

CFC 2019 All in Conference

On June 5th I travelled to Victoria, BC to participate in the Community Foundation of Canada's "All In" Conference on behalf of CFNS. More than 800 community builders, philanthropists, change makers and partners attended this transformative event.

Over three days, I participated in an exploration of how we can collectively and meaningfully be 'All In' for our communities and for a more equitable and sustainable future. The conference was organized in a way that had sessions targeted to all aspects of an effective community foundation, including building a high performance board; attracting and engaging youth in philanthropic efforts and community activism; utilizing social financing; producing effective vital signs reports; cultivating effective relationships between donors and advisors; and diversity, to name a few.

The conference also took place on the ancestral lands of the Lekwungen people of the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day. As such, there were performances, blessings and an overall theme of respect and appreciation for these people, which was a powerful undercurrent running throughout the whole conference, including being marched in to the first plenary session by a drum ceremony. One of the key learnings that came out of the conference was that we all need to build on the learning and action around truth and reconciliation in Canada.

One thing that stood out to me from all of the amazing learning opportunities was the fact that there was a very large delegation of youth in attendance - something that we did not have from Nova Scotia.

So now I would like to issue a challenge to you, our fund holders, donors and supporters to focus more on youth. They truly are the key to social change for the future, and what became crystal clear during the conference is that we as a community foundation in Nova Scotia, have not done our best job at engaging youth in this province.

There are so many opportunities for youth to not only volunteer their time, but to lead the charge, so let's engage them to do so. Volunteerism will not only be of benefit to the youth on things like post-secondary education application forms, scholarship applications and resumes, but also on helping to make fundamental changes to the communities we live in.

The next CFC Conference will be held in Toronto in 2021, and I think it would be an amazing for Nova Scotia to not only attend with a large delegation of young people, but to also present our province as trailblazers for change.

If you have ideas for engaging youth in your community, please reach out to us - we are all in!

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