

Making Science Fun & Relevant, One Community at a Time!

Program overview

The Science Ambassador Program (SAP) pairs senior undergraduate and graduate students in science, engineering, agriculture, and the health sciences with remote Aboriginal community schools for placements of 4-6 weeks each spring. These **Science Ambassadors provide creative and culturally relevant support for science teaching and learning**. Their activities include acting as a 'science contact' for teachers, mentoring senior students about career choices and continuing education, planning and leading hands-on science activities across all grade levels, and engaging with community by participating in school and cultural events.

our goals...

- to provide fun and engaging learning experiences to teachers and students in remote communities, counteracting attitudes that dismiss math and science as boring, difficult, and/or irrelevant
- to have Science Ambassadors serve as role models and academic mentors for students in the schools
- to form learning partnerships with teachers, schools, and communities
- to engage schools and post-secondary institutions in dialogue to enhance science education overall
- to broaden the pool of future University of Saskatchewan students!

"This program has drawn support from a diverse group who are committed to providing the best possible experience of science learning to students in Saskatchewan, which include a growing percentage of Aboriginal youth. We are fortunate to have such a young, talented, and energetic population. I look forward to meeting today's elementary and high school students among the scientists, engineers, and health professionals of the future."

— Dr. Peta Bonham-Smith, Vice Dean, Science



Program reach and scope

Initiated in 2007 by **Dr. Julita Vassileva, NSERC/Cameco Prairie Women in Science and Engineering Chair**, as of 2012 the SAP has arranged 29 Science Ambassador placements in 11 remote communities, reaching > 100 teachers and > 4500 First Nations and Metis students. Qualitative surveys and questionnaires indicate a strong positive correlation between time spent with Science Ambassadors and student attitudes toward high school science enrollment, jobs in science and engineering, and the success of women in these careers. **Gaining momentum through positive feedback from Science Ambassadors and participating schools, communities, and youth, the SAP has grown each year.**

In spring 2013, 18 Science Ambassadors representing 5 University Colleges will be hosted in: Fond du Lac, Black Lake, Stony Rapids, Wollaston Lake, Pinehouse, Beauval, and Green Lake (Saskatchewan), and The Pas, Opaskwayak Cree Nation, and Flin Flon (Manitoba).



"The Science Ambassador Program is a much different outreach project because it is based on STEM people building strong relationships with Indigenous students and their science teachers... An Indigenous perspective and focus on a relational world was taken seriously in planning the Science Ambassador Program. It is a model of culturally appropriate STEM programming." — Dr. Glen Aikenhead¹

¹Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics Education and Related Employment for Indigenous Students and Citizens of Saskatchewan: A Report for the Australian Council of Learned Academies', 2012

Learn more & find the
2012 SAP Report online at:

www.ourscienceambassadors.com



Aboriginal Framework



The Science Ambassador Program is offered by the **Division of Science, College of Arts & Science** with support from: The College of Medicine, The College of Nursing, The College of Kinesiology, The College of Pharmacy and Nutrition, The College of Engineering, The College of Agriculture and Bioresources, and The Western College of Veterinary Medicine



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