

## Master's in Environment & Sustainability (MES) Summer Co-op 2013

Every year the MES program at Western attracts a very diverse range of co-op employers with work opportunities suited to the skills, aptitudes and talents of students in this unique interdisciplinary program. This year is no different; there are students all over the country, with every level of government and in private and not-for-profit organizations working on a whole host of environment and sustainability projects.

At organizations like Bird Studies Canada and Wildlife Preservation Canada, we have students providing support to the conservation of various endangered animal species.

Students are working with local municipalities including The Corporation of the County of Lambton and The Corporation of the City of London as well as some at a distance in places like Parkland County, Alberta. They are involved in a wide range of work specific to their region that includes work on an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan, an Urban Heat Island Study, residential water conservation, and the development of Alternative Land Use Service (ALUS) project agreements.

A London consulting firm, 2cg Inc, has hired an MES student this summer to assist with the creation of a sustainability decision making calculator tool. This tool will incorporate environmental and economic factors, to help businesses decide which sustainability options they should implement at their facilities.

MES Students with Brookfield Johnson Controls in Markham, Ontario are employed as Junior Sustainability Consultants helping to develop a sustainable procurement strategy. The project involves studying the social and environmental impacts of suppliers through survey, the design of a supplier scorecard, making recommendations to strengthen the current sourcing policies and practices, and prospecting methods to raise the profile of the company. In this role, the students are required to act as leaders while facilitating weekly progress meetings with various senior managers.

It is a joy to speak with our students who are eager to find a proving ground for their skills and who have a genuine enthusiasm and deep involvement in their co-op projects. This year, the Co-op Office is hosting monthly teleconferences with the students to provide additional support over the co-op period. Within the first month of a four month term the students have demonstrated an excellent understanding of how their role fits into the organization and have accomplished a great deal of work.

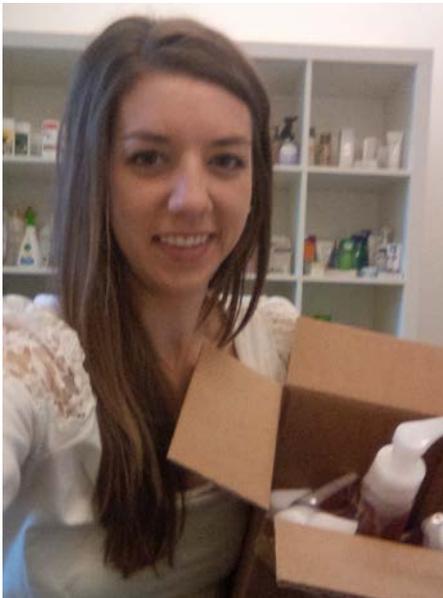


Photo Left: Kathryn Battista, MES student, works at Knowlton Development Corporation (KDC), a contract manufacturing company. As the Sustainability Project Manager, she has the responsibility of developing an effective waste management plan, while working closely with senior directors and engineers at the manufacturing facility in Mississauga, ON. She is compiling a report on key environmental performance indicators in order to identify areas for environmental improvement, for one of the company's clients.

Photo Right: MES student Alicia Vacing holds a Louisiana Waterthrush, a small warbler found in mossy ravine banks or overturned logs in swamps. This species, found only in the southernmost parts of Ontario, is an early nester and easily caught in mist nets. Alicia is holding this female in Wilson Tract near Port Rowan after banding her and her 4 chicks as part of her work with Bird Studies Canada.



MES students are once again receiving support while on their co-op through The Natural Step (TNS) Canada. Through a number of "coaching calls", students have access to the expertise of professional consultants at The Natural Step, and are able to ask questions and seek advice. The support offered by TNS benefits both the student and the employer and we are very proud to be able to provide this service through Western's MES Program.

Once again, thank you to our host co-op employers. Your enthusiasm and interest in working with our students does not go unnoticed, and you have so much to offer them in terms of mentorship. On behalf of the program, we thank you!

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