



GLN GLOBAL LEADERSHIP NETWORK

Feature Stories of the Alumni of the Quebec-Labrador Foundation

Adrienne Blattel

Montréal, Québec

Northern Gulf Culture and Heritage Program, 2001
Heritage Rivers, 2002

Associate Director, Culture and Heritage, 2002-2010
QLF Alumni Congress, Budapest, Hungary, 2006

Driven by her passion for nature, culture, and language, Adrienne Blattel's goal to expose Montréal citizens and tourists to traditional outdoor activities became a reality in 2010. With the support of the Milton Park Recreation Association (ARMP), Adrienne created the year-round Intercultural Outdoor Recreation Program.

As Program Coordinator and Guide, she leads activities such as snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, ice-skating, canoeing, kayaking, camping, biking, and hiking. Adrienne believes, "If you want to do something and be good at it and be contributing in a meaningful way, you have to be having fun or else it's just not going to work."

In 1998, Adrienne graduated from McMaster University with a Bachelor of Arts and Science. Two years later, she attended York University where she earned a Master's in Environmental Studies and Heritage Interpretation. During her studies at York, Dr. Candace Cochrane of QLF hired Adrienne to work as an Intern on the Northern Gulf Culture and Heritage Program in Conche, Newfoundland. Later Adrienne conducted research in France on behalf of QLF, which became the basis of her Master's thesis. Following her studies, she began working in QLF's Montréal office in 2002, collaborating with Dr. Cochrane on both the Northern Gulf Culture and Heritage Program and the Heritage Rivers Program.

Adrienne soon became QLF's Associate Director, Culture and Heritage, traveling to Newfoundland and Labrador and the Québec Lower North Shore to oversee projects. She recalls organizing community festivals, coordinating museum exhibits, and arranging an exchange between two museums in France and the French Shore Historical Society in Conche, Newfoundland. This last endeavor opened a gateway for the museums to share their similar histories across the Atlantic. In addition, Adrienne contributed to QLF's Atlas Richelieu-Missisquoi River Project, giving her the ability to practice heritage-mapping with a focus on Anglophone heritage.



Simone Hanchet (left) and Adrienne Blattel greet guests at an opening banquet, QLF Alumni Congress, Budapest, Hungary, 2006 PHOTO BY KATHRYN OLMSTEAD



Parliament, Danube River, Budapest, Hungary, site of the 2006 QLF Alumni Congress PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA

During her time with QLF, Adrienne participated in several QLF International Programs. In 2006, she attended the first *Alumni Congress* in Budapest, and she later participated in International Exchanges throughout Central Europe. Her most memorable travel experience is a three-month exchange program that took place in Montenegro, to share the stewardship of natural and cultural heritage. The program was jointly organized by QLF and a partner organization dedicated to cultural heritage and sustainable spatial development called EXPEDITIO. She remembers learning the regional Serbian dialect by interacting with locals at a hiking club during this exchange, as well as connecting with other newcomers who were also learning the language through outdoor recreational activities.

After this experience with QLF, Adrienne returned home to Canada with the idea to unite newcomers and Canadians through cultural heritage and recreational activities. Her vision fit comfortably within Milton Park Recreation Association's impressive range of programs, and she was able to launch her program's first camping trip through the organization in August 2010. Adrienne considers her work through the Intercultural Outdoor Recreation Program as her dream job, because it allows her to remove people from their usual contexts and bring them together through leisure and recreation. She recalls how a participant of one of her winter

programs shed tears at the sight of snowflakes for the first time. Adrienne saw how exchanges can be transformational experiences.

Adrienne's time at QLF helped develop her passion for intercultural exchange and taught her the value of interpersonal connections. One illustrative experience happened early on in Adrienne's QLF career, while she was working on the St. Paul's River, on the Québec Lower North Shore. QLF Alumnus Garland Nadeau invited Adrienne to join him on a boat ride. He gave her an enthusiastic tour of the nearby islands, explaining the area's diverse archaeological history. Garland's passion for both his work and his homeland left an impression on Adrienne. "It was a great connection to make," she reflects. "It led me to the idea of following things that really get you excited. [The] whole theme [of my career] may have started there in some way."

Adrienne's passion led her throughout her QLF career and now guides her vision to encourage multiculturalism within her Intercultural Outdoor Recreation Program.



Adrienne Blattel (left) and Dr. Candace Cochrane, QLF's former Director, Northern Gulf Culture and Heritage Program, Whiteley Museum, St. Paul's River, Québec Lower North Shore PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF CANDACE COCHRANE