

Catch a Wave!



Sometimes the task of helping build futures for Newfoundland and Labrador's youth can seem overwhelming. Whenever I feel that way, I think about something Martin Luther King Jr. said: "Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase. Just take the first step."

These last four months at FINALY! have been so busy, so wild, that while it may have been hard to "see the staircase" at times, the staff and I have stayed true to taking steps in faith. Now, as a I take the opportunity to look back and reflect on our activities of the last few months, I can clearly see how our efforts are making a difference for youth in our province.

Just before Christmas, we had the opportunity to be a part of an amazing and heartwarming **media conference**. Panelists spoke from their personal experience regarding making the choice to live and work in the province.

I was honoured to sit alongside people who feel so passionately about making a life in Newfoundland and Labrador. I truly believe that by working together and by speaking out, we can help turn the tide of out-migration for many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

In January, FINALY! was delighted to be short-listed for a **2006 Employer of Distinction Award** by the Employer's Council of Newfoundland and Labrador. This nomination was a result of some advances in the area of Human Resources (HR) we have undertaken in the last year.

We realize that in order to keep good employees we have to offer



more than just competitive wages. Although we are a small organization, some of the practices we are proud to offer here include: a comprehensive health and dental plan for employees that the organization pays half the cost for; an extended lunch for any employee who wishes to engage in physical activity; flexible work hours; and much more. We will be continuing to work to stay abreast of best practices in Human Resources in the coming year.

In February we welcomed three new employees to the organization:

Steven Walsh is our new Youth Inclusion Coordinator. Steve is developing an online directory for youth facing barriers to employment, with a focus on those with physical and/or mental disabilities. This is a very exciting and new road for FINALY! that will help expand how and to whom we deliver services. Look forward to the directory's launch in August 2007.

Diane Poole is our new Wild Craft coordinator based out of Port Hope Simpson. Diane will be completing three Wild Craft workshops on the coast of Labrador.

Lysanne Goulet is our second Katimavik volunteer intern this year. Lysanne is a bilingual 20-year-old from Quebec who is working closely with Shelley Broomfield on the CED national conference. For more information on Katimavik please visit: <http://www.katimavik.org/section/index/id/1> or email Lysanne at lysanne@finaly.ca.



In March I had the opportunity to fly up to the coast of Labrador to deliver an interactive session in partnership with the **Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission**. The session was directed to youth from the coast of Labrador and focused on the rights of young workers and workplace safety.

Over the years, FINALY! has hosted many events, but last month we held our first ever rock concert. **Rock The Vote** took place in

Clareville on March 16th with three bands and a line-up of inspirational speakers. This event lit sparks that we hope will grow into fires of community engagement and political activism for the youth in attendance. With more than one major election on the horizon, look for FINALY!'s involvement in more events like this that emphasize the power of youth to make a difference.

March also saw FINALY! host a **youth stakeholders meeting** bringing all youth stakeholders together to discuss ways in which they can collaborate more effectively. Players included: Community Centre Alliance (CCA), Choices for Youth, Community Youth Network (CYN), Department of Innovation Trade and Rural Development - Getting the Message Out (GMO), Junior Achievement (JA), Executive Council, Department of Education, Holyrood Youth Council, Young Farmers Forum, Canadian Rural Youth Network, CBDC - Youth Ventures and the St. John's Native Friendship Centre.



FINALY! is working very hard to strengthen relations with all **Regional Economic Development Boards** across our province. Some recent successes include:

PYC member Amanda Cull appointed to the Central Labrador Economic Development Corporation (CLEDC) youth seat.

Exploits Valley Economic Development Corporation (EVEDC) partners with FINALY! to appoint FINALY! member Brian Caravan to their youth seat.

Discovery Regional Development Board (DRDB) launches it's new Youth directory – *For Youth Information (FYI)* at FINALY!'s Rock The Vote in Clareville. For more information please visit <http://www.discoveryboard.nf.ca/about.htm>

Thanks for reading – please stay tuned on our website for the latest news, opportunities and events. ■

Rhonda

Rhonda Tulk-Lane,
Executive Director
rhonda@finaly.ca