

Experience North 2023 Blog Post - Andrea Javellana - Thunder Bay

As a lifelong resident of the Greater Toronto Area who lived at home throughout undergrad, my ideal summer opportunity was one where I could apply my knowledge from the classroom while also living in a new location to gain independence and exploration. When I came across the job posting for “*Experience North*”, I knew this was exactly that opportunity and more.

As a statistics major, the prospect of telling a story with data is what drew me into Northern Policy Institute (NPI)'s work. In my position as a research analyst, I was able to do just that. My project was to examine and communicate any trends from residents of the five northern Ontario communities participating in the Rural Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP) about their attitudes towards immigration. Throughout this project, I have expanded my skills in data cleaning, data analysis, data visualization and effective writing in policy. This is in huge part to the people I worked with. Several great researchers and policy analysts supported me and were happy to hear any and all questions and ideas I had.

“*Experience North*” wasn't, however, just about the work in the office... As its name implies, I was encouraged to immerse myself in the community I was living in. I learned from and celebrated life at Pride, Centre Francophone, Festival of India and Fort William Historical Park. I adventured the great outdoors camping, biking, and canoeing. I even experienced the hospital when I had to stay overnight! *Note: NPI was very accommodating and supportive of my health.* All the while I developed strong bonds and friendships that I will cherish forever.

Four months later, I couldn't be happier with my time with NPI. If you're looking for an opportunity that will develop your professional skillset while learning more about the vast and unique communities of Northern Ontario, I would urge you to check out the *Experience North* program.