

# Northern Medical Programs Trust

A PARTNERSHIP OF NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA COMMUNITIES AND UNBC

**UNBC** UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

## 2022 Highlights

HOUSTON  
SECONDARY  
SCHOOL



2022 Healthcare Travelling Roadshow student team (Bulkley Nechako region)

# Shadowing highlights rural rewards

Dr. Adrienne Stedford has come full circle! The \*UBC Northern Medical Program (NMP) grad is helping to welcome current students to Williams Lake, together with local colleagues, as part of the NMP's weekend shadowing program.

The program provides interested first- and second-year NMP students with an opportunity to visit a small town in the north to learn more about rural medicine first-hand from local physicians. Participating communities include Mackenzie, Smithers, Valemount, Vanderhoof and Williams Lake.

“It’s a great way to get some early exposure to clinical medicine, and it also puts rural medicine on the radar as a desirable and rewarding career”

“My weekend shadowing experience as a medical student left a lasting impression on me that eventually led me back to working rurally,” says Adrienne, a NMP Class of 2018 graduate. “It’s a great way to get some early exposure to clinical medicine, and it also puts rural medicine on the radar as a desirable and rewarding career for students to consider at an early stage.

“Even for those who end up working in urban centres, I hope their time rurally helps them have a better understanding of the challenges their rural patients face.”

Shadowing can include a range of experiences, such as family medicine, in-patient care, emergency medicine and obstetrics.

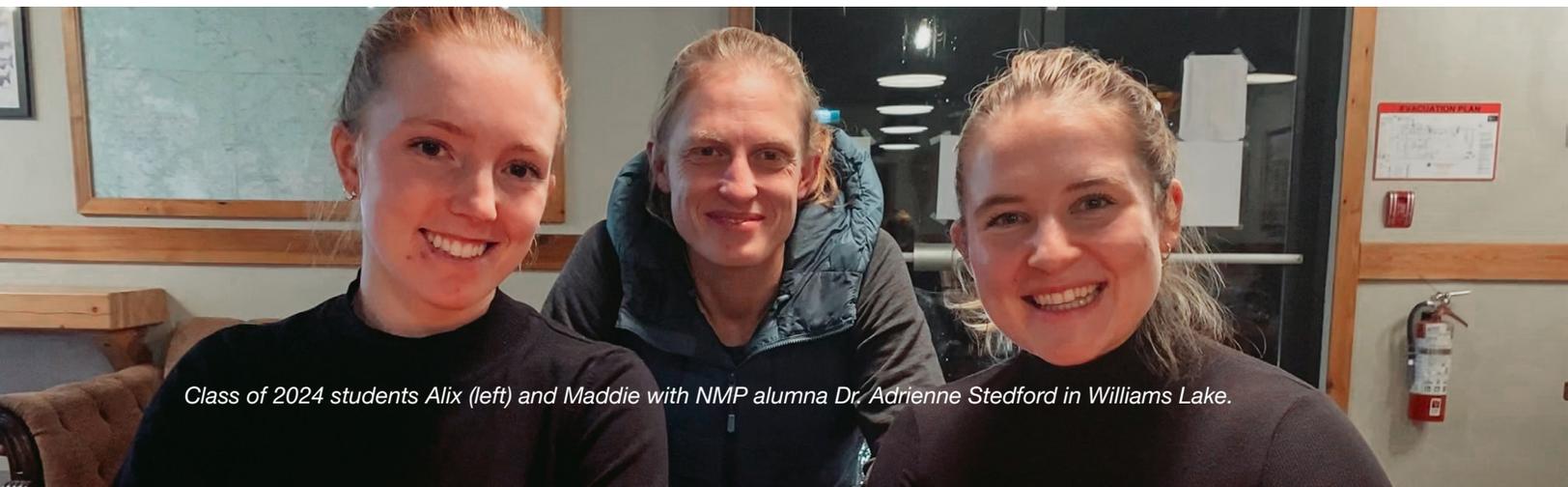
“I look forward to showcasing how fun and interesting rural medicine is, as well as what a fantastic lifestyle a career in rural medicine can offer. Hopefully students walk away from the experience understanding just how broad the scope of rural medicine is and the challenges that are unique to rural populations, such as resource limitations and transport considerations. Rural physicians are in need across the country and I hope to show students how fulfilling it is to build a career somewhere that your skills are truly appreciated.”

Funded through the Northern Medical Programs Trust, weekend shadowing visits take place in the spring and fall.

*\*The NMP is a distributed site of UBC's Faculty of Medicine MD Undergraduate Program, delivered in partnership with UNBC (hosted by the Division of Medical Sciences).*



Maddie (left) and Alix practice some skills during their shadowing time.



Class of 2024 students Alix (left) and Maddie with NMP alumna Dr. Adrienne Stedford in Williams Lake.

# Immersed learning in Chetwynd

*Family Nurse Practitioner student Suzanne Buchanan spent six weeks in the Chetwynd area for a clinical practicum. Suzanne, who grew up partly in Fort St. John, has had the privilege to work with many Indigenous and Inuit populations as a registered nurse and hopes to continue rural practice with an Indigenous health focus after completing her master's program.*

## **What did you enjoy most about your placement in Chetwynd?**

The best thing about being in Chetwynd is that the clinic was busy with a diverse number of cases and learning experiences. The physicians were great at pointing out learning opportunities and being inclusive for student learning. And the town itself has a great recreational centre, many walking paths, and is not far from lakes that offer hiking trails.



*Nature up close! A snapshot from Suzanne of a deer relaxing outside one of the clinic windows.*

## **What was a key learning moment for you during this placement?**

There was a tough patient case we were working on to figure out what would be the best patient pathway. I was really impressed at how the interdisciplinary team worked together to ensure the patient had the best care plan possible. The physicians were great consultants and the nurses were very supportive and knowledgeable. We are taught about interdisciplinary approach throughout the program, but it was so nice to see it working in real time.

## **What drew you to becoming a family nurse practitioner?**

I have been fortunate enough to be able to work up in the high arctic in both Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. To be in these remote communities, where there are limited resources and also increased health disparities, was what motivated me to become a nurse practitioner. Being a nurse practitioner is not about a title for me. It is about the ability to continue to do what I enjoy doing with an increased knowledge base that allows me to be more effective. I want to continue to work in rural health and help decrease health disparities in rural areas.



*Suzanne Buchanan in front of the health clinic sign in Chetwynd.*

# Paving the road for health careers

The Healthcare Travelling Roadshow, an annual tradition each spring at northern B.C. high schools, was on the road again in May after a two-year Covid-19 hiatus!

Led by UBC Northern Medical Program (NMP) students, the Roadshow visits different schools in the region every year to help highlight a range of health careers to local students, through hands-on demonstrations by a team of post-secondary students training in areas such as dental hygiene, dietetics, kinesiology, medicine, midwifery, nursing, occupational therapy, pharmacy, and physical therapy.



*Una, a University of British Columbia Dietetics student, connects with Houston Secondary students.*

In 2022, the Roadshow travelled to the Bulkley Nechako region (Hazelton, Houston, Francois Lake, Grassy Plains, Burns Lake, Fraser Lake), and the Northeast (Fort St. John, Dawson Creek, Tumbler Ridge).

“It was a great opportunity to discuss the nursing knowledge and skills that I have learned with high school students in rural communities,” said Kai Kim, a final-year UNBC nursing student who participated in the Northeast trip. “During the Roadshow, I learned that many students did not know how nurses could specialize in specific fields and work in diverse areas. It was also a valuable experience to reinforce my nursing knowledge and broaden my views on rural nursing.”

In addition to promoting health careers, the Roadshow showcases rural practice as an option for the travelling students and provides an interdisciplinary experience for the group.

Founded in 2010 by the NMP’s Dr. Sean Maurice, the Roadshow is supported by the Northern Medical Programs Trust, UNBC, UBC Faculty of Medicine, and the Rural Education Action Plan.



*UNBC nursing student Kai at North Peace Secondary in Fort St. John.*

**Thank you for supporting health care education at UNBC and helping students with opportunities to learn more about rural practice and health service in the North.**