

## BCMOS On-Site Interviews Pt.1 | Discover Stories Episode 58

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### **Noah Stolte** 1:05

Hello. Welcome to another episode of Re-Imagine Radio. I'm Noah Stolte, the VAMS studio assistant, and today I'm taking a trip to the BCMOS paddling centre to do some interviews. We'll talk to some clients, some staff members and some volunteers about what they do here and some good experiences they've had. Hope you enjoy the conversations. First up we have Theo. Hi Theo, why don't you tell me just a little bit about yourself?

### **Theo** 1:33

yourself? Hello, I'm a grade 12 student going to Van tech. I am interested in soccer. I like watching—or football, if that's what you call it—but I like watching it. I'm interested in the Premier League. The team I follow the most is Chelsea, and I enjoy playing it as well, but I'm more of a watcher than a player. I'd say.

### **Noah Stolte** 1:57

Nice, awesome. And you're volunteering here with BCMOS. How long have you done that for?

### **Theo** 2:03

I have been doing it for around two years. This is my second year, and I think just in general, it's been a very good opportunity and experience for me.

### **Noah Stolte** 2:14

That's great. Why did you want to get involved? Do you have some history with paddling? Or how did you find out about this?

### **Theo** 2:22

I have a sort of history with paddling. I go kayaking every so often, around a few times every year at least. I found out about this one through the sailing volunteering ASABC. I did that one once, and then found out about this one. It's much closer to where I live and aligns more with what I'm interested in. And I just thought it would be a fabulous opportunity to work with different kinds of people and meet new people.

**Noah Stolte 2:46**

That's awesome, sweet. What kind of things do you do here as a volunteer?

**Theo 2:50**

As a volunteer, I will help launch the clients and bring them back in, I'll greet the clients, clean different things and just general housekeeping chores, and that's pretty much it. Yeah.

**Noah Stolte 3:05**

Awesome. Sounds like that's probably really helpful to the people who work here. And then last question here, keeping this short and sweet, what's your favorite part about helping out here?

**Theo 3:15**

I think my favorite part, especially this second year, is just seeing and talking with all the different clients and caretakers and all the different people that are here, and especially this year, where I recognize more people, and I can have better and deeper conversations with a lot of people. And I think that's a really interesting thing to do, especially since I'm not the most social person. So I think it gives me a great opportunity to just talk with a lot of different people.

**Noah Stolte 3:41**

Awesome. That sounds like a really great reason to come out here, just a little bit of community. Alright, thanks for talking me today, and hope you have a good school year coming up.

**Theo 3:53**

Thank you.

**Noah Stolte 3:57**

I am interviewing Alex, staff member here at BCMOS. Hi, Alex, maybe could you tell us a little bit about yourself?

**Alex 4:07**

Hi, yeah. My name is Alex. I am, this is my first year as a paddle staff here with BCMOS. And I am a, I'm going into my fourth and final year in university for Kinesiology. Yeah.

**Noah Stolte 4:23**

Awesome. What kind of what are your interests? What do you what do you do for a hobby?

**Alex 4:28**

I really like being out on the waters. So I do a lot of paddle sports, nothing competitive, just recreationally. I like to be out on the water, even swimming. Just, yeah, anything outdoors and in the waters I'm down for.

**Noah Stolte 4:44**

That's awesome. Is that sort of how you became involved with BCMOS? Where did you first hear about it?

**Alex 4:49**

Yeah, so I used to do dragon boating down here at Creekside Community Centre, and I would see BCMOS paddling operate pretty much everyday I'm at practice, so I just kind of got familiarized with them through that. And I started out intending to volunteer, and then just kind of was offered the opportunity and came down as a staff instead for this year.

**Noah Stolte 5:16**

That's awesome. Can you describe, sort of like, what your day to day is working here at the centre?

**Alex 5:23**

Yeah, every day, I think it's, it's the same, but also different. You meet a lot of different clients. So typically a day would start with us coming down, cleaning the docks from geese poop, and then the first client comes in, and then, you know, it's just a lot of paddling, a lot of conversations with the clients and just a good time in general. And if there's any downtime, it's just us chilling, like me and my coworkers chilling.

**Noah Stolte 5:50**

That's great. Is, like, the weather a pretty big factor working at the paddling centre?

**Alex 5:55**

I think at the beginning it was. So for me, as a staff, it was pretty tiring being out in the sun every day, and then as the season kind of progressed, I think I kind of just got used to the heat, so the weather itself isn't too bad, and I think it kind of just adds to what makes the job so great, just being out in the sun and being able to enjoy, like, sometimes it's breezy as well, so it kind of takes away from the heat. So, it's just, like, a good environment, I think.

**Noah Stolte 6:25**

That's awesome. And it's a beautiful spot as well. For those of you don't know, we're right looking straight at Science World, we got BC Place over there. It's very beautiful. Alright, what's your favorite, do you have, like, a favorite memory or, like, a specific thing that you enjoy doing here the most?

**Alex 6:44**

Probably just talking to people, whether it's my coworkers or, you know, volunteers or the clients. Just I'm not a very social person. I think so this working this job, really took me out of my comfort zone and just having conversations all day. It was like it. I think it helped me grow a lot in my confidence, and just talking to people and obviously just meeting all these awesome people is a really good time.

**Noah Stolte 7:13**

Oh, that's awesome. Okay, what are the, if you don't mind me asking, what are your their plans for the rest of the year after the paddling season ends? Which is, it's drawing to a close, so.

**Alex 7:23**

Yeah, so I'm just going back to school again. I'm going back for my last year of university, for my undergrad, and then, yeah, hopefully just work, go to class, and going forward, I think this job was an amazing opportunity for what I want to do in the future. After I finished my undergrad, I hope to pursue a career in physiotherapy, and I hope to work with people with spinal cord injuries in the future.

**Noah Stolte 7:55**

That's awesome. Thanks so much for talking to me, Alex.

**Alex 7:57**

Yeah, thank you so much for the interview and speaking with me as well. Great.

**Noah Stolte 8:05**

I'm here now with Charlotte, also a staff member here at the paddling centre. Hello Charlotte. Thanks for speaking with me. Could you tell us a little bit about yourself?

**Charlotte** 8:16

Yeah. So this is my fourth summer at BCMOS. I started just after my first year. I'm studying at UBC, I'm studying kinesiology, and I'm currently going to start my fifth year in a few days after the season ends.

**Noah Stolte** 8:31

Oh, that's awesome. Four years is a long time. That's great. How did you start with BCMOS? How did you find out about it? What made you want to start?

**Charlotte** 8:41

So I went to a career day at UBC, and I saw a booth, and I'm pretty sure hiking caught my eye. And I saw that there was adapted hiking and paddling and sailing. And I've grown up going out on the water from the North Shore, so I'm constantly around the mountains in the water, so I thought this would be a great opportunity for me to combine my love for outdoor activities and water sports, and then being able to help out people with disabilities. So I interviewed right when COVID hit, and my first few months were mainly online and remote. And then we started up in in in July of 2020, and it was kind of an experience to be starting at a new position and during COVID and navigating things with the pandemic. But it was just it was so exciting, and I loved it so much. I kept coming back year after year.

**Noah Stolte** 9:33

Awesome. Did you end up doing hiking as well as paddling then?

**Charlotte** 9:36

Yeah, so this summer, I was lucky enough to do hiking. I live pretty close to UBC, so it was a short commute, and I love Pacific Spirit Park. It was great to just go for walks around there. And then I got to go out on a couple destination hikes. So we did Dog Mountain at Seymour, which is a it was a challenge, but it was really, really exciting to take the clients out and explore more of the North Shore Mountains.

**Noah Stolte** 9:59

Yeah. Awesome. So what kind of things do you do working here with BCMOS at the paddling centre? What are your day to day jobs?

**Charlotte** 10:08

Yeah, so we come down in the morning, where we're usually cleaning off the dock from some some presents left by the local birds around here, and then we just get set up for the day. So we set up the paddle boards and get the kayaks out, and if there's no volunteers, then the staff, get to go out paddling with the clients, which is always fun. It's such a nice environment down here. It's very calm and protected, so the water is usually great to go out on. And then we're also doing administrative work, so responding to emails, phone calls, and this summer, we've had a lot more events than in past summers, so we also do prep for that. So organizing volunteers to come out and kind of matching them up with certain clients, coordinating with other programs, and other staff and other organizations to come out and and bring as many clients down onto the water.

**Noah Stolte** 11:03

Cool. So you said events is that sort of just, like, big groups of people, kind of seeing what you're doing around here?

**Charlotte** 11:11

Yeah, so one of our known ones is Kids Day, and that's also done at hiking and sailing, and we had three this summer, and it's a day dedicated to kids with disabilities, and we we book it off. We get three kids, usually out on the hour, and we take them kayaking and paddle boarding. It's very social. It's very fun. We usually have themes, so this year we've done SpongeBob, Moana and pirates, and we've got coloring for the kids and snacks and drinks. And it's a great time just on land and not on the water, and it's a it's a different energy. It feels like a like a summer camp.

**Noah Stolte** 11:47

No, it sounds super fun. All right, do you have like a favorite memory from this summer working with BCMOS?

**Charlotte** 11:53

I don't think I can speak to just one memory, but I love seeing all the returning clients, and I think just some of my more fond memories, are having really great chats with them out on the water, hearing what they're up to in life, and how sometimes that inspires me and then what I want to do after I finish my undergrad. I've gotten a job opportunity from here, I've started working with a client with a disability, and it's been great because I've had the chance to explore the other societies under the Disability Foundation, so I've gone with her to sailing and hiking and with VAMS, with you guys. So I think that's a great memory, because I've gotten to explore more of what the foundation does. And that's just been

really great to see how it impacts members in the community. And it's very rewarding and it's very exciting at same time.

**Noah Stolte** 12:41

That's great. Okay, and then so just finishing up the paddling season is coming to an end, I think in the next few days, is it? Yeah. Okay. So what are the your plans for the rest of the year, be it school or another job?

**Charlotte** 12:54

Yeah, so finishing up my undergrad this year is my main goal. And then after that, I'm thinking of applying for my master's in occupational therapy, got a few coworkers here who are off doing that, and I'm happy to follow in their footsteps, hopefully, so whether that takes me to Canada or down to Australia, New Zealand, open to traveling abroad. So we'll see where that takes me, and hopefully I'm back in Vancouver volunteering next summer at BCMOS as well.

**Noah Stolte** 13:21

Awesome. Thanks so much for chatting with me, Charlotte.

**Charlotte** 13:23

Yeah, thanks Noah.