

INNOVATIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS

FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

MUN Mentors and Culture to Community
Welcoming Programs For International Students

INTERNATIONALIZATION OFFICE (IO)
MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY – St. John's, NL
Valeri Pilgrim, New Arrivals / Tax / Housing Coordinator
vpilgrim@mun.ca



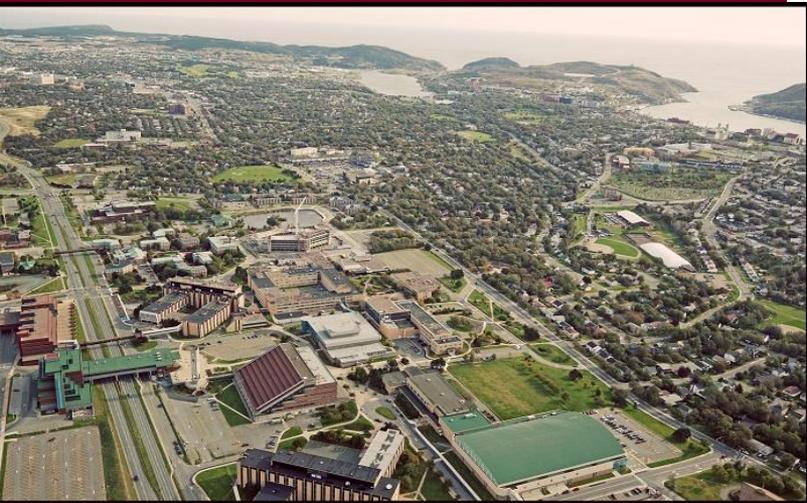
My Story...



- **Kablunangâjuk**
- **Raised in Nunainjuk, Nunatsiavut**
AKA: Nain, Labrador
Remote sub-Arctic
- **So remote women are flown**
371 km south of Nain to give birth
- **Educated in New Brunswick - B.A.**
Oslo, Norway - M.Phil. - Interdisciplinary



The IO @ MUN



- **Nearly 3000 international students**
- **Immigration, health, housing, tax, families, career, transitions**
- **Educational outreach, exchange programs, counselling**

MUN Mentors



- **Coordinated by Transitions Coordinator & run by 2 Senior Volunteer Mentors**
- **New students (mentees) are matched with MUN mentors prior to arrival**
- **Winter 2018: 29 Mentors & 32 Mentees**
- **Engagement in activities once per month with significant NL & Canadian learning experiences while at the same time meeting and learning from students from all over the world**

MUN Mentors Photos

Curling &
Karaoke Dance
Night



MUN Mentors Photos

Newfoundland
culture (proud
fisherfolk)

&

Professionals to
show international
students to learn
various dance
routines



Culture To Community (C2C)



- **Funded by IRCC**
- **A chance for international students to share their culture with schools in remote areas of NL**
- **Cross-Cultural learning experiences**
- **Engagement in activities with significant cultural context in a multi-cultural setting**

Nain Community Visit

International Students:

Satria - Indonesia
Deniz - Turkey
Mohammad -
Morocco



C2C Photos

Satria, Valeri & Mohammad in Nain
Minus 30 degrees in late fall, 2015

Photo credit: Deniz Sariguzel



C2C Photos

Deniz, Mohammad & Satria
With 2 kids from Nain

Photo credit: Deniz Sariguzel



C2C Photos

@ Jens Haven
Memorial School in
Nain, Labrador

Mohammad and Deniz

Learning in *Illusivut Class – Arts and Crafts*



Deniz & Satria

*Illusivut Class –
Arts and Crafts*



C2C Photos @ Jens Haven Memorial School in Nain, Labrador

*Northern Games Popular
among Inuit in the North*

*The Leg Wrestle
The Owl Hop
One foot high kick*



C2C Photos @ Jens Haven Memorial School in Nain, Labrador

*International Students
Teaching About their
Cultures*

Mohammad teaching
children from Nain how to
wrap a shesh & Satria
teaching the geography of
Indonesia



Satria

From Indonesia...
C2C participant

Completed his BBA @
MUN

Works for the Marine
Institute in St. John's
within the International
Office



My experience in Nain, Labrador, was one of the best volunteering opportunities I have taken part-in during my undergrad studies. I learned so much from my interactions in the classrooms and out, about the cultures, community, and way of life. Learning from one another was my initial goal going in, and I received that and much more. This is why Culture to Community was a great program linking and connecting different people from different parts of the globe, it provides a space to experience hands-on learning on cultural exchanges that no social media platform can provide!

Satria Kusuma

Deniz

from Turkey...
C2C participant ...

Completed his M.ED.
@ MUN

Took a teaching position
in Natuashish, on the
north coast of Labrador
in 2017.

Visiting Nain was an experience unlike any other. I believe it changed my life entirely

It was my first trip to northern Canada, first trip to an Aboriginal community, and my first encounter with Aboriginal people.

I was very excited about this trip, and at the same time I was not sure whether I will be welcomed, or not. All my concerns disappeared when I saw Sean (former Minister of Culture, Recreation and Tourism of Nunatsiavut Government) with a warm smile on his face meeting us at Nain airstrip. I knew at that moment that we will be well taken care of.

Three years after my visit to Nain, I started working as a math teacher in Natuashish, a neighbouring First Nations community next to Nain. **I was also very welcomed here.** People are curious to know about me, and more curious to know more when we share more of our culture, customs and language with laughter. I experienced the same during my 3 days visit to Nain. **A warm smile on a face is the best ice-breaker in this harsh and cold environment. The key point is spending more time with local people, and trying to be a part of the community and the land. Nature is pretty much untouched here, and being a part of the land is the major part of the living experience and learning up North. Natuashish is not only the place where I teach, but also the place where I live and learn now."**

Deniz Sariguzel

Math Teacher at Mushuau Innu Natuashish School

Deniz learning to pitch an Innu tent near Natuashish with local community members, winter 2018



Deniz near the Innu Community of Natuashish in Northern Labrador, late summer 2017

○ **KEY FACTORS**

STUDENT VOLUNTEERING

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

IMMERSING STUDENTS IN LIFE EXPERIENCE / CROSS CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

OPENING DOORS & MAKING CONNECTIONS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

BUILDING ALLIES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY & BUILDING TRUST / RELATIONSHIPS

MENTORING

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

QUESTIONS?

COMMENTS?

