



Student Highlight

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WHAT'S MORE

- *Kalin most recently presented preliminary project findings at the 2024 CRRF Conference*
- *Kalin has deep interests in exploring career paths and opportunities within a government capacity*

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Kalin Contois

Undergraduate Student at Brandon University

GETTING TO KNOW KALIN CONTOIS

Kalin Contois is currently an Undergraduate student at Brandon University (BU), majoring in sociology. Though he was born in an urban centre, his upbringing in a rural reserve near Dauphin, Manitoba instilled a deep understanding of rural life. With a wide range of interests, Kalin's spends time supporting local and regional sports teams, and building project skills throughout his time here at BU.

RESERACH AND WORK EXPERIENCES

After high school graduation, Kalin completed one year of schooling in Civil Engineering at Red River College. However, interests and passions on social and societal systems resulted in enrolling at Brandon University subsequent years later. Through the program, Kalin was able to build a foundation of knowledge in sociology. However, it was learning about designing and applying research methods that sparked interest in project work.

Following these courses, Kalin enrolled in the Co-operatives Program at BU. Soon thereafter, Kalin was obtained a Co-op placement at the Trade Commissioner Service in Winnipeg, Manitoba – a department within Global Affairs Canada. Through this internship, he worked as a Trade Commissioner Assistant, gaining valuable insights into governmental operations and international business. His role involved creating and managing databases that are used to facilitate exports, providing experience and practical skills in market analysis



and governmental procedures. With interests in social and organizational networking, this placement allowed Kalin to learn about and work with organizations from across the province.

After completing this internship, Kalin’s interests in technology, and its influence on human behavior – specifically with consideration to the COVID-19 pandemic – resulted in building connections with the Rural Development Institute.

CURRENT PROJECTS

Currently, Kalin is working as part of a team on the ConnectedMB project. This project focuses on exploring the digital landscapes of Manitoba, and assessing the ways in which rural and remote communities in the province have responded to broadband issues through initiative and program development. Through Kalin’s life experiences, he understands the realities of connectivity discrepancies in rural and remote areas, further inspiring the interest in the project, and engaging in community-based work. Not only is he conducting literature research to better understand the history of broadband in the area, he is also implementing community-engagement methodologies, connecting with community stakeholders, and analyzing data based on these community collaborations. With regard to knowledge mobilization, Kalin is also working on digital platforms to edit, refine and produce a podcast series with the ConnectedMB research team.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Looking forward, Kalin is eager to continue his academic journey through the Master of Arts in Rural Development (MARD) Program here at BU to deepen his understandings and experiences within the world of rural research. He is also interested to learn more about initiatives such as PrairiesCan, and all the work they do for rural communities and researchers.

The Rural Development Institute is grateful to be affiliated with a variety of communities, agencies, academics and students across Canada and beyond. These relationships have facilitated the development of unique networks allowing for collaborative projects to take form, and RDI wants to extend its appreciation to all rural researchers.



Working on [the ConnectedMB] project, I feel like I’m gaining and improving upon so many skills that I wouldn’t be able to build on in coursework alone.

