

Engineering a better world

CAMERON MITCHELL
THE BRUNSWICKAN

with them at a much closer level.”

Ryan Brideau was one of the students who volunteered overseas, and he said his experience was phenomenal. Brideau was involved with the Junior Fellowship program, and he helped to bring educational computer programs into the country of Ghana. However, there is much more to the placement programs than merely an exotic adventure.

“There are three aspects to the placements in total,” explained Brideau. “There is the overseas aspect, the in Canada aspect, and a lot of focus on the personal growth aspect as well.”

“Leading up to going overseas, I did about six months of in-country training,” continued Brideau. “I did what we call foundation learning to get myself prepared with a base of knowledge and an idea of what I’m going into. Following that we do about a week of training in Toronto, morning to night for about seven days. And following that is my experience overseas.”

The overseas experience focuses on having an on-ground impact. Technology can drive change, and the EWB is aware of this. However, technological change is pointless unless it is incorporated into each community’s social, cultural, economic and political context. The EWB has struggled with this balancing act in the past, and today they are much more involved in the communities.

“When EWB first started, it was very much of an engineering focus where they would design programs in Canada and then try and implement them overseas,” continued Brideau. “But right off the bat you get the idea that that wouldn’t be the most effective method. So they learned very quickly that that wasn’t having a long lasting impact and that they needed to change their approach.”

“Over the years the program has changed from a much more engineering focus, and shifted towards what we call a holistic approach,” he explained.

Today, EWB volunteers work with local politicians and businesses to stimulate growth in impoverished regions. The teaching aspect of the experience is very important, but often it is the volunteers that are doing the learning.

The personal growth aspect of the program is crucial for the program. The EWB works to build capable leaders with their overseas volunteers, and it is important for the volunteers to spread the stories of their trip.

“The overseas portion of my placement started in late April (of this year) and it went until the very end of August,” elaborated Brideau. “I essentially went to an area in northeastern Ghana called Saboba . . . where most of the buildings were built with mud brick, that is, if you ask me, a very sustainable way to build homes.”

“I lived with a Ghanine family there in a complex with about nine other people, and I went to work each day . . . I went to a non-governmental organization called the Integrated Development Center.”

He worked hard to gather information about the country of Ghana, and the government programs in the region. He spent time developing a computer program to help teach teachers in the area. The idea is that if you teach the teachers, then they can go on to train hundreds of others in the area. But as Brideau found out, it is often the volunteers who are doing the learning.

“In the end I feel like I learned a lot more from the experience than I really contributed,” said Brideau, and that’s what the EWB is all about.

Dressed in their fancy suits and classy evening dresses, it would have been hard to guess that some of the students at last week’s Engineers Without Borders wine and cheese event had once spent time trudging through some of the world’s most impoverished nations in an effort to make things better.

Since the year 2000, Engineers Without Borders (EWB) has been promoting human development through access to technology. Last week’s wine and cheese event was a time for the people involved in EWB to meet and exchange stories. It was also a time for some of the students to meet the professionals in the community, and to ensure that both the student and professional communities are working in the best interests of the EWB.

“At EWB we do a lot of different kinds of outreach,” explained UNB student and EWB member, Ryan Brideau. “So the idea behind the wine and cheese was for us to have an opportunity to meet and mingle with both the professionals in Fredericton, the professionals at the university, and with EWB as a chapter.”

“Sometimes there is a big disconnect between what we do at a chapter level, and what people think we do,” continued Brideau, a physics major at UNB. “So this gives us an opportunity to bring professionals in, and bring people in that we normally wouldn’t be talking to, and allow us to interact

Woodsmen wow Scouts

KEITH BARR
SUBMITTED TO THE BRUNS



Sandy Chase / The Brunswickan

“Go Sophie, Go! Go Sophie, Go!” The shouts and cheers of the Scouts echoed across the Yoho Scout Reserve outside of Fredericton on Saturday as they cheered for their favourite members of the UNB Woodsmen Team. The dull, dreary weather wasn’t going to dampen the enthusiasm of these young Scouts.

Nine members of the UNB Woodsmen Team and two students from the Let’s Talk Science program were at the Yoho Scout Reserve bright and early Saturday morning to lead the Scouts through various forestry related activities. It was the western New Brunswick, or Riverton Area’s annual Forestry Camp for Scouts. The Scouts were divided into three groups and rotated through four activities in the morning. They were given a chance to practice their skill as sawyers as they learned how to use a cross-cut saw at the sawing and tree cookie station. The members of the Woodsmen Team gave them pointers on how to care for a saw and how to use one properly. Then they looked at a couple of tree cookies and discussed what they could learn from the tree rings on the cookies.

Skulls and pelts were on display at the second station. The UNB students led the Scouts in a discussion about fish and wildlife management and played a short game to drive home some of the points they had discussed. At the third station, the Scouts learned the difference between hardwoods and softwoods and were shown how to measure the height and diameter of a couple

of trees at the Scout camp. The Scouts at the fourth station drew a sketch map of their campsite, after learning how to use a compass to orient their map properly.

At noon, the Woodsmen Team and the LTS students were invited down to the main Scout Lodge where six members of the 1st Riverton Rover Crew, also known as the UNB/STU Rovers, had prepared lunch.

After lunch the members of the Woodsmen Team put on a number of demonstrations of chopping, sawing and fire lighting. For many of the Scouts and their leaders this was the highlight of the weekend. The Woodsmen Team wowed the Scouts with their speed in chopping through a block of wood while standing on it, in slicing through a log with a chain saw and in starting a fire and getting a can of water to boil. The Team made a lot of new fans and may have a few Scouts thinking about joining the team when they get older and start university.

After the demonstrations, the Scouts went back to their groups and visited three more stations. At the first station in the afternoon the Woodsmen Team showed the Scouts how to use a peavey and helped them compete in a log

rolling competition. The Scouts learned quickly that it isn’t as easy as it looks to keep the log rolling in a straight line when you only have a peavey to work with.

One of the more popular stations was the fire lighting competition. It was no easy task to gather “dry” material and get a fire started on such a damp and drizzly day but the Scouts somehow managed. The last activity of the afternoon was a nature scavenger hunt that had the Scouts searching the Yoho Scout Reserve for natural items on a long list.

At 4:30 p.m. the Scouts gathered at the Interpretive Centre and thanked the Woodsmen Team and Let’s Talk Science students for coming out to spend the day with them.

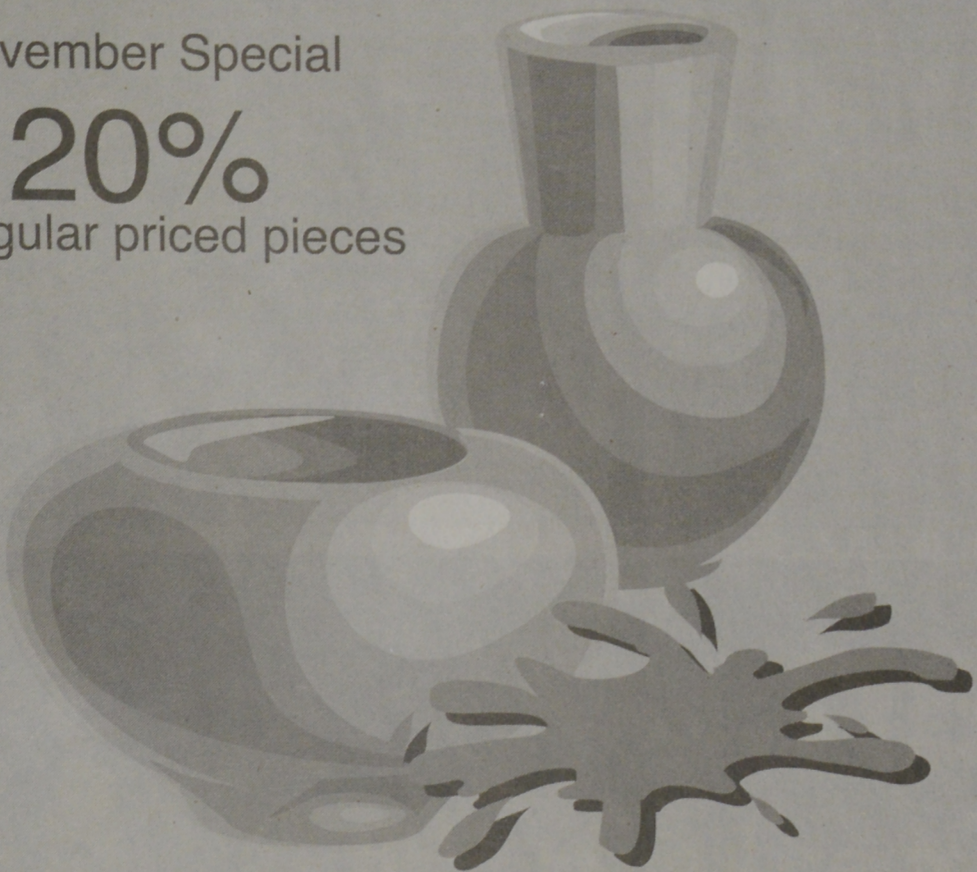
After supper, another group of UNB and STU students, the 1st Riverton Rover Crew, organized a wide game for the Scouts that had them roaming around in the dark wet woods for an hour, pretending to be wild animals looking for food and water while avoiding being eaten by other animals or being captured by evil humans. The Rovers ended the evening by organizing a traditional Scouting campfire for the Scouts and their leaders.



Student Discount

November Special

20%
off regular priced pieces

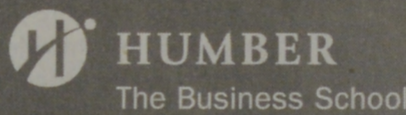


620 Queen Street

474-8003

claycafefredericton.com

Mon-Thurs 11-9; Fri 11-9:30; Sat 10-9; Sun 12-5



I earned my undergraduate degree.
Now, I want a rewarding career*

*not just a job

In less than one year, Humber postgraduate programs will help you launch your career in:

- Financial Planning
- Human Resources
- International Development
- International Marketing
- Marketing Management
- Public Administration

Building on your university degree, Humber’s postgraduate programs offer a concentrated curriculum, career-focused courses and practical field placements. You’ll gain the real-world experience and skills that employers value most.

Get the career you want – apply now.

business.humber.ca