

ARCTIC FUTURE

The Circumpolar International Internship Newsletter

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In This Issue

- Circumpolar Young Leaders
- Going North to North by Nigel Allan
- Going Blind on the Grind by Ruairaidh Carthew
- Circumpolar Studies Program Fills Void in the North
- Sustainable Development Working Group Meeting
- Arctic Children and Youth Foundation
- Circumpolar Youth Connect

Arctic Resource Links

Arctic Children and Youth Foundation

<http://www.arcticcyf.org/>

Circumpolar Young Leaders Program

<http://www.iisd.org/interns/arctic/>

On Top of the World

<http://www.ookpik.org/index.htm>

Do you want to work for a more sustainable future in the North?

Apply to the Circumpolar Young Leaders Program!

Seven exciting international internship opportunities have just been made available for young people from Finland, Russia and Canada (in Canada, the opportunities are limited to people living in, or originally from, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Yukon, and northern Quebec and Labrador). Participants must be between the ages of 19 and 30.

Placements are in Norway, Finland, the U.S.A, Denmark and, possibly, Greenland, Sweden and Canada.

For further information on the Circumpolar Young Leaders Program, eligibility and application details please visit <http://www.iisd.org/interns/arctic/> or send an e-mail to intern-info@iisd.ca

The application deadline is October 25, 2004, or until all positions have been filled.

The program is funded through the Government of Canada's Career Focus Program, by way of a contribution from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, and supported by the Arctic Council through The Future of Children and Youth. Funding for the Russian and Finnish participants is provided by the Centre for International Mobility in Finland.

Going North to North

By Nigel Allan



I recently had the opportunity to spend five months in Oslo, Norway, as an intern with the WWF Arctic Programme. My internship was part of the Arctic Council International Internship Programme and was coordinated by the

International Institute for Sustainable Development. The experience was professionally and personally rewarding.

At WWF I worked with the Communications Manager and spent much of my time working on their quarterly journal, the *Arctic Bulletin*. I tracked down writers, researched issues, edited articles and wrote. Through this work I learned about the many issues affecting the Arctic environment as well as the different programs and studies initiated to understand and protect this region.

Throughout the internship I met and corresponded with many individuals and organizations working on Arctic issues in each of the northern countries. These included scientists, government officials, non-governmental organizations, indigenous groups and people throughout the WWF network. Having the opportunity to meet so many people around the circumpolar North has really given me a sense of a larger community that exists in this region.

Nowhere was this experience stronger than when I went to the Arctic Council meetings in Selfoss, Iceland, where I talked with people doing very important and interesting work in the Arctic. This trip was supported by the Canadian Embassy in Oslo through the Northern Dimensions Program and the WWF Arctic Programme.

I also spent a considerable amount of time on the re-launch of the program's two Web sites. They were moving their main Web site and their Polar Bear Tracker Web site over to WWF's Panda.org family of sites. This involved a lot of correspon-

ding with the WWF International Web team in Gland, Switzerland. This is where my technical background came in very useful. I was able to take suggestions and material from the Communications Manager and then effectively communicate with the Web team in Gland.

This internship has given me the confidence to start my own business. I am continuing to work for the WWF Arctic Programme as a freelance communications consultant. I have also started work with the Arctic Council Action Plan (ACAP) and the Fraser-Harrison Smart Growth program in British Columbia on their new Web sites. Wherever possible I will be looking for ways to be involved with WWF-Canada and the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) on their work in the Northwest Territories.

I am very grateful to IISD and HRSDC for organizing and funding this internship. Thanks to this experience, I am now able to stay in my hometown of Fort Smith in the Northwest Territories and work on interesting and important international projects. I hope to see the program expand to all Arctic countries and will be looking for ways to promote it to other young people in the Northwest Territories.

Going Blind on the Grind

By Ruairaidh Carthew



My circumpolar internship began in January, five km south of the Arctic Circle, and finished 500 km further north on the banks of the Arctic Ocean. For many Canadians, indeed even many northern Canadians, this would seem a perverse way to willingly spend five

months fresh from university. I was in mild agreement. Within an hour at either locale, however, I was an instant convert espousing the virtues of the billowing mass of gratuitous warmth known more humbly as the Gulf Stream. Fears for weather now thrown aside—along with half of my luggage, of which the clothes were far too warm!—I could throw my energies into the actu-

al internship and the communities that I would come to call home.

I was very fortunate in my internship experience, as I had the pleasure of splitting my stay between two northern Scandinavian cities: Rovaniemi (Finland) and Alta (Norway). The switch in locales was a direct consequence of the work I had been assigned. The organization that I had become a part of, the University of the Arctic, runs various programs to accomplish its central goals of higher education and future sustainability for the circumpolar world. One of the principal programs run by UArctic is a student mobility program called north2north, the aim of which is to expand the horizons of northern undergraduate students by providing them with an international study experience. It is the ultimate hope that the participants will gain a greater appreciation for the North and its people and, in so doing, will want to continue living and contributing there. During my stay with UArctic, the north2north program gained an International Coordination Office in Alta, and I was transferred from the International Secretariat in Rovaniemi to Alta to assist in the transition. Much of my work involved communication among program members, all of whom were enthusiastic and dedicated to the program, and terrific people besides. My fabulous co-workers combined with the great ideals of the north2north program and UArctic, made the work pass by quickly, meaningfully and fondly.

Working with an international organization is an incredible experience, and one that opens up many possibilities through the many contacts that one makes. This was made all the more evident for me when I was asked to take a lead role in organizing an international program meeting for the student mobility program. All told, the planning and preparations took the better part of two months, involved 23 participants from five different circumpolar countries, and was a success. Seeing the process through from start to finish and meeting face to face the numerous people I had been in contact with for so long was rewarding and warming, as I now have a much wider circle of friends and associates—one of whom being a compulsive gift-giving Russian that travels with a suitcase full of chocolates (I love that guy!).

There were innumerable quirks that first struck me in Finland, and then again in Norway, that contrasted to the Canadian lifestyle I was accustomed to. More surprising, though, were the common bonds and similarities shared between the three nations, which were far more evident and made for a ridiculously easy transition into the local community. The greatest things that I will take home from this internship are the widened berth of cultural understanding that has grown within me, a love and appreciation for two foreign lands and a greater understanding of myself as a Canadian. Finding an impartial lens with which to view a different world often has the side effect of turning the glass back onto the looker. As a Canadian this introspection has revealed various lackluster truths about which I had not previously been aware. But with each weakness came a corresponding strength, and my keener awareness of what Canada is as a nation has swelled my heart beyond the capacity I had previously known.

Thanks so much IISD, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, UArctic and Finnmark University College for making this a reality for me. The experiences I have realized will help pave the path I tread and shall always be looked back upon with fondness. Best wishes to all the future interns and, if not, why not? If you're an eligible candidate then apply, it's more than worth it.

Circumpolar Studies Program Fills Void in the North

The Circumpolar Studies program is a new way for students attending any of the University of the Arctic's (UArctic) member institutions to learn about the North, with courses held in the classroom, online, outdoors and around the world. The Circumpolar Studies program gives students the opportunity to learn about the lands, peoples and issues of the circumpolar world and prepares them for advanced study or professional employment in fields as diverse as sustainable resource management, self-government, Arctic engineering and northern tourism.

UArctic is a cooperative network of universities, colleges, and other organizations committed to higher education and research in the North.

Following a two-year pilot phase of the Circumpolar Studies program, their first regular academic semester now has 86 students and six (UARctic) members are now offering the program in their classrooms: University of Lapland (Finland); Bodø Regional University (Norway); Stefansson Arctic Institute (Iceland); Lakehead University (Canada); Yukon College (Canada); and University of Northern British Columbia (Canada).

“What their participation shows is that the Circumpolar Studies program is filling a real void in northern-relevant and accessible programming,” says Greg Poelzer, Chair of the program. “Northern students are excited about the opportunity to learn about the issues that affect their communities, from the perspective of their cultures, and in particular to share that experience with colleagues from around the world.”

For more information on the Circumpolar Studies program, please visit <http://www.uarctic.org/bcs> or contact bcs@uarctic.org

Sustainable Development Working Group Meeting

For the first time in its six years, the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) of the Arctic Council held a stand-alone meeting in Whitehorse, September 14–16. The Arctic Council is a high-level intergovernmental forum established in 1996 to provide a mechanism to address the common concerns and challenges faced by Arctic governments and the people of the Arctic. Established in 1998, the Sustainable Development Working Group is the youngest of the Council’s five working groups. The goal of the sustainable development program of the Arctic Council is to propose and adopt steps to be taken by the Arctic States to advance sustainable development in the Arctic.

The meeting lasted two and half days where there was sufficient time to receive information on existing and new projects and to discuss future work plans and the strategic direction for the working group. Welcoming remarks were made by Yukon’s Minister of Economic Development

Jim Kenyon, and, at a reception on the first evening, Yukon’s Minister of Tourism and Culture, Elaine Taylor, as well as Federal Natural Resources Canada Minister, John Efford, addressed the group. Representatives from the eight Arctic States and four Permanent Participants were in attendance and attended the celebration of the Northwest Territories Gwich’in peoples joining the Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN).

At the reception, Tourism and Culture officials, together with industry and First Nation representatives, gave a presentation on Sustainable Tourism in the Yukon. A presentation on the Yukon Trailmarkers project on the first day gave the group a first-hand account of the Yukon government’s work in collecting social and economic progress indicators and placing them into a framework. The AAC’s presentation on the sustainable development strategy for the Ta’an Kwach’an Council illustrated the challenges facing indigenous people in the North as well as the opportunities available to them.

Resources:

New! The Arctic Children and Youth Foundation

A new non-profit organization, devoted to strengthening efforts to address the issues and needs of Arctic children and youth has been established. The chair of the organization is Mary Simon, Canada's former Circumpolar Ambassador.

The Foundation is reacting to Canadians' desire to see concrete and effective action taken to alleviate the disparities in wealth, capacity and opportunity that exist between young people living in the far North and other Canadian youth. The activities devoted to children and youth include: building capacity; promoting awareness; educating and engaging children and youth in issues related to their well-being; supporting educational youth exchanges and internships; promoting and preserving northern cultures; and assisting the representation of their interests at relevant national and international fora.

In the coming years, a large the focus of the Foundation's work will be on mental health and making sure that the interests of Arctic children and youth are represented and heard.

For further information on the foundation, please contact Valerie Hume at humev@inac.gc.ca

Circumpolar Youth Connect!

Arctic youth now have a forum to share their views and learn more about the Arctic and what it means to be part of this unique corner of the world through the On Top of the World Web site at <http://www.ookpik.org/>

We invite you to the site to discover more about youth in neighbouring circumpolar countries and to explore the opportunities and programs available to the youth of the circumpolar world.

It is an exciting time to be living in the North. Many new programs and initiatives are underway and Arctic Council's Future of Children and Youth in the Arctic (FCYA) is one initiative that is making a difference for Arctic youth.

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The International Institute for Sustainable Development contributes to sustainable development by advancing policy recommendations on international trade and investment, economic policy, climate change, measurement and indicators, and natural resources management. By using Internet communications, we report on international negotiations and broker knowledge gained through collaborative projects with global partners, resulting in more rigorous research, capacity building in developing countries and better dialogue between North and South.

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