

YUKON • NWT • NUNAVUT

# moveuphere

TO CANADA'S TERRITORIES



## **NORTHERN EDUCATION**

3 territories  
124 schools. p5

## **HOOKED ON THE NORTH**

They came for a year  
and stayed a lifetime. p10

## **LIVING HERE**

Quickfacts. p14



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Issue number 2, 2020

*Move Up Here* is published  
 three times per year by  
 Up Here Publishing Ltd.  
 Suite 102, 4510 – 50th Ave.  
 Yellowknife, NT  
 X1A 1B9, Canada

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Up Here Publishing also  
 publishes *Up Here* and  
*Up Here Business*.  
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ON THE COVER: SNOWKING'S CASTLE  
 COURTESY TAWNA BROWN/NWT TOURISM



## Welcome to the land of opportunity

In late September the three territorial governments (Yukon, NWT and Nunavut) listed over 300 job openings on their employment websites. Add to that dozens of job openings listed on private job sites and in local newspapers, everything from delivery drivers to glaziers, and you begin to realize just how many job openings there are in the North, particularly in capital cities or regional centres.

Many of the openings are with government in the health care field, with some of the positions in our smaller, more isolated communities. Of course, living costs are much higher in these more remote communities, but so are special northern living allowances, which are added to government salaries. In the NWT and Nunavut the living allowance can reach \$35,000 to \$40,000 per annum for a very isolated community, offsetting the high cost of groceries, fuel and transportation.

As a northern business owner for over 40 years, I've hired dozens of people, coming from every single province in Canada. I've also hired another 8 or 10 via Government of Canada immigration programs. The interesting thing is that many came for the job and money, enjoyed the opportunity and stayed here to raise families.

At one point I had a half dozen employees from Newfoundland. Today four of the six have stayed in the North, are raising children here and most own their own homes. All this is to show that for many the North is the ideal place to lay down roots, and enjoy a prosperous and fulfilling lifestyle.

Close to half the population of the North lives in our three capitals: Whitehorse, Yellowknife and Iqaluit. Here we enjoy fine dining, theatre, a range of shopping from department stores to bookstores.... and some of the best recreational facilities in Canada. Modern schools, well serviced hospitals (with Yellowknife recently opening a new \$400 million regional health facility.) and first-class recreational facilities, are a part of the larger centres.

We also have smaller regional communities with populations ranging from 2,000 to 3,500, and very small communities, with populations of less than 1,000. These communities also need skilled people—nurses, teachers, tradespeople and many a person who has accepted a job in one of these communities has ended up staying a lifetime.

The bottom line is that the North is not a place to fear. Us Northerners think the opposite is true. The North is one of the best places to live, work, and play in Canada. Sure it can get a little cold in the winter. But 24 hours of brilliant summer sunlight makes us forget the dark days of winter.

We encourage you to give it a try. I did. And I'll never regret it.

Marion LaVigne  
*Publisher*







# Getting Educated In The Far North

By Dana Bowen

With a modern curriculum, the North provides a lasting education that goes far beyond the expected. There are 124 schools across the three territories in addition to preschools, colleges and a university. Students receive more one-on-one time with teachers, thanks to small class sizes, as well as insightful lessons about the Northern landscape and Indigenous cultures.

"Our general approach to the curriculum here is to create unique experiences—whether that may be out on the land, in the classroom or it could be in kitchen," says Trine Dennis, principal at Whitehorse's Golden Horn Elementary School. "The purpose is to create unique experiences to engage students in what we have to offer."

Students in each territory learn through a formal education system, similar to the Canadian provinces. The learning model follows best practices from across Canada and shifts towards more hands-on learning. There is more focus on finance, career education, and life skills. It also offers more personalized lessons, based on the students' interests. >>

YUKON UNIVERSITY, AYAMDIGUT CAMPUS





COURTESY OF YUKON UNIVERSITY/CATHIE ARCHBOULD

In the Northwest Territories, the curriculum aims to keep relevant, while covering the usual subjects, like math, science, social studies, physical education, English and French. Whereas the Nunavut Education Authority is organized into four areas: health and physical education, math and science, history and tourism, and languages—which includes English, French and Inuktitut languages.

Northern and Indigenous learning is woven into each territory's curriculum, as well. That includes the NWT's mandatory northern studies course, which 15-year-old Lana Sanders and her peers are taking in Yellowknife. "I

have a couple friends who just moved to town and from what they say, there's a lot more focus on the cultural aspect up here and we learn more about the Indigenous community and their history as well," she says.

The Yukon utilizes northern resources and knowledge from Yukon First Nations, which teaches children about ancestral technology, traditional governance, literature by local authors, and the history of residential schools. In addition, on-the-land teaching is an integral part of schooling in the North. Whitehorse teacher Michelle Beaulieu has led several outdoor excursions over her 21-year career,

which includes camping, canoeing, and hiking.

"The best part of the job is witnessing the change in them over [a trip]," she says. "It increases their confidence and sense of accomplishment."

Iqaluit's Nuna School teaches the usual curriculum in an outdoor setting. Nunavut, as well as the other territories, teach Indigenous languages, on top of French and English.

The Yukon and the NWT both offer varying levels of French programming, whether students are learning the language in an elective class, in French immersion or at a French first language school.



ÉCOLE SIR JOHN FRANKLIN HIGH SCHOOL

COURTESY ÉCOLE SIR JOHN FRANKLIN HIGH SCHOOL

The NWT and the Yukon each have two French first schools. Each territory offers extracurricular activities that range from hairdressing and cooking to music and mechanics. Students can join a sports team, whether they're interested in hockey, soccer or volleyball. In Whitehorse, kids can join track and field, as F.H. Collins Secondary School has just

upgraded its facilities.

Or, students can join an after-school club. At Iqaluit's Inuksuk High School, for example, students may join a film club, the Green [environmental] club or a social justice group.

The schools are not lacking in extra facilities either. Many Yellowknife students have access to a 300-seat performing arts centre, where

schools put on a few productions a year. And if they're not onstage acting, students can explore other jobs within the theatre, such as costume design, lighting, and set design. Other facilities Yellowknife kids have access to include a full-sized gym, an Olympic weight lifting room, mechanics and carpentry rooms, and a computer lab with 3D printers.

**124**  
schools for all  
ages throughout  
the Territories

## FUNDING FOR POST SECONDARY ED

Northern resident students are eligible for many grants and remissible loans as a way to make learning more accessible. There are several options for each territory:

In Nunavut, residents who have lived in the territory for at least one to three years can obtain student assistance. They can get up to \$3,428 per semester when it comes to the basic grant,

plus funds for airfare to get from your home community to school and back.

For residents of the Northwest Territories, students can receive one semester of grants and remissible loans for every year they studied in the NWT, between grades one and 12. The remissible loan can be slowly forgiven for those who return to the NWT for at least three months, after finish-

ing school. With the basic grant, students get up to \$3,000 per semester.

Yukon residents who completed at least two years of secondary school in the territory can receive up to \$144 a week for 170 weeks over their lifetime. Yukon students in grades 10 to 12 are automatically eligible to receive up to \$3,000 for post-secondary education and training.





## Education in Canada's three territories

	NUNAVUT	NWT	YUKON
# of schools	45	49	30
# of teachers	856	814 teachers & support staff	538
# of support staff	337		244
# of school boards	Run by District Education Authority	2 Yellowknife school boards 6 education councils	1
Smallest school population	Uminmak School 22 students Grise Fiord	Kakisa Lake School 4 students, as of 2018 Kakisa	Nelna Bessie John School 7 students, as of Oct 2019 Beaver Creek
Largest school population	Inuksuk High School 419 students Iqaluit	Sir John Franklin High School 750 students Yellowknife	FH Collins Secondary School 674 students, as of Oct 2019 Whitehorse
Newest School(s)	Iglulik High School, Igloodlik	East Three Secondary & East Three Elementary Inuvik	FH Collins Secondary School Whitehorse
Year Constructed	2020	2012	2016

PHOTO COURTESY ECOLE SIR JOHN FRANKLIN HIGH SCHOOL

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When it comes to preschools, Nunavut and the Yukon are each home to a few dozen facilities, while junior kindergarten is part of the formal education system in the NWT. While there are some preschool programs available in the territory, NWT children can start classes at four-years-old, to prepare them for kindergarten.

The North is also home to a few post-secondary schools. Nunavut Arctic College has several campuses across the territory, including ones in Iqaluit, Cambridge Bay, Arviat, Igloodik, and Rankin Inlet.

Aurora College has campuses

in Inuvik, Yellowknife and Fort Smith. Within the school, you can gain a certificate, diploma, or degree in various programs.

And the Yukon recently became home to the North's first university, after the once-college was granted university status in the spring of 2020. There are 13 campuses across the communities, which offer a range of programs, including aviation, social work, culinary arts, nursing and more.

Each school offers a unique experience, as well as a community for its students to learn and grow in.



For more information  
on education in each  
territory visit:

Yukon: [yukon.ca](http://yukon.ca)  
NWT: [ece.gov.nt.ca](http://ece.gov.nt.ca)  
Nunavut: [gov.nu.ca](http://gov.nu.ca)

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COURTESY SIMONE RUDGE/CATHIE ARCHBOULD

# CAME FOR A YEAR, **STAYED FOR A LIFETIME**

Whether arriving from an Alberta farm or a Vancouver film set, each of these visitors intended to make their trip north short and sweet. But for each traveler, life set them on a different path altogether. These temporary tourists soon turned into lifetime residents, proving the North has a way of reeling you in. **BY DANA BOWEN**

## **Simone Rudge**

**WHITEHORSE, YUKON**

CAME FOR: 2 WEEKS

STAYED FOR: 33+ YEARS

Simone Rudge had been warned in 1984 that it wouldn't be as easy as hopping in a car and driving to the Yukon's Indian River Ranch. The Albertan had travelled North to see her boyfriend, Tom, that summer. He worked at the ranch as a farrier. She figured she could head to Whitehorse first, where her boyfriend's friends would drive her to Atlin. From there, the friends connected Rudge with a float-plane pilot who flew her the rest of the way. It was a long journey to make for a two-week visit, but well-worth it for Rudge.

"It was gorgeous—the most beautiful place I had ever been," she says.

And it was remote. "The guests could come and go by airplane, but we'd still be here in the cabin," she adds.

Rudge grew up on a farm outside of Edmonton, so spending time on the ranch felt like second-nature for her. In fact, it came so easily, that she and Tom returned for the next two summers to take on seasonal work. Because there were no shops around to spend their wages on until the end of the season, the couple was able to save and make plans for their future.



"The good thing about working in a hunting camp is you don't get paid until the end," she says. "So, we [saved our money], bought a lot in the Yukon and said, 'Ok, we're moving here.'"

The couple built a house in Whitehorse in 1987 and eventually opened a butcher shop, called Tum Tum's Meats. It focuses on local food and products. Rudge also took on a position with Yukon College (now Yukon University). Although retired now, she taught math, science and experiential courses in developmental studies.

More than 30 years later, Rudge says she can't imagine calling anywhere else home.

"Yukon has gorgeous scenery, but it's also a really accepting community of people. Whether you're living in an off-the-grid cabin or in a high-rise downtown, people are totally accepting of whatever your choice is," she says. "This place has all the things we want."

## Trudi Bruce

RANKIN INLET, NUNAVUT

CAME FOR: 10 MONTHS  
STAYED FOR: 25+ YEARS

When 23-year-old Trudi Bruce prepared to leave Winnipeg for Rankin Inlet, NU, she told her parents, "don't worry, I'll be back in 10 months."

Trudi was a recent college graduate at the time, and had left home to start her teaching career with a 10-month contract. She had expected to fulfill her work term and head back home, but that all changed after meeting her future husband, Tommy Bruce.

Tommy was on his way to Arviat, NU, when he got stuck in Rankin Inlet overnight, due to the weather.

So, Trudi's coworker invited Tommy over and the trio watched a Sylvester Stallone movie together. The couple recalls tidbits of that

first evening together. The movie was terrible and Tommy criticized Trudi's chili. "I told her my sisters did it better," says Tommy.

Nonetheless, the two quickly fell for each other. But on the November night Tommy proposed, he warned Trudi he would never leave the North. Marrying him meant committing to Nunavut as well. She said yes.

"A big pull (for staying here) is my husband," she says. "We've never even talked about living anywhere else."

Although Trudi's parents had been hoping for her return after that first year, she says her family was supportive of the move.

"They were happy I was employed more than anything."

It helped that Trudi's parents loved her husband when they met him, she adds. The couple moved back and forth between a few communities in Nunavut, over the years, including Coral Harbour and Baker Lake. During many of Trudi's teaching breaks, she regularly returned to Winnipeg with the couple's children.

And while Trudi says she was exceptionally homesick that first year, she soon found beauty in her new home.

"I used to miss the fall colours and then I realized the tundra changes colours like the leaves on the trees," she says.

Now, Trudi has spent more than half her life calling the North home and says she wouldn't have it any other way.

## Lulu Keating

DAWSON CITY, YUKON

CAME FOR: 3 WEEKS  
STAYED FOR: 15+ YEARS

Although Lulu Keating was visiting the Yukon for the first time, she immediately felt like she was coming home.

The Nova Scotia-born filmmaker had previously worked in Vancouver, where she says she, "got paid a lot to make bad television," making her rethink calling the big city home.

But it was a different feeling in 2001, when Keating arrived in Dawson City, YT to work on a reality TV show.

"I felt like I had arrived where I was meant to be," the filmmaker says. "Being from Nova Scotia, there's a sense of place there and it's where my family is from, going back about four or five generations. So, I didn't think there'd ever be another place that felt like home."

Keating's work on the northern film set lasted just a few weeks, but she returned again in 2003 for an artist residency and then again, the following year, for a position organizing the Dawson City International Short Film Festival. She left again when the contract ended and then returned once more in 2005.

When Keating finally settled in Dawson City, she took on positions outside of filmmaking for the first time in her 25-year career. That included organizing conferences and helping with physiotherapy. Her art also continued to flourish with the help of the many grants and residencies the Yukon offers.

Keating explains that many of her northern-shot films have made it to global film festivals, which she has been able to attend thanks to government funding. On top of that, Keating credits the small arts community for allowing her to expand her skillset.

"There's a lot of overlap with other art forms, so in a larger community, you'd be exclusively in film. Here, it could be film, fine arts, sculpture and whatever else is going on," she says. "There's so many opportunities to learn new things."

CONTINUED...

"They were happy I was employed more than anything."

- Trudi Bruce



COURTESY TRUDI BRUCE



COURTESY OF LULU KEATING/NATE JONES

"I felt like I had arrived where I was meant to be."

- Lulu Keating

"It's been my home for so long that I've actually come to be accustomed to living in a small place, where you know everyone and everyone knows you," he says. "I remember when I first came here, I was working at a store and this little girl's nose would be resting on top of the counter—that's how short she was. I remember selling her gum or candy or whatever it was. And now, her grandchildren are that height. So, it's been fun watching families progress and grow up over the years."

Now that both Canney and his wife are reaching retirement age, the couple are giving some thought to moving elsewhere part-time.

"I'd love to be here for the warmer half of year and somewhere else for the colder part of the year," he says. "At this point, I would rather tough out some rain than 40-below."

However, the talk of moving elsewhere doesn't mean Canney hasn't enjoyed his life in the North.

"I have absolutely no regrets. I feel very fortunate for my station in life," he says.

When it comes to staying in the North for good, Keating says nothing is certain but, "after about 16 years it's still working for me."

### Mike Canney FORT SIMPSON, NWT

Came For: 2 years  
 Stayed For: 35+ years

In search of a job, a 19-year-old Mike Canney moved to Fort Simpson, Northwest Territories and decided it wasn't for him.

"It was very tiny and it was deficient in just about everything under the sun," he says. "But the people were really friendly and accepting and there was lots of work." Originally from Fredericton, NB, Canney says, back then, he preferred bigger cities and moved back east in between seasonal work in the territory. However, at home, work was limited and he had to "tough it out" by taking on minimum wage jobs or whatever he could find. Canney continued his seasonal returns to the North as a temporary solution to making ends meet.

Eventually he met his future wife in Fort Simpson and accepted a full-time position with the department of environment and natural resources, where Canney says he's still excited about going into work each day. And over the years, he has learned to love and appreciate all his community has to offer, he adds.

COURTESY LYNN CANNEY/SHAWNA MCLEOD





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Gyrfalcon

Species: *Falco rusticolus*

*Bird of Prey*

Population Stable

Colour ranging from  
white to very dark

	YUKON	NWT	NUNAVUT
Land Area	483,450 sq. km	1,183,085 sq. km	1,936,113 sq. km
Rank by Size in Canada	9	3	1
Comparable Size	NL, NB and PEI combined	AB and MB combined	QB, NL, NB, NS and PEI combined
Population	42,152	45,161	39,486
Capital City	Whitehorse	Yellowknife	Iqaluit
Populaiton, Capital City	30,025	21,713	8,000
2 <sup>nd</sup> Largest Community	Dawson Pop 2,297	Hay River Pop 3,749	Rankin Inlet Pop 2,820
Total # of Communities	16	33	25
Communities with Population over 1,000	3	6	12
Climate (in Capital City)			
Avg high - July	20.6 °C	21.3 °C	12.3 °C
Avg low - January	minus 19.2 °C	minus 29.5 °C	Minus 31 °C
Frost Free Days	874	118	706
Avg. # of Days w/ Sunshine	251	283	250
Avg. Annual Precipitation	262 mm	289 mm	404 mm
First Nations	14 First Nations	5 First Nation settlement areas 1 Inuvialuit settlement area	n/a
Longest River	Yukon River 3190 km	Mackenzie River 4241 km	Back River 974 km
Official Bird	Raven	Gyrfalcon	Rock Ptarmigan
Official Flower	Fireweed	Mountain Aven	Purple Saxifrage
Official Tree	Subalpine Fir	Tamarack Larch	n/a
Gemstone	Lazulite	Diamond	n/a
Cost per Litre of Milk in Capital City	\$2.33	\$2.50	\$5.50



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