

Institution

Vancouver Island University
and University of Northern BC

Principal Researcher

Dr. Nicole Vaugeois
Pat Maher
Micki McCartney
Erin Heeney
Blake Rowsell
Shannon Bence

Research Field

Economic Development

Student Involvement

3 student researchers
employed

Partners & Collaborators

go2
BC Resort Communities
(Fernie, Golden,
Harrison Hot Springs,
Invermere, Kimberley,
Osoyoos, Radium Hot Springs,
Revelstoke, Rossland,
Sun Peaks, Tofino, Ucluelet,
Valemount and Whistler)

Funding Sources

Canada-British Columbia
Labour Market Development
Agreement

Students contribute to BC Resort Community Labour Market Project

Vancouver Island University tourism students Erin Heeney and Shannon Bence were involved in a five person research team to study the Tourism Labour Market in BC's resort communities. The project was led by go2, BC's Tourism Human Resource Society to increase the competitiveness of the resort communities with respect to the supply of labour.

Many of the labour market challenges identified in the BC Tourism Labour Market Strategy (go2, 2012) are similar to those experienced throughout global, national, and local markets. Seasonality, shifting demographics, industry perceptions, training, and the recruitment and retention of staff are among the greatest challenges facing the tourism labour market. BC resort communities are further challenged by their rural location where access to supplies, training, and personnel can be difficult.

In order to understand the situation in BC's resort communities, go2 led an initiative to conduct research in the spring of 2013. Led by Dr. Nicole Vaugeois and Dr. Pat Maher, a five person research team employing students and graduates from VIU and UNBC completed the project. The goal of the analysis is to provide go2 and the resort communities with a stronger understanding of BC resort community labour market dynamics to enhance efforts for resort community recruitment, training and retention of staff.

The report responds to four core study questions, which include:

1. What are the existing and best practices to manage labour market issues such as seasonal recruitment, training and retention of staff?
2. What strategies can assist BC resort communities with recruitment, training, and staff retention?
3. What is the experience of BC resort communities with respect to labour market issues and what lessons have they learned that can advance the resort network to enhance the productivity of seasonal labour markets?
4. How can better linkages and communications between BC resort communities be developed to maximize knowledge on effective labour market practices?

PACE Research Report

The project provided great learning experiences for the graduates and students. Erin Heeney and Blake Rowsell, who both recently completed their Masters at VIU and the University of Northern BC respectively, were able to conduct research on a new topic and in a team environment. Erin, who is setting up a research consultancy business with a colleague, says the experience provided her with the opportunity to learn about project management and working for a client. For Shannon Bence, who is now collecting data for her own master's thesis, the opportunity allowed her to learn from students who had just completed the process and to experience the pace involved in a research project.

