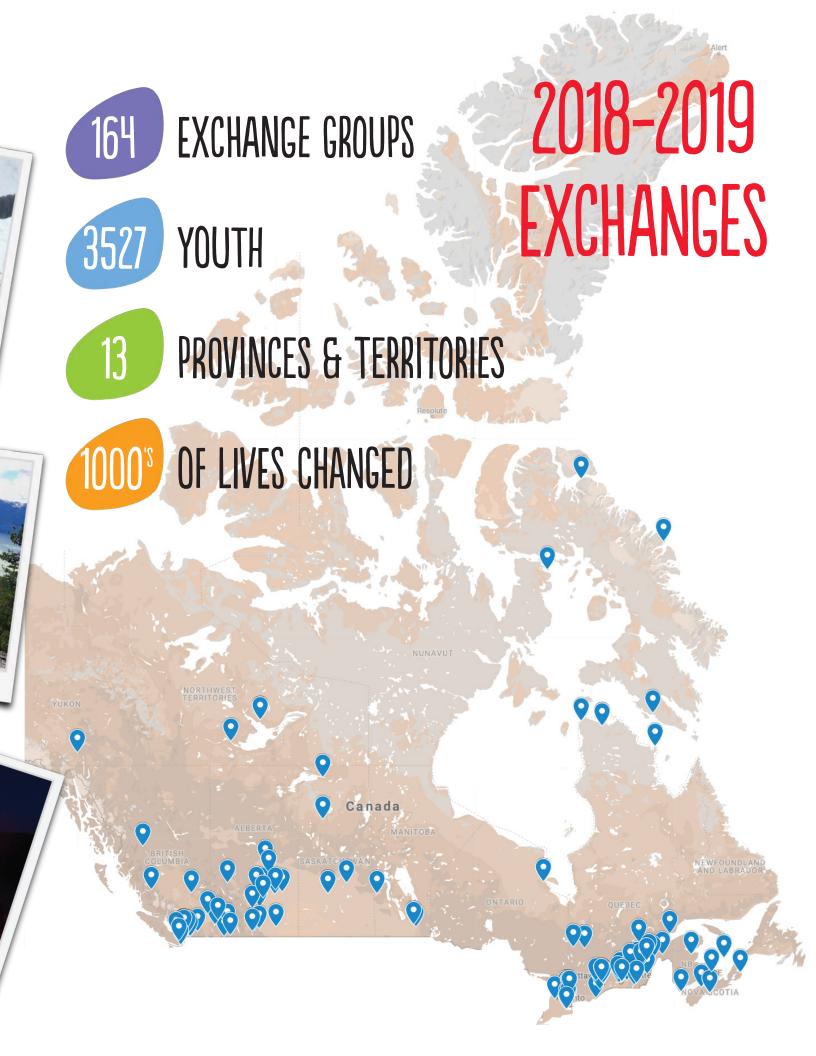
We offer opportunities for young Canadians to explore their country in ways they may never have imagined. For many, these experiences may be the first time youth have traveled without their family. and more often the first time they have visited another province or territory within Canada.

BENEFITS OF STUDENT EXCHANGE:

- Strengthens second language skills & academics.
- Improves cultural awareness and understanding of Canada.
- Increases empathy, inclusion and reduces social barriers.
- Develops leadership skills and critical thinking.
- Forges new friendships and connections.
- Builds self-confidence, independence, and maturity.
- Creates FUN memories that last a lifetime!

Experiences Canada offers many types of exchanges including Cultural, Sports, Indigenous, Immigration & Diversity, Human Rights, and Linguistic. More are in development all the time.





BRITISH COLUMBIA



My time on this exchange, both while we were in Ontario and while we were in British Columbia, exceeded all expectations. When we traveled to the Gitxsan territory, we were fully embraced into their way of life and were given in-depth insight into their culture that I never could have predicted.

Our group consisted of high school students from Peterborough, Ontario. Most of us are currently taking an aboriginal governance course, which is why we were invited to participate in this particular exchange. There were twenty students and three adult chaperones. During the Gitxsan students' stay in Peterborough, we set out to build familiarity and companionship. It was also very interesting to visit different areas of our own community, many of which our own student group experienced for the first time.

When we arrived in British Columbia, we experienced a blur of activity in a new place very different from our home. Some of the obvious differences had to do with the physical characteristics of the two communities; the Gitxsan territories were much more rural, towns were more dispersed and we were surrounded by expansive mountainous terrain. However, the differences between their community and my own go deeper. The Gitxsan territories we visited had a certain vibrancy that stands as a testament to their cultural resilience.

We went into the exchange believing that the other students would be very different from us. We had many preconceived notions of how they would act and what they would be like. When they first arrived, we learned very quickly that we were quite similar in the way that we dressed and acted, and in our concerns and interests. However, I was more surprised during the second half of the exchange when we visited a sweat lodge. We were very apprehensive about the whole experience because we didn't know what to

expect. Then we found out that it was not only going to be our first time experiencing the sweat lodge, but it would also be the first time for many of the Gitxsan students. For me, the experience was even more meaningful knowing that we were able to share this first time experience with our new friends as they reconnected with their own culture.

I CAME TO REALIZE HOW MUCH I RELATED TO
INDIGENOUS TEACHINGS AND RESPECTED THE
LONGEVITY OF TRADITIONAL INDIGENOUS CULTURE.

22

This exchange was an opportunity to build relationships and get to know each other. It was an opportunity to explore common interests, learn about each other's cultures, and help each other open up and learn about ourselves. We were nervous during the lead-up to the trip, but everyone involved worked hard to help us feel that we were a part of something great. Going on this exchange greatly impacted how I see myself and my world-view. I came to realize how much I related to Indigenous teachings and respected the longevity of traditional Indigenous culture. Both as a host and as a visitor, I had an exceptional experience that I would recommend to anyone.

I encourage anyone interested in going on an exchange similar to this one to do it. Keep your mind open to new ideas and experiences, because there is so much to encounter in the two short weeks. Get out of your comfort zone. The best memories I have from the exchange come from times where I pushed myself further than what I was initially comfortable with, resulting in the most rewarding experiences.

By Cali Brake





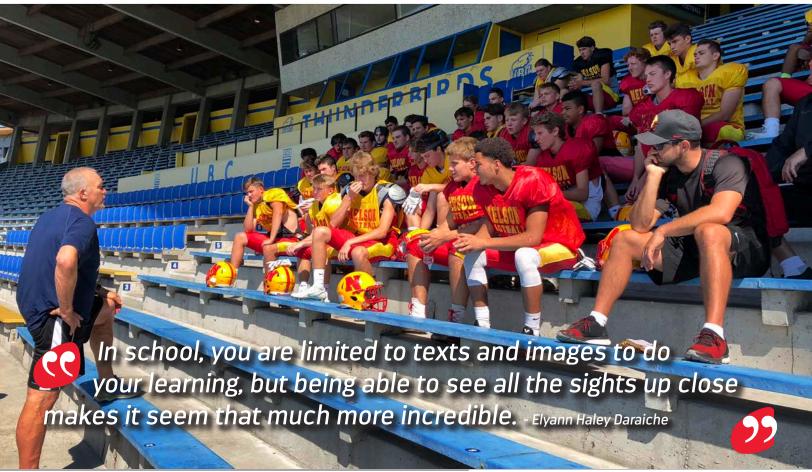




















What surprised me the most is how the people that live there help each other... I also noticed just how open minded and accepting people are regardless of their differences. Their open mindedness made me think about how here, people judge more easily and how we should follow their example.

- Marilou Daraiche





















During this exchange I learned a lot about what it was like to live there and how different it was from living here. It taught me a lot about our land and diversity.

- Venice Cunan









Proud to support the activity and initiatives of Experiences Canada

- Established for 30 years in 3 prime city locations in Toronto and Ottawa.
- UNIGLOBE is a globally recognized travel brand that you can trust.
- Providing top notch customer service through an elite team of professional travel agents.
- We specialize in group tours fully customized for student educational tours.
- We provide tours to any global destination.
- Your one stop shop for air quotes, hotel bookings, travel insurance and more.



UNIGLOBE THE PREMIERE TRAVEL GROUP OTTAWA: 613-230-7411 TORONTO: 416-363-7491 1-88-UNIGLOBE

www.uniglobepremiere.com



I desperately wanted to do this exchange since I was going to discover a new part of Canada. I also think that this type of exchange is a good opportunity to practice your English and make meaningful connections with new people! Ever since the announcement, I couldn't wait to live such a beautiful experience, but once the trip started, I realized just how lucky I was. If I had the opportunity to redo it tomorrow morning, I would 100% no hesitations!

In total, we were twenty grade eight and nine students from École Jesus-Marie de Beauceville. We're all from Beauce, a small corner in the administrative region of Chaudière-Appalaches in the big province of Quebec. We're about an hour from Québec. For a few of us. including me, it was the first time we would be flying. At the beginning, it was stressful, but then I got used to it and it went well.



In my opinion, Alberta is similar to Quebec because the people there are very respectful and thankful and they really appreciate what they have. In terms of the landscape, there were a lot more farms in Alberta than in Quebec, and it was impressive to see how many there were. The fauna and flora of the Rockies also blew me away, and I quickly fell in love with the magnificent landscape of the mountains that had snowy summits and light blue lakes! It was impressive to see how Alberta has a flat landscape all the way to the Rockies, whereas in Beauce, we have more of a hilly landscape. I think that Alberta is a beautiful corner of the world, very calm, maybe even calmer than Quebec.

The thing that was the most surprising to me during the exchange is without a doubt the West Edmonton Mall.

I told myself that it was big, and I imagined that it was maybe similar to the ones we have in Quebec, maybe a little bit bigger. When we arrived, I realized that it was ENORMOUS and that I never imagined it to be that big! After all, it's the third biggest shopping centre in the WORLD!



I HAVE SO MANY MEMORIES FROM THE EXCHANGE. IT MADE ME STEP OUT OF MY COMFORT ZONE AND OPEN MYSELF UP TO OTHER CULTURES.

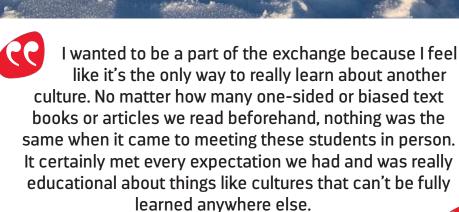
After the exchange, I would say that I'm more open to other cultures and that I'm not as much of a picky eater, I try and taste more new things. I would really like to do a second exchange because I loved that our twins got to stay with us and we got to stay with them! I would love to redo the exchange because it allows you to discover a new corner of your country and create new friendships! At the beginning of my stay at my twin's house, I found adapting to a new bed, a new house... just being out of my comfort zone difficult! However, my twin's family was so welcoming that I didn't feel nervous at all, I felt like I was at home. I really liked my twin! He took very good care of me, assured me that I was fine and that I hadn't forgotten anything for the day's activity. Basically, it was like he was my big brother. I strongly recommend doing an exchange like the one I lived, and I guarantee that you won't regret it.

Finally, I have so many memories from the exchange, notably new friendships, some super beautiful photos and some really funny moments that I'll never forget! It made me step out of my comfort zone and open myself up to other cultures. I'm really going to miss Alberta! It's really something you should do in your lifetime!



By Samuel Boutin





- Cassi Bennett





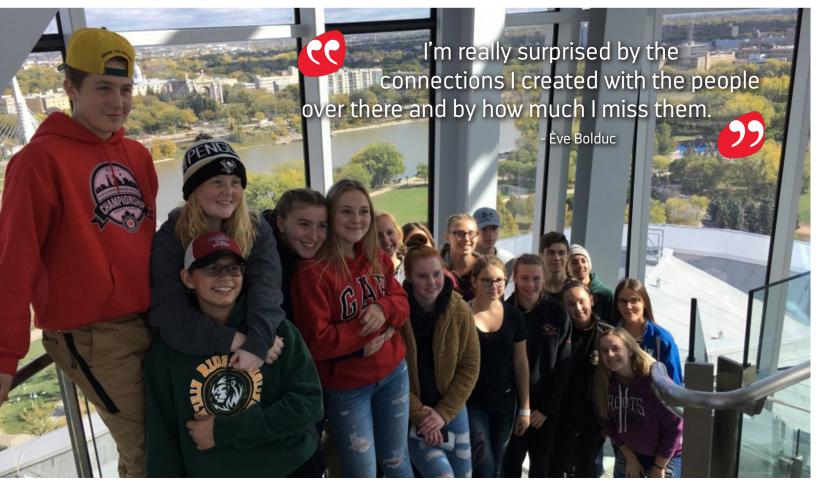




























EXCHANGE PHOTOS - PRAIRIES







People who only
have experienced life
in Eastern Canada don't
realize how magnificent the
mountains are in the West.

- Benjamin Silcoff









Photo courtesy of Reaton Institute Cape Breton University



sitting down to take a stand

We tell her story #AtCMHR









ONTARIO



I LEARNED THE MOST ABOUT MONEY AT THE BANK OF CANADA MUSEUM, WHICH CHANGED MY PERSPECTIVE ON OVERSPENDING, SO I AM CERTAIN THAT WILL BE HELPFUL WHEN I HAVE TO MANAGE MY OWN MONEY.





Before going on exchange, I hadn't really heard of Experiences Canada. But, if I had heard of them I would have been even more excited for this exchange. Above all else, I wanted to be a part of this exchange because the students who had gone the year before all loved their experiences in BC and encouraged us to participate. I already had great expectations for this exchange, because all I heard were good things, and reality surpassed my expectations because all the activities were educational as well as fun.

My group was fairly big because even though we divided up in smaller groups we were usually 6 or 8 depending on the activity. Where I come from, we pretty much all know each other because Bathurst is a small place, and you don't have to worry about getting lost. Even though I was with the group, and even though I had already traveled and taken a plane with my parents, without them it was different because in the first few days I was worried about getting lost or that my family would forget me.

When I was in my twin's home, I was more than reassured because his family was so wonderful and kind. I became the closest with his mother because she reminded me of my own mom.

Because I'm from there, I find Bathurst boring, but we had actually planned some fun activities, like going to Fredericton and learning about science at Science-Est and some history at the courthouse. We also went to the Acadian village. This week for me was wonderful (except for when I had a fever).

In Ottawa, we went to the Museum of History, and my favourite part was the "Across the World exhibit" for young kids.

I would really love to do another exchange next year. This exchange was very educational and I learned the most about money at the Bank of Canada museum, which changed my perspective on overspending, so I am certain that will be helpful when I have to manage my own money.

I recommend to all students to participate at least once, because the experience was more than amazing, educational and fun. I will cherish these wonderful memories.

By Pascale Lagace





The impact this exchange had on me was that it showed me that I don't have to be scared of travel. That Canada is a big beautiful place, and I want to see more of it.

















I feel blessed to be part of it, and will try my best to learn more about the culture in Attawapiskat, closely linked to my culture as a Métis

- Alexandre LaFleur















My twin family made sure to make me feel like I was part of their family. I barely even missed home while I was with them.



















PROUD PARTNER OF EXPERIENCES CANADA















ONEBEC

Every second year, Canadian Parents for French organizes an exchange with another community through Experiences Canada. I love learning new things about our country, improving my French and meeting new people. That is why I wanted to go on this exchange. The exchange that I participated in exceeded my expectations. It was so much fun and the people were great.

The group of kids that were on the exchange this year were from grade 7 and 8 and they were all very nice. The 19 of us live in the towns of Canmore and Banff. The town of Canmore has a population of about 13,000 people and Banff has about 8,000. They are both extremely beautiful communities. The community that we visited, Saint Augustin de Desmaures, was bigger and closer to a major city. These communities are similar as they both are wonderful places with great people. Something I didn't expect was to see how spectacular the Hotel Frontenac was. It was bigger and more magnificent than I had expected.



My exchange partner, Claudia, and the other kids we met were amazing and I really want to see them again. I hope to go visit them next spring break. My twin was a little quiet, but so nice and super cool. It was great having her at our house. My twin's family was one of the kindest families ever. Her mom cried when I left, and I almost cried too. I would 100% recommend this experience to someone else. My mom is already planning to do the exchange with the same organizers from Saint Augustin de Desmaures when my sister is in grade 8, because we had such a great time with them.

I don't think that the exchange could have been any better than it was. Everybody loved everybody, and we had a blast. My exchange partner was such a kind and wonderful person to be around. Everyone even said we kind of look alike. It was one of the most fun things that I've ever been part of and would recommend it to anyone.

By Jay Porter













When we were in Quebec we went to a maple farm and we got to eat and do some French dancing and play with spoons and the setting made everything so fun.

- Hannah Cramer-Law























We had three activities at the dogsledding place [in Baie-Comeau]... ice fishing, making maple syrup and lastly dogsledding. 4 huskies were pulling me for about 45 minutes. I was smiling and laughing for the full 45 minutes. It was incredible how strong the dogs were.

- Desirae Anderson









ATLANTIC CANADA

Ever since I was young, I've always wanted to go on a student exchange trip. I read about programs hosted by Experiences Canada, and I thought that living somewhere else for a while would be the coolest thing in the world! I wanted to have my own Indiana Jones adventure, so when my teacher approached me to go on an exchange trip to Bathurst, New Brunswick, I immediately said yes! I was looking forward to immersing myself in a different culture, improving my French skills, and meeting new people. After being a part of an exchange, I realized how lucky I was to have that opportunity!

I live in the suburban area of Ottawa, Ontario. It is a fairly large and loud community. When we arrived in Bathurst, we were surprised to find out how quiet it was there. There was barely any traffic and outside noise, which was great for the tired Frank Ryan students who wanted to sleep after the long flight. Bathurst is a very small city and where my host family's house was located, everything we needed was in close proximity. The chances of getting lost were very small, which was a major plus for me, a person with no sense of direction. Both our communities are very cold.

like it was a great icebreaker and a wonderful bonding experience.

My second favourite part of the exchange was when my classmates and I were on the plane on the way there. One of my best friends was flying for her first time, and I was happy that I could experience that with her. I loved seeing how excited she was seeing how high in the air we were. The whole flight, we were singing, dancing and listening to our favourite songs.



I GOT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT MYSELF, MAKE NEW FRIENDS AND EXPERIENCE NEW THINGS!

I think that this exchange was a wonderful experience for my peers and I to develop our independence and to be more confident. I might have even found a place where I would like to retire to! I love how calm Bathurst is, and I would love to live there later on in life!

My experience hosting was wonderful! We had the chance to be the first hosts of the exchange, which meant we were the ones making the first connections. My teacher paired me with a wonderful "twin" and we had a ton of fun together. We got along straight away and were laughing and giggling every day. She also helped me come out of my shell.

My best memory of the week I was hosting was when my "twin" and two of our friends were playing Super Mario Bros. together in my basement. We were laughing, yelling and screaming at each other all night, and I felt I was placed with the nicest host family in the whole world! They treated me like their own and helped me immerse myself in their culture and language during my stay. I had a host mom, a host dad, a brother and sister. I don't have any siblings, and I was happy to be the "big sister" of my exchange twin and her brother. I felt super loved and I was sad to leave.

A student exchange seemed a bit scary at first. I was scared to leave Ottawa without my family, but I feel like it was a great experience for everyone! I got to learn more about myself, make new friends and experience new things! If anyone is uncertain about doing an exchange, you should try it! Who knows what you might discover?

By Hana Vinette

































I think that
this exchange
was a wonderful
experience for my
peers and I to develop
our independence and
to be more confident.















THE NORTH

I was lucky enough to be involved in an exchange with a group of students from Fort Providence, which is an indigenous community in the Northwest Territories. We came together three different times, twice in Ottawa, and once in Fort Providence. We went up for a week in March and as excited as I was, I could've never imagined how incredible that week would be.

THIS EXCHANGE HAS BEEN ONE OF THE GREATEST EXPERIENCES OF MY LIFE, AND I WILL ALWAYS CHERISH THE RELATIONSHIPS THAT I'VE MADE, AND THE LESSONS I'VE LEARNED.

My favourite memory of our trip came at the very beginning when just after arriving, we left to go winter camping for three days. The area that we stayed at had heated cabins that had more than enough room for us, as well as plenty of space to run around and throw a Frisbee, which we did a lot. There was also a spot for a campfire, where we spent all of our nights playing games, chatting and singing songs underneath the northern lights. Our group was also super fortunate to be involved in a youth conference, with groups from all around the Northwest Territories, who came to the school in Fort Providence where we were staying. For three days, we got to listen to guest speakers and discuss some of the issues that indigenous people face, and what people around our country can do to support reconciliation and decolonization.

This exchange has been one of the greatest experiences of my life, and I will always cherish the relationships that I've made, and the lessons I've learned. Anyone who has the chance to do one of these exchanges shouldn't hesitate to sign up because you will not regret it. Even the people who were hesitant about joining were the ones who ended up enjoying it the most, and the saddest when our two groups had to part ways.

By Nicky Dunn







I have learned about how to hunt wild animals and create your own coats, jackets, hats, gloves, just anything. I got to learn about their culture.



























EXCHANGE PHOTOS - THE NORTH



positive experience. Our son really enjoyed seeing Quebec, and came home so proud of himself and full of confidence about his French language skills. He was very surprised by how different our two provinces are, and it was an excellent way for him to get a glimpse of how others live. He has made some lifelong friends.

We loved being a part of this exchange. Not only for the kids but also for the parents to learn about and experience diversity! Great to be out of our comfort zone and show off what we love about our town.

I believe this is very valuable for parents and children to learn more about the different people in our country and to support one another.

As this was an exchange with the French part of Canada, it is a great tool to showcase Canada's second language and culture.

IT WAS SUCH AN ENRICHING EXPERIENCE FOR MY CHILD AND ENTIRE FAMILY

My daughter is noticeably more mature, confident and will never forget the opportunity your organization has generously offered her. We took in two twins due to uneven numbers and we are so grateful to have hosted them. My perception of our wonderful Northern inhabitants has been changed and we are very thankful to you and the wonderful chaperones who volunteered their time.

My child had an excellent time and an experience that he has grown from and will remember for the rest of his life- we are so fortunate to have this valuable opportunity.

Parents rated the following elements of the exchange experience as either meeting or exceeding their expectations:

Transportation 80%

Safety & Security Measures 84%

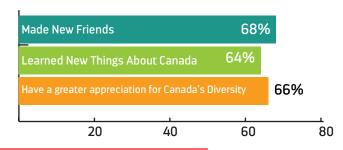
Pre-trip Info 67%

Time hosting Twinned Youth 55%

20 40 60 80

91% of parents would recommend this program to a friend 89% of parents would participate in another exchange.

Parents thought their children:







experiencescanada.ca

Engage, Inspire, Empower,



370,000+ Youth have participated in our programs

4800 Youth take

part in an exchange each year

80 years Experiences Canada has been providing life-changing experiences



NATIONAL PRIDE



59% Linguistic

8% Indigenous

16% History & Culture

8% Performing Arts

2% Sports

2% Geography, Science or Environment

5% Leadership/ Community Engagement Learn about our new initiatives, partnerships, youth forums & pilot projects!



Experiences Canada



@ExperiencesCan

5% who took part said they would recommend the program to friends



400+ Locations across Canada



history, geography, official languages and cultural diversity. Thanks to the generous support of the Department of Canadian Heritage, our flagship Exchange program provides opportunities to Canadian

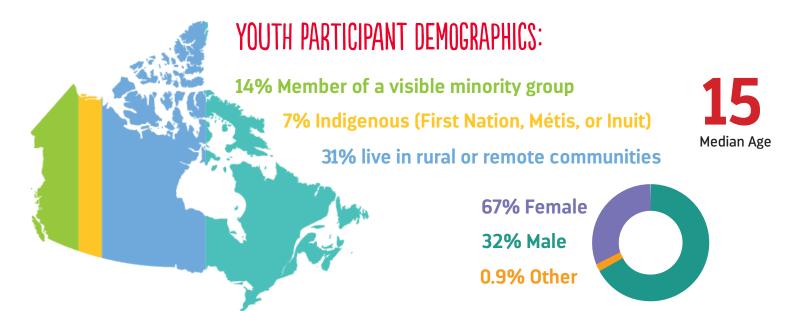
LIFELONG FRIENDSHIP



Patrimoine

SURVEY RESULTS

Experiences Canada values the feedback of its participants. Here is what they told us about their experience through an online survey:



87%

Rated their exchange as good or excellent

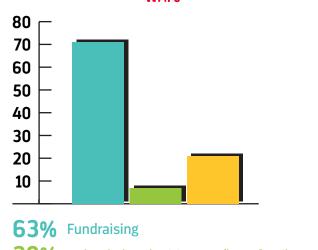
Would go on another exchange

91%

Would recomment this program to a friend

79%

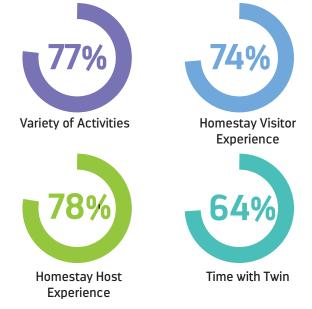
YOUTH PARTICIPANTS WERE INVOLVED IN THE ORGANIZATION OF THEIR EXCHANGES IN DIFFERENT WAYS:



20% Helped plan the itinerary/host family activities

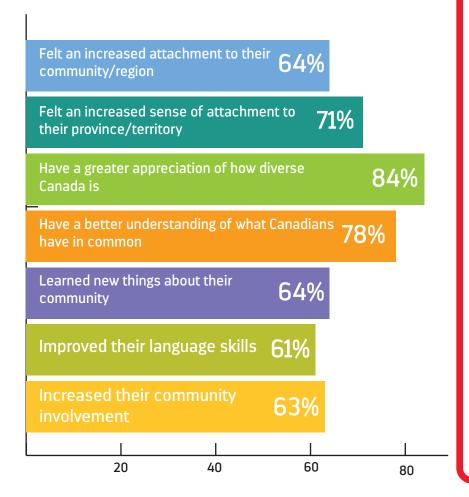
23% Recruited friends to participate

THE FOLLOWING ASPECTS OF THE EXCHANGE MET OR EXCEEDED YOUTH PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS OVERALL



LASTING IMPACT:

Youth respondents overall felt very strongly about the following impacts of their exchange:



WHAT OUR GROUP ORGANISERS ARE SAYING:

- 95% of group organizers who responded felt the exchange experience overall met or exceeded their expectations.
- 96% believed their students had learned more about Canada

"Students and families have raved about what a wonderful experience it was for them. They learned a lot and developed strong connections between the two schools!."

"The hosting part was particularly important for our community. We had many people come together to support the exchange and were able to bring important parts of Kyuquot culture to our students and theirs."

"Our students had experiences in their own community that they didn't even know existed, families came together to work as a community to plan events, youth made lasting friendships and learned so much about another part of Canada."

WHAT OUR PARTICIPANTS ARE SAYING:

"If you go on an exchange you will become closer with people from your community, other communities and it will open your mind to an even better Canada."

"My exchange was amazing and stepping out of comfort zone, turned out to be a fully positive experience."

"I was only in trois rivières for a week but I loved being surrounded by a different language. I wish I could have stayed longer because I know it would've helped my French so much. This trip has led me to do a larger exchange in February, for three months."

"I just need to say this was an amazing trip that opened my eyes on Canada's other culture and programs like these need to be kept!!! I hope every generation gets some sort of experience like this."

"My favourite part of the exchange was discovering the Inuit culture and experiencing their love for their land and their kindness to us."



experiences Canada is committed to inspiring youth to build on their travel experience and connect with other youth that share their passion and interest in exploring our country. We operate alumni pages on Instagram (@EC_alumni_anciens participants) and Facebook (Experiences Canada Alumni / Anciens Participants) where youth can share photos and reflections from their experience, and keep in touch with each other. We also use those pages to post information about other youth opportunities available, some offered by Experiences Canada, and some offered by other youth organizations. We encourage you to sign up and check the space regularly so you can continue to explore what this country has to offer in ways you may never have imagined!

Youth looking to stay involved in Experiences Canada may wish to consider applying to become part of our National Youth Advisory Committee. Each year Experiences Canada invites 12-18 youth from across Canada to serve on its advisory committee. They meet in Ottawa for a weekend in November to talk about their ideas for youth travel and exchanges with the Board of Directors and set their plan for supporting the organization through volunteer projects throughout the year. The advisory committee is a great way to develop your leadership and advocacy skills and gain valuable training and experience making presentations, advocating for projects, and learning about how youth programs are developed.



In June 2020, Experiences Canada is presenting the second Youth Leadership Forum on the topic of Reconciliation. Sixty Four (64) youth, half of whom will be Indigenous will be selected to participate in a weeklong program that explores First Nation, Inuit and Métis history, culture, and rights, and involves them in learning and discussion about the many challenging paths toward reconciliation. Youth can apply via our website answering the question "what does reconciliation look like to you" using whatever medium they choose: art, music, performance, written or spoken word.



Experiences Canada is also interested in understanding the longer impact of youth travel and exchange experiences. We are always looking for alumni interested in keeping in touch with us through occasional surveys and updates to hear your thoughts on issues, ideas, as well as program impact. We are happy to hear from you at any time so feel free to connect via our social media pages, or drop us an email at info@experiencescanada.ca



experiences PORUMS
CANADA POR FORUMS
RÉCONCILIATION

WINNIPE JUNE 27TH -JULY 4TH 2020

REGISTER TODAY FOR THE CHANCE TO TRAVEL TO WINNIPEG AND ATTEND OUR WEEK-LONG FORUM ON RECONCILIATION

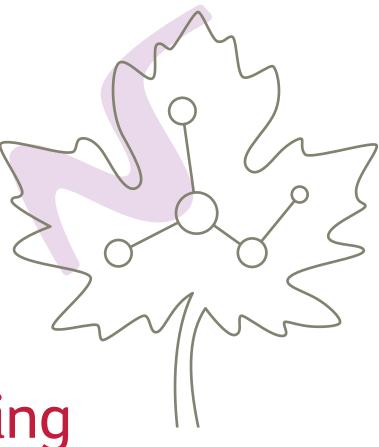
32 Indigenous youth and 32 non-indigenous youth between the ages of 14-18 will be selected from across Canada, to travel to Winnipeg for a week-long program to develop their knowledge and foster greater dialogue and understanding among non-Indigenous and Indigenous young people about indigenous history, culture, and the path forward to Reconciliation.

WWW.FORUMS.EXPERIENCESCANADA.CA









Building bright futures through lifelong learning

Together, we can do more for Canadians, for each other and for the communities we love.



Stronger Communities Together™