



2009/2010 Participant Biographies

Ana-Elisa Armstrong de Almeida

Currently Ana-Elisa works with children, youth and families who have experienced sexual abuse and/or other forms of abuse and trauma. She is a big advocate for sexual abuse prevention education and for the inclusion of children and youth's voices in decisions that affect them, be that on a family, community or societal level. Ana-Elisa is Canadian-Brazilian and travels to Brazil often to work with grass-roots non-profit organizations serving extremely disadvantaged communities in Rio de Janeiro. Her work and research interests are child development in situations of extreme adversity, the formation of gender identity and sexuality in young vulnerable children, citizenship and political awareness in children, and child and youth sexual exploitation. Her long-term professional goal is to facilitate knowledge exchanges between Canadian and Brazilian non-profits working with children, youth and families.

Faith Bateman

Faith Bateman has called Victoria home for 10 years now and is delighted to be so close to the ocean and the mountains. Victoria fits in well with her love of kayaking, hiking and nature in general. Bearing a deep concern for the health of the environment, Faith volunteers her time to help build sustainable communities. To support this interest, Faith acquired the Project Management Professional® accreditation.

Through extensive travel and adventure over the years, Faith has developed a keen interest in how others live their lives, especially as it relates to "green" living.

Faith is a creative soul who expresses herself through the lens of a camera. Capturing the heart of people, she has found a niche in fine art portrait photography.

An avid gardener, Faith spends her summer months harvesting the bounty found within her own backyard. She's developed a brand called "The Not So Secret Garden" where she shares the beauty and benefits of growing locally with friends and family.

Jody Bauche

I have always been passionate about the wellbeing of children. I graduated from Edmonton's Grant MacEwan College in 1999 with my diploma in Early Childhood Development. From there I found myself wearing many hats in the community: child care worker, preschool teacher, youth recreation worker and family counselor.

I moved to Victoria, BC seven years ago to finish my degree in social work. Since I completed my degree in I have found myself working for non-government based organizations that foster my inherent spirit for community development.

Currently I keep myself busy with a contract from Success by 6 as an Aboriginal Early Childhood Coordinator for South Vancouver Island.

I work with several of the local First Nations communities within the Capital Regional District and through this work I have developed an expansive vision for Indigenous Sustainable Development which includes economic, environmental, social and cultural sustainability.

Kris Constable

A native of Ontario, Kris Constable has been in B.C. for just over three years. After having worked in information security for Nortel for several years, Kris now owns his own company, PrivaSecTech, which specializes in providing technical advice to organizations looking to improve privacy and security policies and practices.

An active volunteer, Kris is the president of the Canadian Pacific Lawn Bowling club in downtown Victoria, and was instrumental in saving the club last year by preventing the site from being developed by the city.

Kris also sits on the boards of directors for the Together Against Poverty Society, an advocacy group for people with low incomes, and Atomic Vaudeville, a theatre company. He also is a member of the privacy and access committee for the B.C. Civil Liberties Association.

Most recently, Kris became co-owner of Solomon's, a restaurant/cocktail lounge on Herald Street downtown.

Kyla Fiddick

Kyla Fiddick was born and raised in Victoria, British Columbia. Through high school and into college Kyla participated on a variety of sports including track and field, basketball and soccer. After high school Kyla went on to work in the fitness industry where she enjoyed helping people achieve their fitness goals and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Health and fitness continue to remain a passion for her. Kyla enjoys travelling and being immersed in cultural and ethnic diversity. Beyond personal travel, she has taken the opportunity to work in London, England and to volunteer in Cusco, Peru. Since graduating in 2007 with a Bachelors Degree in Business Administration from Camosun College, Kyla furthered her education by completing a CMA accounting designation in June 2009. Kyla's dream is to align her career and passions in a role that effectively utilizes her educational and practical skills to serve the needs of the community.

Brad Fraser

I was born in Quesnel BC and moved to Victoria with my parents and two brothers when I was very young. The majority of my childhood was spent playing sports and exploring the Gulf and San Juan Islands aboard our boat during summer family vacations. After graduating from the University of Victoria I left for Calgary and a career in the Oil and Gas industry only to returning shortly thereafter and realising Victoria is my home. Having a nose for adventure, challenge and being told that a lack of knowledge has never stopped me from having an opinion, I joined the Victoria Police Department.

In 2004 I rode in the 1000km Tour de Rock, Cops for Cancer raising just under \$1.3 million for Childhood Cancer research and Camp Goodtimes. Probably the most remarkable and humbling undertaking I've ever pursued.

I recently chaired a facet of the Crystal Meth Victoria Society, a non-profit community-action anti-drug effort and presently work with the RCMP National Security program.

I love playing sports particularly tennis, hockey and golf, have a passion for anything outdoors and enjoy camping with family and friends.

Irene Guglielmi

Irene is an educator and optimist. She taught 3rd grade in the Caribbean for five years and currently works for the Ministry of Education.

Irene has lived in several communities in British Columbia and has spent 10 years living, working, and going to school in Europe, the Caribbean and the Yukon. In 2005 she relocated back to Victoria with her 2 sons.

She received her BA from the University of Waterloo in Ontario and later pursued a Masters in International Education through Framingham State College, MA.

Irene's curiosity to find sustainable ways to contribute back to our community is why she is interested in Leadership Victoria.

When there is a moment of spare time, Irene enjoys going on adventures with her boys, digging in the garden, reading and playing soccer.

Berdine Jonker

Berdine Jonker is originally from Nelson, BC, and has lived in Victoria since starting university here in 1995. She is currently the Acting Senior Heritage Planner with the BC Heritage Branch. She holds a Bachelor of Arts (Art History), a Diploma in Cultural Resource Management, and is completing a Master's in Public Administration from UVic this fall. Berdine is passionate about her job, and is always willing and ready to discuss how heritage conservation contributes to sustainable communities. She enjoys working with local governments and community members, an activity which makes up a large part of her job. Berdine has been contributing to the development of her community as a member of the City of Victoria's Community Heritage Commission over the last four years. Berdine is married to Mike, a sonar technician in the Navy, and is currently the proud 'parent' of an eight-year-old Jack Russell Terrier named Eli.

Louise Labonte

Louise comes from a family of 9 and was born and raised in Morinville, Alberta. She completed a 2 year diploma in Laboratory Technology from NAIT and worked in this profession for a number of years. She left this field and traveled and lived throughout the US for 8 years. She moved to Victoria in 1994 and pursued a career in the Forestry Industry.

In 1999 Louise was successful in getting a position at the University of Victoria where she still remains. While working at UVic she completed evening courses in Accounting at Camosun College. She is currently the Administrative Officer for UVic Libraries, responsible for the Libraries operating budget and building administration. She continues to look for opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Louise has been involved in competitive sports throughout her life. Since living in Victoria she's played competitive fastball and was a member of a gold medal winning team that participated in the World Masters Games in Melbourne. She has a passion for sport and enjoys spending time with friends, hiking, biking and gardening.

Monique Lacerte-Roth

Monique Lacerte-Roth is the Coordinator of Community Arts Development and Arts Training Organizations at the BC Arts Council since June of 2005. She is the Officer responsible for Community Arts Councils, Regional Initiatives, Scholarships, Community Festivals and Community Projects as well as the newer (2005) Arts-Based Community Development Program.

Her interest in studio-arts, and her own practice brought her to Toronto in the late 80's where she worked for a time as a conservator, commercial picture framer and stylist for large Toronto galleries. Later, she worked as a commercial art dealer and managed the print department of Yorkville's Mira Godard Gallery between 1991 and 1994. She then entered the non-profit sector as the archivist and print sales manager at Open Studio, Canada's oldest printmaking co-operative, until 1995 when she moved with her young family to BC.

Subsequent to this, and for the next nine years, she worked as the Executive Director of the Campbell River Community Arts Council on Vancouver Island. During that time she served on the Board of the Pacific Region Arts Council and later on the Assembly of BC Arts Councils, and was its President from 2002 until the Spring of 2005. It was during this period of volunteerism that her confidence in community arts' ability to affect change became ingrained.

Monique holds an Honours Bachelor of Arts with a double major in Studio Practice (Printmaking and Drawing) and English Literature from the University of Guelph, Ontario.

Melana Mar

Melana likes to think that she has traveled to every big city and small cranny within Canada as one of the perks and punishments of the job while she was a recruiter for the University of Victoria. She spent 8 years living out of rented mini vans and hotels while seeking out the best apple pie whenever time would allow it. She is happy to report that she has found many great slices and has met many wonderful people.

Currently, Melana who is still working at UVic is doing what she loves best- planning parties. As the Event Officer in an area dauntingly named Office of the Registrar and Enrolment Services she takes great pleasure arriving to work and walking passed the worker bees on occasion with bizzare supplies like a bagful of cowboy hats and a tray of cookies in the morning before setting up for her next student event. Odd looks aside, Melana is happy to be working with students and parents and creating meaningful connections across campus.

Melana enjoys museums, music and is always looking for her next adventure through travel or in the kitchen.

Meghan McKenzie

People tend to say I'm chaotically organized and have the resilience of a cat - I just pick myself up after falling 10 feet, shake it off and keep on going.

I grew up in Kelowna, BC - enrolled in a number of different sports. I ski raced for the BC team, played select soccer and was a junior member at the Kelowna Golf and Country Club. I spent a half a year traveling Europe after graduation and found myself in Victoria attending Camosun College for Managerial Studies.

After graduating with a diploma in Managerial Studies I was accepted into the BComm program at Royal Roads. I became the classes Industry Representative as well at the Sponsorship and Judge Recruitment Chair for the 2005 RRU International Case Competition.

Upon graduation I landed a Marketing Assistant position with Westhills Sustainable Land Development Corporation. I am now the Marketing and Home Customization Coordinator for what is soon to be one of the largest sustainable communities in Canada I've been working for this company for 2 years and am very proud to be a part of such an innovative project.

I am also the Event Chair for the BC Minerva Foundation, organizing and hosting fundraising events to raise money for the many Minerva leadership and mentoring programs for women in BC.

Shawna Paul

Born and raised in Guelph Ontario and a graduate of the University of Western Ontario, Shawna 'transplanted' to the wonderful community of Victoria to pursue further education in the field of art therapy. Now in her 7th year as a professional and registered art therapist, Shawna loves supporting, encouraging and growing with children, youth and adults in a variety of settings

including the Mary Manning Centre, Lifetime Networks Victoria and the British Columbia School of Art Therapy.

Shawna continually seeks balance and adventure in other areas of her life as well, whether it be enjoying creative endeavors, traveling and taking in nature, spending time with family and friends or volunteering with various community events and organizations.

Shawna is looking forward to the incredible learning opportunities and experiences that the Leadership Victoria program will provide to her and her future community connections.

Nannette Plant, BFA, BA, MA

Nannette moved to Victoria three years ago, having spent her early years growing up in Ottawa followed by over twenty years studying and working in Montreal. She holds Bachelors' degrees in Fine Arts and Geography from Concordia University and a Masters in Learning and Technology from Royal Roads University. Nannette is trilingual (English, French and Spanish) and enjoys learning about cultures. She has had the privilege of meeting and recruiting students across Canada and in the Middle East.

Nannette works for the School of Trades and Technology at Camosun College. She believes strongly in social and environmental stewardship. If each of us does what we can by donating our time and resources, even the smallest contributions can make a big difference. Nannette is the proud mother of a son in his first year at the University of Victoria and a lovely but stubborn dog with a Mussolini complex.

Yasmin Rampuri

I was born and raised in rural Alberta, the first child of immigrant parents. I went off to the University of Alberta in Edmonton with a lot of expectations on my shoulders, and spent 7 years trying a bit of everything, thus becoming a true generalist. More importantly in some ways, I got very involved with my residence as a student leader, made friends easily for the first time in my life, did lots of interesting paid and volunteer work, and essentially became who I am today.

I moved to Victoria immediately after graduating in 1995. I currently work at the Inter-Cultural Association as a Volunteer Coordinator, and also oversee our Immigrant Support Groups for women and seniors. I have been very lucky to have work I can't talk about without smiling throughout most of my career, including now!

In my spare time, I have a garden and greenhouse which are producing things quite enthusiastically right now, my husband and I laugh our butts off in ballroom dance classes, and we seem to be able to paddle a tandem canoe without throwing each other overboard. We have a dog and a cat who, predictably, barely tolerate each other. Our house in Sidney is a work in progress, but we're enjoying slowly renovating it ourselves.

Ron Rice

Ron was born and raised in Duncan and is a member of Cowichan Tribes. He started with the BCAAFC in May 1998. His background in hospitality and event planning has served the association well. In 2007 Ron took a 19 month leave of absence to manage Cultural Events & Ceremonies for the Cowichan 2008 North American Indigenous Games. He has also gained prominence within the Aboriginal Friendship Centres movement working to support a number of Friendship Centres in transition throughout BC and in Quebec. Ron has been the President of the Victoria Native Friendship Centre since 2003.

Sari Ringma

Sari was born and raised in a Finnish family in Sooke BC. She attended Camosun College's Criminal Justice Program and decided in her second year to focus her studies on developmental psychology through correspondence at Athabasca University. After meeting her husband in Victoria they moved to several cities with his work including Kelowna, Vancouver, and five years in Winnipeg Manitoba.

Sari has always been passionate about helping guide individuals to recognize their own potential. She has managed several group homes with a variety of different needs and age groups in both Winnipeg, MB and in North Vancouver. Sari is currently employed at Victoria Cool Aid Society as a Housing Administrative Coordinator.

During the last year Sari and her family relocated back to Sooke, BC to raise their two boys and to give them the opportunity to enjoy the beautiful and wild West Coast.

Dibya Shrestha

Dibya Shrestha recently joined Community Based Research Lab in the University of Victoria. She is assessing the challenges, stigma, legal status quo, and the success story associated with the bidders (recyclers) in the context of inclusive waste management. She was previously (2007/2008) involved in Centre for Alternative Wastewater Treatment, Fleming College, Ontario, where she worked in wastewater management project for small communities in Nunavut. This introduced her to the field of community based research. She has a Master of Science degree in Environmental and Resource Management from Brandenburg University of Technology, Germany. She has been involved in research, education and outreach relating to sustainable land and water resource management in Canada, Germany and Nepal. She is also an active volunteer with the United Way, Victoria promoting advocacy, awareness and volunteering on Southern Vancouver Island and mobilizing youth in building strong community through engaged and involved citizens.

Steve Smith

Steve was born in Arcola Saskatchewan in 1960. He spent the next 17 years in various towns in Manitoba and Western Ontario. After moving to Saskatoon in 1976, he graduated from Walter Murray Collegiate in 1978. He was involved in the Canadian Militia from 1976 until 1982. Steve attended Kelsey Institute in Saskatoon in 1980 for the Refrigeration & Air Conditioning apprenticeship program. After working in his trade in Saskatchewan and Alberta, he settled in Calgary in 1983 where he met his future wife to be Wanda. They were married in April 1985 and moved to Victoria July 1, 1986. Steve currently works as Service Manager for a local refrigeration air conditioning company.

In 1996 Steve joined the Saanich Police Reserve force. Now as a Sargeant, he is jointly responsible for the coordination and leadership of 40 plus personnel involved with many of Saanich's public safety programs. This is as much a full time commitement as his regular job.

During his time off, he likes to spend time with his wife, Rudy the minature pincher (6 feet tall and bullet proof) and golfing. He enjoys hiking and has done the Chilkoote Trail, West Coast Trail and most recently the MachuPicchu trail in the spring of 2009.

On a high note, Steve and Wanda will be celebrating their 25th wedding anniversary April 2010 in Maui.

Colina Titus

Colina was born in England and graduated from St Andrew's University where she met her Canadian husband. They moved to St John's enjoying 11 wonderful years on the 'rock'. During this time Colina enjoyed being a 'stay-at-home Mum' with two kids

In 1996, they were transferred to Victoria. A volunteer opportunity at the Garth Homer Society quickly became the introduction to a new career. Twelve years and a number of positions later, Colina is now on the management team of this same organization whose mandate is to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities into the community.

Colina has served 6 years on the board of the Esquimalt Neighbourhood House and is part of a team that serves a free hot breakfast in the downtown on a Saturday.

Colina is an active member in her church, and enjoys cycling, reading, walking her dog and growing fruit and vegetables.

James Wadsworth

- I was born & raised in Victoria
- I have been married for 3 years and I have one 11 month old girl named Samantha
- Growing up I attended school at Craigflower, Shoreline, and Spectrum
- As a youth I participated in baseball, soccer and scouts
- My first job was working for Denny's Restaurant as a service assistant (ceramic engineer) and later on I graduated to line cook
- I earned a BA in Geography from the University of Victoria
- Since graduating I have traveled to Japan, Europe, Turkey and throughout North America
- After graduating I worked in forestry for companies that conducted ecological mapping & forest inventory
- I volunteered as a member of the board of directors for Work streams Employment Society
- I have worked at BC Transit for the last 4 years in the Planning Division, I was also briefly a bus driver