

**Name:** Katie McKay-Argyriou

**Title:** Program Manager, Wheatland Regional Library

**Born and lived:** I was born in Calgary but spent my early childhood in the Northwest Territories and the Yukon before moving to Manitoba. My dad was an RCMP officer for 32 years, so that explains the reason for the many, many places I have lived. I attended university at Brandon University in Manitoba where I met my husband, Alex. We moved our family to Saskatchewan in 2011 and have lived in Moose Jaw, Martensville and Saskatoon.

**Early Life:** Living in Canada's far north as a child was an adventure full of wilderness and wide- open spaces. My favourite town we lived in as a child was Dawson City, Yukon. Every summer the town would host Klondike Days and I remember it felt like living inside a museum with everyone in period costume and special events happening throughout the town. My life as a daughter of an RCMP officer who loved to move to new places meant that I grew up meeting lots of new people from all walks of life, cultures and backgrounds. As a child I didn't love the frequent moves but I now appreciate how much I learned from all those experiences and places.

**Professional career and activities:** After graduating with my BA from Brandon University I began working at the Commonwealth Air Training Plan Museum. It was my first job after university and to this day is still my favourite. Working at the museum alongside the WWII veterans was such an amazing experience. One of the initiatives I managed during my time at the museum was the completion of an Oral History Project. We collected oral histories in audio and video format from WWII veterans and their families from all over Canada who had gone through the Commonwealth Air Training Plan. We used their stories and produced an educational video that is still shown at the museum today. I carry the stories of those men and women in my heart always.

Following my time at the museum I began working for the Canadian Red Cross in Community Outreach and Disaster Services. During these years I returned to university to complete a Bachelor Degree in Applied Disaster and Emergency Studies. I worked for the Red Cross in this role until my son was born and then I chose to stay home as a full time Mom for the next 8 years.

When I returned to the workforce, I joined the Martensville Library where I enjoyed working in community engagement and programming again. I created and delivered a variety of programs including preschool story time, Books N Babies, Toddlers Wiggles and Giggles and a Kids Club for school age children. These years of programming experience lead me to my current position as Program Manager with the Wheatland Regional Library.

**Family:** I met my husband Alex when we were both 19 years old and we have been married for 17 years. We have a teenage son, Liam, and our family is completed with our dachshund pup, Haggis the Bruce.

**In my spare time:** Being a mom is 100% my greatest joy, so spending time with my teenage son is the best part of my day. In my spare time I like to workout with my son (although now he says I slow him down!), go for family walks with our dog, read lots of books and bake delicious treats for my family to enjoy. Our family loves to travel, so when it is safe to do so again, we have a long list of places to go! My favourite family vacation so far was our trip to Scotland in 2018, such an amazing country to visit.

**Favourite books:** *Pride & Prejudice* – Jane Austen, *Left Neglected* – Lisa Genova, *Trinity* – Leon Uris, *A Rose for the Crown* – Anne Easter Smith, *Outlander* – Diana Gabaldon

**Most memorable career achievement:** It is so hard to pick one, as I have loved all my jobs and experiences over the years. I do feel very proud of the work I did with the Canadian Red Cross responding to local and provincial disasters. Helping people in a time of stress and crisis is very challenging but incredibly rewarding as well. I also really loved training disaster response volunteers for the Red Cross who would travel to disasters in other countries to provide support and assistance. I was always so amazed to talk with my volunteers upon their return from their international work to hear about how their experiences changed their lives and perspectives on our society.