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Castlegar, BC

TeckServ Student Internship Supports Rural Community Development

Funding is available to help organizations work with post-secondary students to undertake community-based research in the West Kootenay and Boundary regions. The annual TeckServ Internship, now in its fifth year, provides support for a Selkirk College student to engage in local community service through an applied research project designed to offer ongoing benefit to the community.

Students and community-based organizations are invited to submit proposals that address a need for applied research to support initiatives intended to create positive rural development outcomes at the local or regional scale. Submissions from organizations do not need to have a student identified, but submissions from students must be linked to a sponsoring community organization. Proposals must be submitted by March 6th and the successful applicant will be notified by mid-March.

The program is funded by Teck Trail Operations and offers up to \$10,000 in financial assistance to cover student wages, supplies and travel costs. Additional support is provided by the Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute (RDI), at Selkirk College, in the form of research advisory services, office space and student supervision (if necessary), dissemination of research results, and help in matching organizational needs with student researchers.

Last year's TeckServ internship allowed Dana Burgess, a student in Selkirk College's Social Service Worker program, to work with the Nelson CARES Society and its Age Friendly Community initiative. The project researched isolation in rural seniors and uncovered issues related to mobility, socialization, transportation, and access to health and information services.

"In addition to sharpening her applied research skills, Dana was able to work one on one with vulnerable seniors and community organizations," says Dr. Terri MacDonald, Regional Innovation Chair at the RDI. "Dana has subsequently secured employment with the sponsoring agency which is an added bonus."

The TeckServ funding helps students gain valuable workplace experience and put their education to use for the benefit of their community. The program is part of Teck Trail Operations' ongoing commitment to Selkirk College, its students and the communities within the region.

To learn more about the program and how to apply, visit selkirk.ca/teckserv.

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The Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute, at Selkirk College, is a regional research centre with a mandate to support informed decision-making by Columbia Basin-Boundary communities through the provision of information, applied research and related outreach and extension support.