

CISV Canada - National Leadership Training Committee

Hello! It is my pleasure to introduce you to CISV Canada's NLTC. Our job is to train all the leaders that CISV Canada sends internationally and nationally every year. We plan and run the national trainings that occur in the spring of each year, and ensure that our training materials are to the current international standards.



2019 National Trainers

(Back Row): Phyllis-Ann Downey, Kevin Atcheson (past trainer), Mackenzie Higa

(Front Row): Marcel Pennington, Cristen Keeney (Past), Dana Machin (past trainer), Mercedes Fogarassy, Alyssa Alidina

(Missing: Jessica Noble, Alanna King, Bets Tremblay, Jared Shantz)

Marcel Pennington

Chapter: Saskatoon (lives in Nanaimo, BC)

Marcel was a lucky 11 year old to experience a Village in Spain. Since that first CISV experience he cooked at a Village, attended a Step-Up Camp, JC'd in Toronto, and in 2010 lead a Village to Iceland. He has been trained by the NLTC, helped as a program trainer for the NLTC, and has been on the NLTC since 2013. He spent the last 6 years in Saskatoon doing leadership training and a term as chapter chair, he has since moved back to BC.

He is a proud daddy, baby girl Kora is the center of his world. Outside of being a dad he is a bicycle fanatic, and pedals year round no matter the weather. Other than two wheeled hobbies he; works as a mechanical engineer, enjoys outdoor adventures, snuggles from his pugs, home cooked food and is not shy to be the only person on the dance floor!



Alyssa Alidina

Chapter: Toronto (previously Vancouver and Halifax)

Alyssa joined CISV Vancouver in the fall of 2000, CISV Halifax in 2009 and then CISV Toronto in 2011. With a grown-up job being mandatory these days, the NLTC provides her with an opportunity to train leaders to ensure Canadian JB'ers not only have as much fun as she did over the years but learn something as well. Since 2000, she has had the opportunity to experience a number of different programs as a participant, staff and leader as well as to participate in various national meetings, training sessions and more recently, as the Risk Management Liaison for the last couple of years.

Much to the surprise of many who knew this tomboy in her youth, Alyssa now works for one of the big banks in Canada (hint: the green one) and can usually be found wandering the Financial District of Toronto. She does quite a bit of travel for work (though it's nowhere near as fun as CISV) and is looking forward to chairing the NLTC, hoping she can make a valuable contribution to the amazing team of people across this great nation!



Phyllis-Ann Downey

Chapter: Halifax

Phyllis-Ann discovered CISV Halifax in 2012 and after attending a few local events and loving everything CISV stands for and believes in she became a leader for a step up in 2013 in Gothenburg, Sweden. It was such an amazing experience for her and her delegates that she led another group of CISVers to Lyon, France in 2014. Since leading Phyllis-Ann has staffed a Youth Meeting, Halifax (2016), an International People's Project, Fredericton (2018) and a Step Up, Halifax (2019).

In her real life Phyllis-Ann is an elementary school teacher and enjoys hiking and travelling. She is excited to continue her involvement with CISV as a member of the NLTC!



Mercedes Fogarassy

Chapter: Toronto (previously Vancouver!)

Mercedes has been involved with CISV since the ripe ol' age of 10 when she attended a minicamp. Since then, she's been hooked! Having done nearly every programme as a participant and most recently as a leader, Mercedes loves sharing her experiences in CISV, and encouraging everyone she meets to get involved. She was very involved in the Junior Branch; was part of the Americas regional team, and currently represents CISV Canada at all levels of the organization. Mercedes received her TTT certification in Lima, Peru in 2016. Locally, she stays active in the Toronto chapter, although originally hailing from Vancouver, BC, and loves meeting new CISVers, youth and parents alike.



Outside of CISV, Mercedes is a recent grad of the University of Toronto, with a super CISV-centric degree: International Relations & Peace, Conflict, and Justice Studies. She currently works at a tech company doing geo-political risk assessment and predictive analytics - sounds scary, right?! (It's not, but it is fascinating!) On the side she whips people into shape at the local fitness studio, and will go on and on about how fun working out with her is (again, it's not scary!). Mercedes also has a weird obsession with sloths, corgis, plain lays, and nutella (not all together, of course), and will talk your ear off about anything and everything you can think of!

Mackenzie Higa

Chapter: Vancouver

Mackenzie has been a part of CISV since the tender age of 11 years old. He has been a Step-Up delegate, a JC, a leader and a staff over his long CISV career. He is very active within CISV Vancouver as the JB liaison where he helps the JB plan and run local CISV events.

When he's not volunteering for CISV, he's either coding, going to the gym or watching The Office. Mackenzie is a student at Simon Fraser University and works part-time as a Web Developer. He enjoys long walks on the beach, hiking and a responsible evening out.



Alanna King

Chapter: Saskatoon

Ever since attending National Training in 1998 as a JC, Alanna has dreamed of being part of the NLTC. A very exciting new chapter in her CISV career!

Alanna started her CISV journey when she attended a Summer Camp (Step Up) in Detroit, USA. When she returned to her local chapter she joined the Junior Branch and continued being involved in the JB into her young adulthood. She has been a participant, JC, Jr Staff, Leader, Staff and most recently her 10th international program as Director for 'Against the Flow' Step Up in Saskatoon. She currently works in her local chapter as the hosting coordinator, and has served many roles on the Saskatoon adult board. In 2016 she was the recipient of CISV Canada's Brock Foster Award, recognizing individuals for their contributions to their local chapter.

Outside of CISV, Alanna is a bowling alley operator and sings 4-part barbershop style acapella music in an all women's chorus called Magic City Chorus, they received a first place medal in their category last year at regionals. In her free time she coordinates the rentals for Ukrainian Park, a camp site owned by the Ukrainian Catholic Church, volunteers in her community as the community newsletter coordinator and manages 3 facebook accounts and websites for various organizations. She will take you up on a game of cards or dice any day!

Bets Tremblay

Chapter: Halifax

Bets was introduced to CISV Halifax in 2016 when she was 21 and has since led two Villages, a Step Up and is training to be Staff at a Step Up in 2019. Along with international experiences she has also become involved with her local chapter as the JB liaison and has been a program group trainer for the NLTC.

Outside of CISV, Bets is a student and spends most of her free time playing and coaching rugby. Outside of sports she also enjoys guitar, art, strong coffee and protecting the planets' resources. Bets can't wait to continue to learn and help facilitate all things CISV!



Jessica Noble

Chapter: Victoria

Jessica came to CISV in 2014 when the local chapter was short one leader for a Step Up. Since that program in Luxembourg, Jessica has led a second Step Up to Hungary, Staffed a Youth Meeting in her home chapter of Victoria, been the Local Leader Trainer for 3 years, and on the CISV Victoria executive board in various forms as well as chaperoned numerous mini-camps and helped in every kitchen she can. Jessica is very excited to be part of CISV at the national level and help future leaders fully understand their position and have their best experience possible.

Outside of CISV, you can find Jessica on the ice playing hockey or in a gym playing floor hockey. She loves living on Vancouver Island and tries to take full advantage of the Island Life by spending lots of time outside in the old growth forests and on the beaches. Jessica graduated from the University of Victoria and is currently working full time in health care while pursuing a leadership certificate.

Jared Shantz

Chapter: Waterloo

Jared first learned about CISV when members came to present about it to his classroom when he was 10. He attended a village that summer and was hooked! Jared attended many international programs as a delegate, and since turning 21 has lead 2 Step Ups and directed a village. He has also been involved locally since he was old enough to join the JB Exec, and he is currently the JB Liaison for CISV Waterloo guiding the Exec in planning and running local activities and mosaics.



Outside of CISV, Jared spends his free time reading comics and watching anime or practicing martial arts. He spent 6 months in China learning Shaolin Kung Fu and Sanda and now loves everything about it. He also always enjoys playing board games! Jared is super excited to take a national role as a member of the NLTC!