

## Volunteer and Mobile Studio Coordinator Year End Report 2023

### Assisted Aimee in her interim role

Right before I left, at points throughout the year, and while I transitioned back to being at the station I assisted Aimee with strategies for Volunteer recruitment and retention. I'm excited to be back in the role, but was comforted by Aimee's efforts in my absence, and found her to be a lovely first person for new prospective volunteers to meet when starting out at the station. Our brief overlap led to some fun collaborations, like assisting with recording "BlackBall", her electronic-music-in-schools-project over at Mitchell Woods.

### Attended NCRC

I've been attending the NCRC for years, but this one was a bit of whirlwind as the first days of the conference were actually my first days back to work after a year-long parental leave. There were a lot of insightful moments at the NCRC, two that really have stuck with me are these:

**When considering feedback, criticism, suggestions etc - who are you hearing from, and who are you potentially *not* hearing from?** This was a thought that arose for me when the NCRC was doing a presentation speaking to how they had implemented changes based on feedback they'd received over several years from several members. It was impressive to see that they were open to feedback and change, but as the process was explained it reinforced to me that we should always be looking for feedback in a variety of ways, on different platforms and portals, so as to hope we reach a real diversity of perspectives, and we should try to be a space folks are comfortable approaching.

**Make notes now, organize notes later** - it was actually a small bit of insight from a mechanic, who now works in radio. He described a process where tools and parts are piled in one place when returned, and on a different day the tools and parts are re-sorted to where they should be stored. This is a process that helps with efficiency - when you have a thought or idea, you throw it down, and *later* you can sort it. It has really helped with my ADHD and I have kept much more consistent with my efficiency! This may seem like a silly thing to highlight but it has been a complete game-changer for me!

### Feeding Tummies and Souls (and a fantastic ripple effect)

I came across this local, virtual storytelling event while still on leave, and as soon as I got back to work I reached out to collaborate with them. I met with several of the storytellers, and lived-experience experts, to interview them about the value of storytelling, and its role in creating opportunities for diverse voices to share their experiences, and these interviews aired in advance of their storytelling event. I then recorded their Zoom storytelling event, which was edited by our Co-op student Leo during the summer, and then had intros recorded by our Co-op Student Gwen when she started this fall, and it then aired on our airwaves. This event connected me to accessibility advocate Judy Noonan, and her and I were later able to attend the ribbon cutting ceremony for A.L.L., Guelph's first accessible little library, where Judy hosted interviews for the first time, interviewing people at the event. It also connected me to the Storyteller's Guild, which is a promising contact, and led to us tabling at the North End Harvest Market Resource Fair again, where I interviewed folks from the different organizations. And that led to interviewing Chelsey Edwards from Poverty Task Force, which led to our opportunity to share the Poverty Task Force's incredible podcast series on our airwaves, and helped with encouraging Chelsey to join our board of directors! This is maybe one of my favourite examples of how projects in the community can snowball and be of so much value to CFRU!

**Helped with offsite broadcasts (Multicultural Festival, connected us with the night market (where we found Takeyce!), North End Harvest Market Resource Fair, 10C birthday party) as well as delivery and setup to many more**

With some of my tech hours I helped set us up at some of the offsite events we tabled and broadcast from, a few highlights being the Ward Night Markets, the Resource Fair I previously mentioned, the Multicultural Festival, and the 10C birthday party (where I also did live interviews during the event.). The Night Market was a particularly cool opportunity for exposure - I had attended them, and suggested we table at one, and us tabling there is what led to us meeting Takeyce, who has become an incredible presence at CFRU on our airwaves, and DJing at local events.

### **Project Serve**

One of the first things I did upon returning was reach out to Student Volunteer Connections, to re-engage with their organization, and to discuss partnerships opportunities. The first project we did was a CFRU collaboration with "Project Serve" - Project Serve sends thousands of University of Guelph students out into the community to volunteer at locations spread across the city. CFRU's role in the project was training eight students (four pairs) to take mobile recorders to four of these sites to record on-site interviews with participants. We collected a ton of material through these

students, and several have come back to train as volunteers with CFRU in order to work on editing these recordings for radio.

### **Resumed work with Campus Friends**

Now that we are back in person, I have resumed in-person, station visits, from “Campus Friends”, an on-campus group that supports young adults with disabilities and exceptionalities by partnering them with University Student Mentors, to participate in projects and experience student life. The Campus Friends have been recording interviews with each other, picking out tracks of music, and they have almost completed their first new episode since their return. The editing is being done entirely independently by Campus Friend Nicolo, and he has really dived into the project with inspiring enthusiasm. The show is going to be awesome when it’s ready!

### **MADE: Urban Arts Project**

Bryan talked about this in his report too, so I won’t go into too much detail, but I LOVE this podcast project, it was our tenth year I believe, where we help a group of students enrolled in Experiential Learning create podcasts, which we then on our airwaves

### **Onboarding new volunteers**

I’ve had 65 new volunteers come through my General Orientation Sessions since I resumed doing them in September. The overwhelming majority are students. I have an elaborate spreadsheet for tracking the intake and follow through of volunteers, and hope my periodic checking in will help with volunteer retention. So far it seems to be working, I’ve had reports from all departments that they have seen a significant increase in volunteer interest (the Music Library is even at capacity!) Some volunteers take a lot of following up before they’re able to attend, especially because student life is so busy, but it has proven a valuable effort over and over! I try to treat each prospective volunteer like they could be the next Ian McDiarmid - you never know what they will go on to do! So I try to be as personal and individualized as I can, while still being efficient. I’m really enjoying being back in this role and watching the new volunteers in their new work with us.

### **New Volunteer involvement, and the Green Screen Team**

Since being back, the top two areas of interest in CFRU Volunteering have been production/tech, and the Music Library. The Music Library is currently at capacity for volunteers (which is awesome), and I’ve been working on encouraging the overflow of

folks interested to contribute towards our “CFRU Selector” playlist radio shows. For tech, a lot of the interest was specifically in production, sound, working with live music and video. So I encouraged a large group of these new prospective volunteers to attend a group training with Bryan so these students (and myself) could learn how to do this without requiring Bryan’s presence to pull it off. After the initial training, Amara scheduled a student band to come up and be our “practice run”, where we could go through all the motions, and then that same band was part of CFRBoo, which was our first time trying it out live. We were able to do all of this while Bryan was away, and there is now a large group who are now training new people themselves, and have become a big group of friends. They have overseen several more in-studios, including with artists they have sought out and invited to come perform, and after recruiting and overseeing an in-studio with Apollo Suns, they even were all added to the guest list for the show in Hamilton the next evening, and they all carpoled to the show together (just an adorable side note). They have since taken their group outside the station to record events at the Bullring. They have tons more ideas of what they want to work on and it’s been incredible watching them flourish! Thank you Rickky, Katie, Matthew, Lukas, Sophia, Amara, and everyone else who has been helping out!

### **CFRBoo**

In celebration of a return to in-person gathering at the station, I revived the pre-pandemic annual “CFRBoo” event on Halloween. CFRBoo acts as a sort of station open house, with free candy, in-studio performances, station tours, and as much interactivity with station equipment and studios as we can generate. We had a “Spooky postcards” station setup in the social media lab, the Green-Screen Team and Amara our Campus Outreach Assistant helped over-see three in-studio performances - one local act, and two student bands recruited by Amara. We had a costume contest, and had several opportunities where students coming up to the station could actually come into the On-Air studio and be a live spontaneous guest. A highlight for me was overseeing a spontaneous interview between our high school co-op student Gwen, interviewing a UofG student who had just wandered into the station, about their respective high school co-op experiences. This was Gwen’s first time live on the radio, the UofG student (Jorja’s) first time in our station, and has since led to Jorja training to be a CFRU volunteer. CFRU radio host Takeyce allowed for an “open-doors” pop-in during her show too, and another highlight was hearing Takeyce and Amara chatting with each other in Spanish. We received tons of feedback from attendees about how fun the event was.

### **Consultant on Mobile Studio Projects**

Two different Mobile Studio projects reached out to me in my role as CFRU's Mobile Studio Coordinator, to consult on really neat projects they've been working on. One was a group of Masters students from the University of Bolzano in Italy, who are building a mobile community radio project with a community there, and one is Christine Gibb, Associate Professor at the School of International Development and Global Studies at the University of Ottawa, who is working on a research project that takes the form of partnering seniors and youth to interview each other about their respective experiences during the pandemic. Both I held virtual meetings with on Zoom and answered questions about my experiences helping engage with these communities, and in both cases there is the potential for some of the projects created to be shared with us, and/or the research gathered by all of the people working on these projects. Christine offered lots of resources in exchange for my help, including these things:

"My research team is studying 'equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility', with a focus on radio and podcasting. We don't yet have documents to share (it's more internal PowerPoint presentations and meeting minutes), but I can share material as it is available. We have a work-in-progress "EDIA and podcasting for radio folks" report that we will be sharing with the NCRA, likely next year.

If it would be helpful to have a letter of support from an academic about the importance of working with seniors, especially in the context of EDIA, I would be happy to provide one.

If you would like to have an undergraduate student provide some kind of research support in the winter semester, please let me know. For example, student could review the Bridging the Social Distance archives (maybe with a focus on the 'silver lining' part) to identify patterns and themes."

I look forward to utilizing her offers when time permits, and am very excited by having her as a resource for us!

### **Continued work at The Village of Riverside Glen, "Bridging the Social Distance", "Mobile Community Radio Show", and projects in schools**

Every week I continue to visit the Village of Riverside Glen, where I interview seniors, residents, and staff - I still have my contact there, Bryce, the General Manager, and he recruits guests for the radio. I hear positive feedback all the time from the staff, and the families of residents, and from listeners, as to their appreciation of this radio content. "Bridging the Social Distance" is now at 225 episodes. That show is primarily my senior guests, but also includes other members of the community, with a goal of creating a

platform for lesser represented voices. I also continue to air some content as the “Mobile Community Radio Show”, when the content is more varied, or produced by other community participants. Both lead to lots of awesome radio that would not otherwise take to our airwaves and promote awesome things happening in our community.

I have met with Tracy Hunter, the Experiential Learning Rep at the School Board, and we are working towards starting up CFRU’s in-schools projects again, which will be a very exciting initiative to bring back! We will likely be starting with Willow Road PS, where we had an awesome collaboration pre-pandemic.

### **Produce: Her**

I became aware of this awesome project happening at Heffner Studios at the Kitchener Public Library, called “Produce: Her Sessions”, a series of workshops, public speaking events, and studio open houses to give women, non-binary, and gender-diverse folks opportunities to engage with recording, music, production, and sound equipment. I attended their open house, interviewed their coordinator Sam to air on CFRU to promote the series, and attended one of the public speaking events to assist with recording it for CFRU’s airwaves. We consider KW to be local to us, and an opportunity to partner with another recording facility that is accessible to the public, that is demonstrating placing importance in engaging with community members who are traditionally underrepresented in media is such a great opportunity for us! I look forward to working with them more in the future.

### **Helping with hiring for the new student positions**

I have assisted with the hiring process for the majority of our student positions, and have been blown away by what our station has been able to expand to support with all their help. It is very exciting having so many fresh, student perspectives informing our work and taking on new projects, and I’m really excited to see what happens with our newest Event Planners we just hired!

### **A new slate of board members**

While onboarding new volunteers, and reviewing notes of existing volunteers and community members with valuable skillsets, I’ve been keeping a list of prospective board members. When our number of board members dropped quite low a couple months back I reached out to ten different people I thought showed great promise, one (Miranda) joined immediately, seven more attended our hybrid “Board Meeting Open

House”, and of those seven, four joined at that meeting, while the others expressed an interest in potentially running at the AGM. I have since put together an even larger list of suggestions for the board to work from to assemble a slate for the AGM. When creating this list, I look for diversity in many different areas, including what the students are studying in school, what interests they express etc, and what areas they volunteer in at the station where applicable, to try to have all of the areas of need on the board covered. I am so excited to have this fresh energy and new perspectives join our board, and to see what CFRU becomes in the days ahead!