YUKON • NWT • NUNAVUT

# moveup

TO CANADA'S TERRITORIES

ISSUE 1, 2020

**WHY MOVE NORTH?**
To enjoy life as it should be lived. P4

**NORTHERN HEALTH CARE**
It's mainly free and readily accessible. P7

**HOOKED ON THE NORTH**
They came for a year and stayed a lifetime. P10

PANGNIRTUNG, NUNAVUT

# How I became a Northerner

I am one of thousands of Canadians who moved North from southern Canada. Like many who make the move, I promised my employer I would stay a year, maybe two. Now, some 40 years later, I'm still here. But why?

I left a job in a downtown Toronto office tower to take a position in Yellowknife, a place I knew nothing about. I left my friends behind, sold my trusty Volkswagen convertible and packed my belongings for the movers.

I arrived on New Year's Eve and the temperature was hovering around minus 40 C, far beyond the warming capabilities of my southern duffel coat and leather boots. And it was dark. Sunrise was somewhere around 10 am and by 3:30 pm it was dark again. This was not where I wanted to be. For the first month I vowed to find the fastest route back to Toronto the minute my promised year was completed.

And then the change set in. I made new friends. I was promoted by my employer. I tried cross country skiing. Bought a pass for daily swims at the community pool. Started a branch of the professional organization I belonged to in Toronto, and recognized people I bumped into when I picked up my mail at the post office.

By mid-April sunrise was around 5:30 am and sunset was after 10 pm and the bright sunlight and pure air encouraged outdoor activity. That's when I began my love affair with the northern outdoors. Camping, paddling, fishing: all activities that I dabbled in when living in Ontario.

I did stay the prescribed year (16 months to be exact) with my first employer, but the lure of entrepreneurship was irresistible, so along with a friend from Montreal, we started a company ... firstly an advertising agency, and in 1984 added a publishing company. Our latest publishing venture is *Move Up*, designed to convince you that the far North is one of the best places in Canada to live, work and play.

Each issue we'll introduce you to northern living, northern jobs and northern services, that are often less expensive and more reliable than those in the south. Basic health care is free; education includes a forgivable loan program to help northern kids attend university; and there's no provincial (territorial tax) tax.

It's a different world. A challenging world sometimes. But as an ex-Torontonian, there's nowhere else I'd rather be. We invite you to read about the North. Check out hundreds of job openings in the North, and really consider a move. I'm sure, like me, you'll never regret it.

Marion LaVigne
*Publisher*

YUKON • NWT • NUNAVUT
moveup
TO CANADA'S TERRITORIES
Issue number 1, 2020

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ON THE COVER: CATHIE ARCHBOULD; LEFT: MICHAEL DAVIES

VERONICA LOPEZ AZOCAR

THREE TERRITORIES:

# The part of Canada we call home

Residents of Canada's far North like to think they're tougher than their fellow Canadians. Also luckier and more resourceful. Yes, there are a few very cold days, but not the bone chilling cold of King and Bay, or Portage and Main. Then there is the darkness of deep winter, forgotten with the arrival of the long, sunny days of summer. Or the yearning for a juicy peach, fulfilled when the next plane or truck delivers produce to the local store. Or the complaining about costs, offset by northern living tax reductions and higher wages.

COURTESY AURORA VILLAGE

Northerners walk to work at minus 40 C, cozy in parkas, windpants and an assortment of accessories. We unplug our vehicles (connected to battery blankets and oil pan heaters) for excursions to the supermarket, or to pick up the kids from hockey or soccer. We learn how to ration water if we live in a community where water is delivered to an in-house holding tank twice a week. And we watch out for one another.

Canada's three northern territories make up nearly 40% of this country's land mass, and only 0.1% of its population, giving us lots of room to move around. The capital cities, with their many government and support services jobs, account for a large percentage of the territories' population, with Whitehorse home to 70% of Yukon's population, Yellowknife home to 44% of the NWT population, and Iqaluit home to 21% of Nunavut's population.

At least 95% of Canadians have never set foot in any of the territories, and many still think that if you cross the 60th parallel you're entering a flat area of snow, polar bears and dog teams. Not so. Today's North is a mix of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, who love their smartphones as much as any Canadian, follow their favourite hockey teams on satellite TV, even in the most remote communities, and probably know more about Canadian politics than most residents in a southern province.

Yes, there are still dog teams, but most are used for recreational purposes. Polar bears still wander the shores of the Arctic

Ocean and Hudson Bay and we never dream about white Christmases, because we know they are always white.

Cottage country, known as cabin country in the North, is usually within an hour of home, and is accessible by truck, boat, snowmobile or all-terrain-vehicle... and is almost always near a good fishing lake or river or a prime hunting location.

In the far North, housing comes in many shapes and forms. There are single family homes, condos, apartments, mobile homes, and in Yellowknife, a colourful houseboat community. In the Yukon and Northwest Territories you can drive to most communities, but in Nunavut access is strictly by air, which drives up the cost of living throughout the territory, but is often offset by an employer supplied cost of living allowance (In 2018, allowance for territorial government employees in Iqaluit was $15,016 annually and $34,455 for employees in Grise Fiord, the territories' most isolated community).

Outdoor and indoor recreation plays a large part in northern life. Cross country skiing, snowboarding, snowmobiling, fishing, paddling, hiking, golfing, aurora viewing are just a few of the year round outdoor activities. In winter, almost every community has an arena for hockey and pleasure skating, and larger centres have swimming pools, indoor tracks, field houses for soccer, badminton, school gyms for basketball and volleyball and more.

Activities in the North are geared to both adults and children. Northern kids likely see more of the world than those from any province. Exchanges with southern and international students, school trips to Europe or southern Canada are just some of our student's contact with the world outside our territories. Within the territories there are also opportunites to participate in annual sports tournaments, or the bi-annual Arctic Winter Games, hosted across Canada's North or in Alaska or Northern Alberta... and occasionally in Greenland.

And then there is work. As the northern economy grows, we have lots of jobs and not enough people to fill them. Entry level jobs, trades jobs, professional jobs. In government, health, education, mining, construction, transportation, retail and service industries. The North also welcomes entrepreneurs, ready to set roots in the North and grow their businesses here.

LALENIA NEUFELD

Opportunity is really what the North is all about. It's a place where you can start as a junior clerk and work your way up to manager in a few years. It's where you can contribute to our society. It's where you can enjoy life as it should be lived.

**95%** *of Canadians have never set foot in any of the territories, and many still think that if you cross the 60th parallel you're entering a flat area of snow, polar bears and dog teams.* ***Not so.***

Yukon

# A wide open career.

We are the Yukon public service. Every day, we come together to serve the people who live here, and to make a difference in so many ways—from simple to extraordinary and everything in between. Here, you will find the diverse opportunities you desire to develop your career and enrich your life.

**yukon.ca/employment**

Canada's Top 100 Employers 2020


# Health Care in Canada's Far North

The North's health system has mastered the problem of isolation. When you need medical attention in any of our three territories, there are people and programs to assist.

Pregnant, and living in a small community without a hospital or midwife? You'll be sent to a regional centre well in advance of your due date and will stay in a comfortable boarding home with other people from your region, until it's time to go to the hospital. Live in Cambridge Bay or Pond Inlet and the nurse or nurse practitioner determines your medical problem is an emergency? **>>**

***A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO*** *we surveyed over 1,000 Canadians who showed an interest in moving North, but didn't follow through. We wanted to know their concerns about living, working and playing in the North. From that survey, here are perceived deterrents to making a move to the far north: health care; education; cost of living; housing; accessibility. We understood those concerns, but we want to set the record straight. Yes, the cost of living is higher, but so are the tax exemptions (GST, but no HST), a tax deduction for northern residency, free health care for most needs; post secondary education grants and much more. In this issue, we'd like to start by telling you a bit more about our health care systems.*

YELLOWKNIFE'S STANTON REGIONAL HOSPITAL

PATRICK KANE/UP HERE

*Territorial extended benefits programs cover specified costs for seniors*

You'll be "medevaced" by air ambulance to the closest hospital. Need treatment or surgery for a specialized condition, and that specialist or service is not available in the North? You'll travel to a major hospital in Ottawa, Winnipeg, Edmonton or Vancouver and most costs will be covered by territorial health insurance plans

The North is prepared to handle most emergency or special medical conditions, but it also has a system in place to look after the day-to-day health and medical needs of its residents. Facilities range from multi-million-dollar hospitals with hundreds of staff, to small community health centres operated by two nurses.

Each northern capital city has a territorial hospital which serves all residents, as needed. In the Northwest Territories there is also a regional hospital in Inuvik and smaller community hospitals in Hay River, Fort Smith and Fort Simpson. Yukon also has two community hospitals (Dawson and Watson Lake) as does Nunavut with small hospitals in Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay.

Most other communities in all three territories have health centres with experienced nurses attending to the health and medical needs of populations from 150 to 1,500 or more. These centres are well equipped, often with ultrasound and X-ray equipment, and most northern health centres are connected to larger centres via *Telehealth*, a video conferencing program that allows direct consultations with doctors.

Basic hospital and medical costs are covered under the health care insurance programs of each territory, as are specialist services outside the territories (specialized surgery, diagnoses, etc.) Eligibility for health care mainly depends on residency in a territory and proof of residency in Canada. Northern health care systems do not cover standard dental procedures, eyeglasses, etc. But these services are often covered under employer benefit plans. Territorial extended benefits programs cover specified costs for seniors and other identified at-risk groups.

Each territory also offers services ranging from long-term care to specialist clinics, to mental health care.

## Health Services in Canada's three territories

### Territorial Hospitals

| YUKON | NORTHWEST TERRITORIES | NUNAVUT |
|---|---|---|
| Whitehorse General Hospital<br>Beds: 56 Staff: 540<br>50 GPs, 7 specialists | Stanton Territorial Hospital, Yellowknife<br>Beds: 100 Staff: 600<br>29 GPs, 22 specialists | Qikiqtani General Hospital, Iqaluit<br>Beds: 35 Staff: 229<br>20 GPs, visiting specialists |
| Primary acute care, emergency care, surgical, cancer, visiting specialists, occupational and physical therapy lab services, X-ray, ultrasound, MRI, CT, mammography | Surgery, ENT, ophthalmology, obstetrics and gynocology, pediatrics, orthopedic surgery, psychiatry, radiology, anesthesia, visiting specialists (CT, ultrasound, dialysis) | Emergency cardiology, gynaecology, dermatology, rheumatology, neurology, orthopedics, ENT, ophthamology. Additional services provided in Ottawa |

### Regional or Community Hospitals

| YUKON | NORTHWEST TERRITORIES | NUNAVUT |
|---|---|---|
| Dawson City Community Hospital<br>Beds: 6 Staff: 28<br>3 GPs | Inuvik Regional Hospital<br>Beds: 50<br>9 GPs/locums | Regional Health Centre, Cambridge Bay<br>Beds: 8 Staff: 70<br>1 GP |
| 24/7 emergency care, inpatient and ambulatory care, lab and X-ray, ultrasound services. | Emergency and minor surgery, Mammograms | Midwife services, ultrasound, lab services. |
| Watson Lake Community Hospital<br>Beds: 6 Staff: 26<br>2 GPs | Hay River Health Centre<br>Beds: 19<br>1 resident GP plus locums | Regional Health Centre, Rankin Inlet<br>Beds: 10 Staff: 79<br>2 GPs |
| 24/7 emergency care, inpatient and ambulatory care, lab and X-ray, ultrasound services. | Fort Smith Health Centre<br>Beds: 5 Staff: 100 | Midwife services, ultrasounds, lab services, visiting physicians |

### Community Health Centres

| YUKON | NORTHWEST TERRITORIES | NUNAVUT |
|---|---|---|
| 12 Health Centres in smaller communities<br>Usually 2 nurses | 27 Health Centres in small communities<br>Usually 2 or more nurses.<br>NWT MedResponse | 30 Health Centres in communities<br>Usually 2 or more nurses |

### Other Services

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Toll-free Health line<br>Telehealth in 14 communities access to physio, occupational, speech therapy, emergency radiology | Toll-free help line<br>Healthnet services available for diagnostic imaging, electronic records and Telehealth patient videoconferencing | Toll free mental help line<br>Telehealth services for both clinical referals and follow ups, as well as family visits with patients |

### Medical Travel

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Medically necessary travel to the nearest centre where services exist. | Travel costs from home community, $200 co-payment. | Medically necessary travel from home co-payment is $250 |

### Eligibility for Health Care

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Proof of Canadian citizen or permanent resident. Yukon resident. Apply in person | Canadian citizen, or resident NWT resident. Mail in forms | Permanent residents of Nunavut |

### Coverage

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Physicians at clinics, hospitals, ward care in hospital<br>Children's dental care, hearing services<br>Extended health care benefits for seniors | Basic hospital and medical clinic treatment for inpatients and outpatients. Eye exams. Extended benefits for seniors and for specified diseases. | Basic hospital and medical clinic treatment, eye exams, dental care for children. Extended care for seniors, long term care. |

### Costs:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| No charge for covered health care services | No charge for covered health care, co-payment for travel. | No charge for covered health care, co-payment for travel |

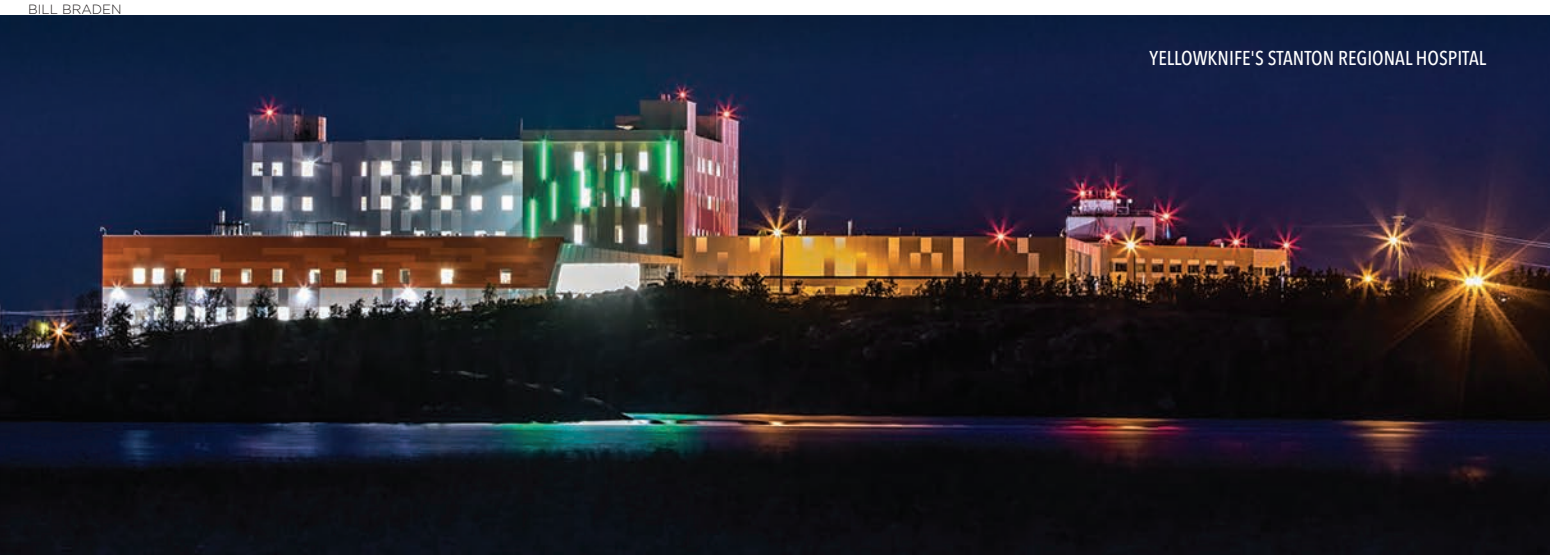
$0

*Basic hospital and medical costs are covered under the health care insurance programs of each territory, as are specialist services outside the territories.*

*For more information on health care in each territory visit:*

*Yukon: hss.gov.yk.ca*
*NWT: hss.gov.nt.ca*
*Nunavut: gov.nu.ca/health*

BILL BRADEN



YELLOWKNIFE'S STANTON REGIONAL HOSPITAL

COURTESY GURDEEP PANDHER

# CAME FOR A YEAR, STAYED FOR A LIFETIME

They arrive with a short-term contract, expectations of a casual adventure, and no real plans to stay. Life, and the North, have other intentions. For anyone thinking of dipping their toes into northern living, be forewarned. Once you're here, you'll never want to leave. BY RHIANNON RUSSELL

## Gurdeep Pandher

WHITEHORSE, YUKON

CAME FOR: 1 WEEK
STAYED FOR: 8 YEARS+

When Gurdeep Pandher became a Canadian citizen in 2006, he decided to explore his new country, travelling around many of the provinces and the Northwest Territories. In 2011, he flew to Whitehorse for a week-long visit. On his first day in town, Pandher struck up a conversation with a man on a downtown street, and this new friend brought him to Robert Service Campground later that night for a party.

Travellers sat in a circle, singing songs, dancing, playing instruments, and telling stories until the wee hours of the morning. Pandher was struck by everyone's friendliness. The rest of his trip was more of the same. The woman whose room he was renting through Kijiji offered to drive him around and show him the local sights. Others he met at a concert invited him to a house party.

"People weren't like, 'This guy is a stranger, let's exclude him.' People were really inclusive," he says. It reminded Pandher of the small village in Punjab, India, where he was born. There, everyone knew each other. The Yukon had a similar feel, he thought. He also loved the scenery, the wildlife, and the arts scene.

By the end of the week, Pandher had resolved to come back

for good. The following year, he packed up his life in Lloydminster, on the Alberta-Saskatchewan border, and drove up the Alaska Highway.

The Yukon turned out to be everything he hoped it would be. The Gold Rush may be history but, "this is a place where the gold is in the heart of the people," he says.

Today, Pandher works for the Yukon government as an IT consultant, but he's best-known for his dancing.

Shortly after moving north, he began teaching bhangra classes. In 2016, he went national after posting a video online of him and a partner performing the traditional Indian dance at Whitehorse's Canada Day festivities. Both CBC and CTV interviewed him about the dance, and his experience living in the Yukon.

In the years since, Pandher has filmed several other viral bhangra videos. One in 2017 showed him and Whitehorse Mayor Dan Curtis dancing inside City Hall, and was featured on the BBC's website.

"When you're in a remote place, you connect more," Pandher says of his northern home. "You feel that bonding more with other people... The dancing allowed me to spread a message about unity and diversity; the message of togetherness and connectedness."

A message of inclusion, brought to you by the North.

## Debbie DeLancey

YELLOWKNIFE, NWT

CAME FOR: 6 WEEKS
STAYED FOR: 33 YEARS+

Debbie DeLancey arrived in Yellowknife in March 1976 and was, as she puts it, "swept away."

It was a business trip. At the time, she was working for the Dene Nation in Ottawa as the organization advanced its land claims process for First Nations in the Mackenzie Valley opposing the gas pipeline. In 1977, once the pipeline plan was shelved, the Dene Nation closed its Ottawa office, but offered DeLancey a job in Yellowknife. She was thrilled.

"The long days, the sunshine, the blue skies, the sun sparkling off the pristine snow," she says. "I mean, there's so many other wonderful things about living in the North but immediately, I felt my spirits lift and I thought, 'Wow, who wouldn't want to live here?'"

Over the coming years, she travelled to Dene communities across the Northwest Territories and also completed a one-year contract with Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (then called the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada) during which time she was based in Baker Lake and Iqaluit.

In 1981, DeLancey moved to Fort Good Hope, the home of her then-husband. There, she helped establish a band-owned consulting firm that focused on traditional knowledge and community-based research.

"Being immersed in a different culture, living close to the land, starting to understand the deep connection that Indigenous peoples have with the land and how that influences every aspect of culture—I was so privileged to experience that," she says.

The couple had two sons, and when they reached school age, DeLancey moved with them to Yellowknife. In 1987, she took a job with the Northwest Territories government, but was skeptical that she'd be able to influence policy.

> "Working anywhere else just looked boring after the challenges that we're used to dealing with on a daily basis in the North." – *Debbie DeLancy*

"When I was interviewed and asked how long did I think I might stick with government, I responded that I expected it to be really boring and couldn't see staying in that job for more than two years," she says now, with a laugh.

But she was pleasantly surprised. She continued on in government, climbing up the ranks to deputy minister positions in the departments of Municipal and Community Affairs and Human Resources.

*CONTINUED...*


COURTESY DEBBIE DELANCY


COURTESY LINDSAY JOHNSTON

> "That it really does take time to get to know a community and build up the trust and build up the relationships."
> – *Lindsay Johnston*

In 2009, DeLancey retired and moved to Victoria—but hated it.

"I missed the cultural richness [of the North]," she says. "I also realized what a fascinating and complex environment we live in. Working anywhere else just looked boring after the challenges that we're used to dealing with on a daily basis in the North."

After two years in Victoria, she moved back to Yellowknife, accepting a position as deputy minister of Health and Social Services. DeLancey retired again in 2017. This time, she stayed in Yellowknife.

## Lindsay Johnston

TESLIN, YUKON

CAME FOR: 1 YEAR
STAYED FOR: 5 YEARS+

In 2014, Lindsay Johnston applied for a position as recreation coordinator for the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation. There was a one-year commitment attached, but she was living in Invermere, British Columbia at the time—where she owns a house and a small business—so she tried to negotiate down to six months. The First Nation held firm, though. Johnston accepted the job, anyway.

"Then I very quickly realized that even a year was probably not going to be enough," she says. "That it really does take time to get to know a community and build up the trust and build up the relationships." She stayed in that role for five years.

"I liked the quiet," she says. "I loved the people. It's a pretty special place... The natural athleticism [of the youth] is off the hook and it just needs to be channeled. I really believe that sport and recreation can change lives and that experience up there solidified that in my mind even further."

While born and raised in Calgary, Johnston knew even before she moved to the Yukon that she liked smaller towns. Part of what led her to apply for the job in Old Crow was a desire to change things up in her life. Her father had died around that time, and she felt she was losing drive to run her business, which involved hosting groups and providing transportation services in a resort area. The recession had had an effect, too. She wanted to find work in line with her education: a business and entrepreneurship degree with a major in sport and recreation.

A friend suggested Johnston teach recreation on oil rigs, but she wasn't keen on having a job just for the paycheque—she wanted to feel fulfilled.

During a search, she found a posting for the position with Vuntut Gwitchin. It connected with her as not just a job, but "a real neat experience and something that really seemed to resonate with me. So I decided to give it a whirl."

Last October, Johnston took a one-year leave of absence from VGFN and moved slightly south, to Teslin, where she now works as that village's recreation manager. "It's nice to be connected to roads again," she says with a laugh.

Over the last five years, whenever friends asked her when she was coming back home, she says she felt that the Yukon was home now.


## Bert Rose

IQALUIT, NUNAVUT

CAME FOR: 6 MONTHS
STAYED FOR: 55 YEARS+

Bert Rose was 20 years old when he first went north. From Regina, he took a six-month teaching gig covering a maternity leave in Fort Smith. When it was over, he wanted to go as far north as he possibly could.

In 1965, that destination was a seven-room school in Aklavik, NT. When Rose returned to Regina at year's end, he and girlfriend, Joanne, got engaged.

"When I proposed to her, she made me walk around the block and promise to bring her North," Rose says. "That was fine by me because I'd had a year and half of great adventures, and I was certainly willing to go on with it."

On with it they went. The couple spent nine years in Qikiqtarjuaq (then called Broughton Island). Rose worked as a teacher, while Joanne did various jobs around town, like administering surveys with the assistance of a local who could translate. The couple even once walked from Qik to Pangnirtung—a distance of about 177 kilometres.

"Once in a while, we were allowed to go up to the DEW Line site and we could use the DEW Line circuits so we could phone through and get a commercial operator in Hay River and we would be able to phone south," he recalls.

They had a son in 1972, and the growing family moved around the North as Rose took various education jobs: a teaching position in Whale Cove, a principalship in Déljne (then called Fort Franklin), and in 1981, a job in Iqaluit (then Frobisher Bay) as the supervisor of schools for North Baffin. In 1982, they had a daughter.

Up until his semi-retirement in 1999, Rose was a dean at Arctic College and worked for the Nunavut Implementation Commission. He also organized the inaugural celebration for the creation of the new territory, on April 1, 1999.

Today, he and Joanne still live in Iqaluit, where they don't see any advantage to moving south.

"It was the wisest decision we've ever made because in Nunavut, when you're in a taxation-based municipality and you're over 65, you don't pay any taxes on your house," Rose says.

When he thinks back to what drew his twenty-something self to the North, he doesn't hesitate to answer. "It was such a frontier. No airplanes, no telephones, no television. And it was exciting. There were exciting things happening educationally for me in the classroom."

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# Nunavut is seeking teachers starting August 2020!

Do you want to make a difference in a Nunavut community? The Government of Nunavut is looking for educators for full-time, indeterminate, and term positions.

Nunavut students need dedicated, passionate and bold teachers. Teaching in Nunavut provides opportunities to inspire students, whether it is through classroom instruction or after-school activities. Each school in Nunavut is unique and diverse, making teachers an integral part of their community.

# Le Nunavut est à la recherche d'enseignantes et d'enseignants pour août 2020!

Vous souhaitez faire une différence dans une collectivité du Nunavut? Le gouvernement du Nunavut souhaite embaucher des éducatrices et des éducateurs pour pourvoir des postes permanents à temps plein, ainsi que des contrats de différentes durées.

Sachez que les élèves nunavois ont besoin d'enseignantes et d'enseignants dévoués, passionnés et ambitieux! Enseigner au Nunavut, c'est l'occasion d'inspirer ses élèves tant en classe que lors d'activités parascolaires. Chaque école nunavoise est unique et diversifiée, ce qui permet à tous les enseignantes et les enseignants de faire partie intégrante de la collectivité.

# Nunavut qiniqhimaaqtun ilihaiyukharnik aulayukharnik Niqiliqivik 2020mi!

Allamik aulatitiumavit Nunavunmi nunalaani? Nunavut Kavamangit qiniqhimaaqtun ilihaiyiikharnik talvuuna ilihaiyukharnik ubluq tamaat, akunigaaluk havaktukharnik kiklivikhaqaqtunik havaanganik.

Nunavut ilihaqtun piumayut havadjagiktunik, quviahuktunik, iqiahungituniklu ilihaiyiinik. Ilihaiyiit Nunavunmi tunihimaaqtun pidjutikharnik quvianaqtumik tautuktitiyaanganik ilihaiqtunik, talvuuna iliharvingmi ilihaiyunik ilihagungnaigaangamik iliharvingmi hulilukaaktukharnik. Tamangnik iliharviit Nunavunmi avaliqangitun allatqiinguyutlu, taima ilihaiyiit akhurnaqtumik ilaqaqtukharnik nunalaamingni.

Nunavut

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**Casey Parker**
*Apprentice Aircraft Maintenance Engineer*
*Former Ramp Agent*

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