

(Continued from front page)

Looking forward, the ACSRC is embarking upon a number of exciting initiatives. We are poised to begin a 14-month project synthesizing water policy and interventions from across the province, as well as finding ways to link that work with the social and natural science capacity and needs of the Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils. We will be continuing our work on “Phase Two” of the TTNS project, which will entail the collection and analysis of sustainability plans from across the country, as well as another national event to discuss the findings, implications, and realities of moving from sustainability planning to adoption, implementation and evaluation. We are also in the process of continuing to adopt and adapt the “Top 40” process to rural policy and research – we hope to complete a provincial version of this process in the upcoming year, and ideally to conduct a national-level initiative as well. Finally, we hope to continue to bring scholars from across the country to Augustana and the University of Alberta to present new ideas, perspectives and research. In 2011-12, we hope to provide public lectures on a diverse range of topics, including rural capacity, religion and sustainability, education and rural Canada, and the role/importance of culture in the “sustainability question.”

In short, while the past year has been busy, I optimistically hope for an even busier year in 2011-12!

Lars K Hallström, PhD

Director, Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities

RURAL RESEARCH WORKSHOP

The 1st Annual Rural Research Workshop (RRW) took place on May 5, 2011 in Ottawa, Ontario. This one-day workshop promoted networking among rural researchers and provided a forum for the discussion of rural research and rural policy. 138 rural researchers from all over Canada attended the conference. 25 research papers were presented on a diverse set of topics that included: place-based policy, tourism support for rural community development, measuring social capital, planning for rural health, renewable energy technologies, food security, e-governance and community decision making, and changing paradigms in agricultural policy.

The ACSRC's Director, Lars K Hallstrom, sat on the RRW steering committee and provided travel financial support to presenters through a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) grant in the Aid to Research Workshops and Conferences in Canada category.

For more info on the event, visit

<http://www.fcm.ca/english/View.asp?mp=788&x=1531>

4901-46 Avenue, Camrose, AB T4V 2R3 | P: 780.679.1672 |

E: admin.acsrc@ualberta.ca | [@ACSRC](https://twitter.com/ACSRC) | [UofA.ACSRC](https://www.facebook.com/UofA.ACSRC) |

[AdminACSRC](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...) | www.augustana.ualberta.ca/centres/acsrc/

UPCOMING EVENTS

ARDN The Power of Knowledge Workshop

Executive Royal Inn | Leduc, AB
September 29, 2011

North Atlantic Forum: Culture, Place & Identity at the Heart of Regional Development

St John's , NFLD and Labrador
October 13-15, 2011

8th International Conference on Environmental, Cultural, Economic and Social Sustainability

UBC | Vancouver, BC
January 10-12, 2012

For more info on these events, visit

<http://www.augustana.ualberta.ca/research/centres/acsrc/>



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA ALBERTA CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE RURAL COMMUNITIES

RESEARCH NEWS AND INFORMATION

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The past 12 months have absolutely flown by, and demonstrate just how busy and necessary the work of rural development, community engagement and sustainability can be. In the second year of full-time operations, the ACSRC has seen the growth of numerous projects and initiatives that range from issues in health and aging, to natural resources, to sustainability and sustainable community planning, to setting broader priorities for engagement, collaboration and both research and public policy for rural Alberta, and Canada.

I am extremely pleased to see the ACSRC becoming an established part of both the provincial and federal contexts for rural development, policy and research. Through our contributions to the “Taking the Next Steps” conference (held in Camrose in October, 2010) and the Rural Research Workshop (held in Ottawa in May 2011) we have been able to connect with researchers, policy makers and citizens from rural communities across the country, and to really begin to put the ACSRC, and the University of Alberta as a “rurally relevant” post-secondary institution, on the map.

The past year has seen a number of high-lights and successes, none of which would have been possible without the continuous and dedicated support of the ACSRC staff. Although we draw from a mix of student, graduate student and part-time employees, through their hard work the ACSRC has been able to (1) fund, implement and evaluate events (including the two noted above); (2) provide input into the work and activities of both federal and provincial offices working here in Alberta; (3) place numerous students in both internships and community-service learning placements (in collaboration with LaB); and (4) contribute to the knowledge base about rural development, sustainability and policy through the development of edited volumes and special editions of peer-reviewed journals.

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EXPLORING WATER IN ALBERTA

Dr. Lars K. Hallström, Director, ACSRC, has been awarded financial support of up to \$50,000 from the Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN) for his project “What makes rural Alberta communities successful – Water Management.” Over the next year, this project, seeks to identify, synthesize and categorize the multiple strategies and initiatives that have been undertaken within Alberta to reconcile the pressures of economic and population growth with issues of water supply and policy. It will do so through a combination of conventional academic methods (scoping review) combined with a more innovative approach to knowledge sharing and problem solving – crowdsourcing. The project will conclude with a workshop to assess, validate, edit and contribute to the results of both the crowdsourcing and scoping review phases.



RURAL CAPACITY INTERNSHIP 2011

Rural and agricultural-based communities play important economic and social roles, but they face huge challenges with limited capacity – or budget – to research problems, engage citizens, and make key decisions. In order to assist communities in addressing these issues and to create meaningful rural-based undergraduate student experiences, the University of Alberta's Augustana Campus-based Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities and Learning and Beyond office have partnered to establish the Rural Capacity Intern Program. This summer, its second phase provided internship opportunities for a dozen students within communities around Alberta.

The program introduces interns to a community, where they are exposed to multiple aspects of rural municipal planning, administration, and program development relating their area of study or interest. Interns also work under the guidance of Augustana faculty members in developing and researching community-based projects that support rural capacity and sustainability issues.

The resulting insights into rural sustainability questions will be valuable for both communities and the students. The communities have already come to value the energetic students, and the students themselves have been very happy with the support they receive in the program.

Entering his fourth year of political studies in September, Jeremy Smith is spending the summer in the Smoky Lake county office in a comprehensive bylaw review. He might rewrite, amalgamate or recommend elimination of any of the bylaws he discovers.



"It's a big clean up because it hasn't been done for 50 years," he laughs. "After I'm done, I will produce a policy on how to do more consistent bylaw reviews. Next time they do this, it will take far less effort!" The contrast Smith has found between a larger city centre and the 2200-resident county is the constraint on resources: everyone wears two hats, and you don't have entire departments devoted to policy development.

"We come in and can do things that other people don't have time for," said Smith. "The bylaw review hasn't been done in many, many decades,

but they are also ecstatic to see a young guy running around the office who also enjoys talking about the same things a Chief Administration Officer does." Originally from Cold Lake, Smith feels comfortable in smaller communities. After more municipal experience, he plans to try his hand at questions of small city development.

"It's a great way for students to go into work areas or careers that interest us," says Smith. "We are learning through work experience and academia at the same time."

Written by Christopher Thrall

For more information on the program and links to Intern's blogs, visit <http://www.augustana.ualberta.ca/research/centres/acsrc/internship.html>

CONTINUING CARE NETWORKING EVENTS

The Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities (ACSRC) and the Institute for Continuing Care Education and Research (ICCEER) recently hosted three networking events in Northern Alberta to discuss local issues in continuing care. These events took place thanks to the financial support of the Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN).

The first two events took place at Keyano College in May 2011 and were organized and coordinated by Sandra Woodhead Lyons (ICCEER), Lars Hallström (ACSRC), Guy Harmer (Keyano College), and Darline Reid (AHS). On May 10th representatives from the outlying communities in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo met to discuss continuing care issues. Other attendees included Alberta government representatives, Alberta Health Services, the local Metis Association, and NorQuest College.

On May 11th representatives from Fort McMurray, including local health care providers, municipal representatives, and local citizens, participated in a discussion, along with representatives from NorQuest College, Alberta Seniors & Community Supports, and Advanced Education & Technology.

The third event was held at Grande Prairie Community College on May 17th. This event was organized and coordinated by Sandra Woodhead Lyons (ICCEER), Lars Hallström (ACSRC), Cheryl King (Grande Prairie Regional College), Marie Johnson (AHS), and Kathleen Turner (GP County FCSS).

Attendees included representatives from Grande Prairie and surrounding communities, Advanced Education & Technology, Alberta Health & Wellness, Alberta Seniors & Community Supports, the Alberta First Nations Continuing Care Working Group, University of Alberta, and NorQuest College.

A fourth event, scheduled to take place in Slave Lake, has been postponed until the Fall due to the tragic wild fires that affected the community in May 2011.

For complete reporting on these events, please visit <http://iccer.ca/ccne.html>

RESEARCH PRIORITIES FOR ALBERTA WPACs

On May 5th in Red Deer, AB, the ACSRC and Lisa M. Fox, Sustainability Resources Ltd, hosted academic representatives from the University of Alberta and Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPACs) members from across Alberta to discuss: (1) the ways in which the post-secondary sector and WPACs might continue to work together; (2) the needs, gaps and opportunities that might be bridged by collaboration between WPACs and researchers/teachers in post-secondary institutions; and (3) specific opportunities, projects or initiatives that might better link the WPACs to the research/brokerage capacity of post-secondary institutions in the province.

This event took place thanks to the financial support of the Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN).

For a summary of findings from the event, please visit <http://www.augustana.ualberta.ca/acsrc/>



INTERN HIGHLIGHTS (CON'T)

I spent my summer in the Special Areas working as a Rural Capacity intern for the Return to Rural Project. I was constantly updating their social media engines like Twitter, Facebook and their website, where I posted events, jobs and real estate opportunities. It has been my best summer job yet! I felt as though I could bring something to the table with my Management degree yet I also faced challenges that have helped me to grow in my career path and as a person. I have learned to better market to this social generation. I was encouraged to be creative in my approach to social media, and had a lot of fun with it! Thanks to the Learning and Beyond Office, ACSRC and University of Alberta Augustana for making this intership possible! - [Larae Pierson, Special Areas 2, AB](#)

Growing up I was never ashamed to admit that I was a rural kid but I would be lying if I said that there weren't times when I felt that living in a rural area had disadvantages. Of course, I know now that both urban and rural come with their own unique advantages and disadvantages. A highlight of the internship for me has been being able to connect with people, via social media, who share an appreciation for all things rural. It was exciting to learn that there is a movement to get people talking about rural in a new light. I think that as interns, we have played an important role in bringing fresh insight into the rural discussion. - [Odessa Sherbaniuk, Learning and Beyond, Camrose, AB](#)

TAKING THE NEXT STEPS - PHASE 2

The Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities (ACSRC) is pleased to report that earlier this year the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) granted a 1-year extension to the 'Taking the Next Steps' project (TTNS). The new project end date is now March 31, 2012.

Given this revised timeframe and the remaining available funds, the ACSRC and the TTNS organizing committee have proceeded with the hiring of two University of Alberta students (Augustana Campus Undergraduate & Department of Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology graduate student) to conduct a high level assessment of sustainability plan implementation in communities across Canada. This assessment is being done in partnership with two other organizations, currently engaged in similar reviews. We are also developing an archive of sustainability plans from across the country, and in partnership with other organizations hope to distil both common themes, and 'emerging practices' from the work being done in rural communities.

In addition, TTNS organizers are in the midst of planning a second meeting to discuss the results of the aforementioned assessment and to further explore how community-university relationships working in this area (of sustainability planning, policy and implementation) could consider moving forward, including the possibility of funding for a national rural initiative, increased knowledge transfer, and networking between rural communities, researchers and policymakers. This event will tentatively take place in Toronto (due to ease of transport in the winter and "centrality") during February 2012.

We will have more news to share regarding this event in the coming weeks as we pin down dates, exact location and agenda.

RURAL CAPACITY INTERN HIGHLIGHTS

As the second phase of the Rural Capacity Intern program comes to a close, the ACSRC asked this year's crop of interns to reflect on their personal highlights from this Summer. Here is what they had to say...

A high-point for me this summer was the opportunity to work alongside the residents of Slave Lake in the wildfire relief efforts. For the first two weeks of July Greenwood Neighborhood Place sent myself and three of their employees to Slave Lake. During these two weeks we worked in a variety of areas including municipal office reception and finance, community support services and Alberta Housing.

Our tasks included community programming, data entry, and housing needs assessment.

For me, the most powerful part of this experience was the resiliency I observed in both the people and community of Slave Lake. I believe that we observed the true power of community in the outstanding number of neighbors helping and supporting neighbors. - [Kailyn Jones, Greenwood Neighborhood Place, Sundre, AB](#)



My summer working as a Rural Capacity Intern with the Maskwacis Justice Society in Hobbema has been an amazing experience. My highlights include being able to work in an aboriginal community where I witnessed first hand the culture and issues facing the community. The majority of my summer was spent working with preventative programming for youth, this includes Girl Guides, Girl Power, Boys Circle, and the Traditional Cultural Camp. Being involved in these programs was great, I could see the results and the effects that these programs had on individual youth's lives. For me, the best part of these programs was that it was all heavily tied back to aboriginal culture.

- [Alison Bortolon, Maskwacis Justice Society, Hobbema, AB](#)

Having spent some of my childhood in the village of Hay Lakes and having strong family ties to the village I was excited to be placed in this rural community. One of the highlights of this summer has been getting back to my roots and having the ability to contribute to the village in my own way. As a Rural Capacity Intern I have discovered more about the unique opportunities that exist in our rural communities and have broadened my understanding of rural sustainability. - [Shara Harke, Village of Hay Lakes, AB](#)

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INTERN HIGHLIGHTS (CON'T)

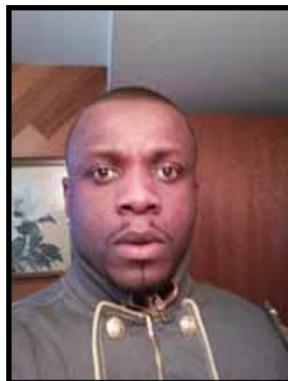
My summer in Sturgeon County has been full of exciting experiences, but one that definitely sticks out is being able to watch months of hard work play out in the form of the Sturgeon County Bounty Canada Day event at the Edmonton Garrison. The Sturgeon County Bounty is an initiative implemented by the Economic Development department and is focused on the concept of value-added agriculture that helps to promote local producers in Sturgeon County. The event at the Garrison was a taste event where local producers prepared dishes using their own local ingredients, which visitors to the event purchased tickets to try. We also featured artisans and other vendors from Sturgeon County. The Canada Day event provided a great opportunity for producers to market themselves directly to people in the and to further the initiative; the event was a huge promotion for quality local food as well. - [Shelby Sherwick, Sturgeon County, Morinville, AB](#)



One of many highlights of my internship this summer was the opportunity to attend the CASHRA – Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies - national conference in Calgary. Welcoming and Inclusive Communities (WIC) was invited to have a display set up during the conference because this initiative is a partnership between the AUMA, Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission, and the Human Rights branch of Alberta Culture and Community Spirit. Throughout the two days of the conference I met many people involved in interesting projects and organizations around the country, all committed to building welcoming, inclusive and discrimination-free communities and workplaces. I was also able to listen to great speakers and debates on topics like accommodation in the workplace, understanding the experiences of Aboriginal youth, and responses to hate crimes in Alberta. Attending this conference was a wonderful opportunity for learning and reflection.

- [Amy Wilhelm, Alberta Urban Municipalities Association](#)

I worked on numerous projects for the City of Camrose Engineering Department. Some key moments during my internship were when I had Department Heads whom I consulted with ask my opinion on their projects. I found it to be empowering and reassuring because having experienced professionals who have been working in their fields of expertise for years look to you for some form of new ideas is encouraging, and reflects the confidence they have in the rural capacity program and the contributions you can make to enhance their capacities. As well, my internship with the City of Camrose exposed me to different levels of municipal administration. Municipalities are confounding creatures which encouraged me to learn a lot more about them. - [Ellis Agbenyega, City of Camrose, AB](#)



INTERN HIGHLIGHTS (CON'T)

There have been a lot of great memories that I have from my time as a Rural Capacity Intern in the Village of Forestburg. I feel as though a majority of the summer has been a highlight because I was able to work with the volunteer organizations in the village and help them search for grants, apply for grants, and give them some new ideas from an ‘outsider’s’ point of view. This internship has opened my eyes to challenges faced by smaller communities and has shown me how important volunteers are in a community like Forestburg. Volunteers are the people who complete the tasks that are usually completed by full time paid employees in larger municipalities, so without these volunteers something would definitely be missing from a smaller municipality. These volunteers are essential to Forestburg because without them, the services they provide to the community would not exist. The Village of Forestburg recognizes the importance of volunteer organizations and it is great to see a municipality that cares about their volunteers. - [Kendra Kerrigan, Village of Forestburg, AB](#)

This summer I have had the pleasure of working for the Village of Edgerton, as a Rural Capacity Intern. This internship has been a great experience for me, and I have loved every minute of it. While being in Edgerton, I have been able to get a well rounded and diverse experience in every aspect of what it takes to run a small rural community. This has ranged from mapping the cemetery, to fire hall inventory, to attending council meetings, to helping plan the First Responders Conference, and organizing youth and senior events. There has never been a dull moment in Edgerton.

I am still looking forward to a few of my major events; Amazing Race, Kids day and Seniors BBQ. - [Naomi Finseth, Village of Edgerton, AB](#)



Since becoming a Rural Capacity Intern, I’ve learnt a great deal working with the Chief Administrative Officer of Smoky Lake County, Cory Ollikka, and his assistant Lydia Cielin, on matters of public policy and municipal bylaw. In my time working at this municipality, it was my job to perform a bylaw review. This involved a careful reading of over 1200 bylaws to determine their validity today.

My summer had ups and downs, but it was never without a moment where I wasn’t learning fascinating new things about law and policy formulation and municipal governance. My favorite part of the summer was getting to write an omnibus bylaw, detailing what bylaws had become defunct or redundant and then recommending the repeal of those bylaws. It will be put forward to county council next week if all goes well. - [Jeremy Smith, Town of Smoky Lake, AB](#)

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