

MICAH CENTRE

NEWSLETTER SPRING 2024

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Seasons of Change

Jonathan Nicolai-deKoning

Micah Centre Program Director

Like so many in Alberta, I relish the changes that arrive in April and May. The warming weather and longer days give rise to greening grass, blossoming trees, and fresh interactions with neighbours venturing outside for long evening walks and garden work after a long hibernation. The world is 'mud-lucious and puddle-wonderful' and I get caught up in the season of change.

That season of change also takes hold of us at the Micah Centre. Come May, many of our students venture out of the classroom and into the world to learn about the Creator's call to reconciliation, justice, and care.

Here are just a few recent examples. This May, we hosted our week-long 'Justice, Land, and Place' course on the land stewarded by our friends at Lady Flower Gardens, getting our hands into the garden dirt and our toes into the mud on the forest trails as we heard from elders, economists, historians, painters, farmers, and conservationists about what it means to belong to a place. Other students join our partners WorldRenew and Diaconia Nacional in southern Honduras, sweating alongside new Honduran friends as we work together to build a community water project and learn about the challenges



*A Place to Belong:
Justice, Land, and Place course;
Dave Ealey leading students on a
birding walk*

and joys of life in that place. In the summer, we send students on internships around Edmonton and around the world to witness the work of justice-advocates and community-builders.

These learning opportunities give rise to other changes in our students, mirroring the spring-time changes around us. Students begin to see their own stories as knitted to the stories of marginalized people around the world, and start to consider how they may live with those communities in mind. They reconsider the purpose of their work and their worship as ways to align themselves with God's love for all of God's creatures. Choose your spring-time garden metaphor – grow, blossom, flourish . . . we see our students leaning into the beautiful dream of shalom that God offers us in the gospel.

I am grateful for the movement from winter to spring, and for the way that movement is mirrored in our students' learning journeys. May you, too, relish the passage to spring and embrace this 'mud-lucious and puddle-wonderful' season of change – and as you do so (to steal a prayer from the Iona Community's George MacLeod) "may the Holy Spirit, Enlivener, breath on you, fill you with life anew so that we can see God's new creation, already upon us, breaking through, groaning and travailing, but already breaking through".



Quest Mexico 2024!

Student Reflections

Claire Peters

King's Student: Biology

Hi! My name is Claire and I just finished my third year as a Biology major at King's. Taking part in Quest Mexico through the Micah Centre this semester was such a memorable and impactful experience. During our time in Cuernavaca, we met several amazing people with a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. We learned about their lives, hopes, and struggles, as well as work they've done in response to social justice issues. It was often difficult to take in the realities they face, but also incredibly important and eye-opening. Being in Mexico and interacting with the people we met was far more meaningful than simply hearing about these things in a classroom, and allowed me to be impacted and changed by what I learned.



Claire Peters

One of my huge takeaways from this course was the value of learning and listening. So much is going on in our world around us, both near and far, and my own knowledge barely scratches the surface; Quest showed me how far it goes to actively listen, form relationships with people, and to do our best to engage questions and issues that may be new to us. Quest Mexico taught me a lot about liberation theology, and increased my awareness of the effects of globalization in Mexico, the immigration experience, and the rich cultures and history that have shaped the people of this country. One of my favourite speakers was an Indigenous spiritual leader, Nacho Torres, who led us in an Indigenous ceremony after hiking through the forest. I learned so much about the history and spirituality of Indigenous people in Mexico that I had never heard of before, and it was so cool to be included in a beautiful practice such as this.

Since coming home, I've continued to reflect on the many things that I learned and the significant encounters I had during our time at Quest. I'm still working on sharing what I learned and finding other ways to listen to others. I'm incredibly thankful to have experienced Quest Mexico with my peers from King's, and I found that sharing this time not only allowed us to learn together and provided opportunities for us to share our thoughts and feelings, but was also the start of many friendships. For anyone considering taking the Quest Mexico course, I definitely recommend it!



King's Quest Mexico students 2024



Rebekah Fuellbrandt

Rebekah Fuellbrandt

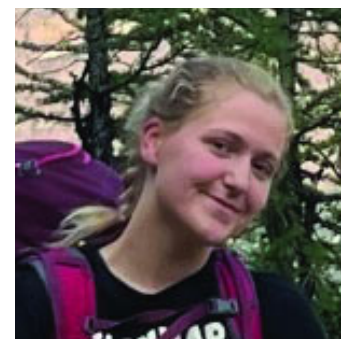
King's Student: Politics, History, & Economics

I went into Quest Mexico with few expectations and many questions. Before Quest, I had been thinking a lot about what the church should be doing in response to the needs and injustices of the world, and I was wondering what it meant for me to follow Jesus and do what is right and just. My questions were not answered at Quest, but they did gain new dimensions. Now, when I think about the church and its role in the world, I think about the people we met who were empowered by the liberating message of Jesus, and I also think of the many places where we saw the absence of the institutional church. I wonder where in Edmonton the church is absent and how I might bring the liberating gospel to those places.

The question of what it means to live justly in the world was also made more complicated for me. We met many people in Mexico who were living in abject poverty, and we learned about the dynamics of globalization that caused that poverty. I was left with many questions, including, "How do I live justly when there is a global system of injustice at work?" But we also met people like Nacho, an Indigenous leader who has been caring for his people for decades and who is perhaps the kindest, gentlest person I have ever met. Nacho has been doing difficult work for years, facing a global system that seeks to obliterate his people and their history, yet peace and goodness radiated off of him. Because of him, my vision of what it means to be a loving and just person expanded, and the possibilities of what my work and life might look like grew. This was the true gift of Quest—my questions are more complicated, but I have new models for living in the world and acting in justice and peace.



Quest Mexico students visiting a resident of La Estacion Settlement



Sarah Greidanus

Sarah Greidanus

King's Student: Chemistry

It is difficult to fully put into words all that we learnt and experienced during the Quest Mexico trip. I feel immensely grateful for the generous hosts and speakers that took the time to talk with us and share a glimpse into their life. I was quite moved by all the stories that we heard, especially those of the women in Cuernavaca. The group running the Women's Centre in La Estacion were all dedicated to supporting each other and improving their community. I saw a similar passion in Ofelia, one of the guest speakers, who despite raising several kids on her own, worked tirelessly to improve her community and was one of the main contributors to providing water access to the families in La Estacion. The strong sense of community was so evident and was something that I was inspired by. I often get so wrapped up in my own life and responsibilities that I forget the importance of community-building.

I feel as though the Quest program perfectly embodies what King's strives to do: to contribute to a more humane, just, and sustainable world. Throughout our time at quest we were immersed in learning experiences that broadened our perspectives and forced us to confront injustice. We sat with people face-to-face and engaged in their stories and with their knowledge of the culture and history of Mexico. This type of learning could not be fully accomplished in the classroom. We learned about current and historic economic, environmental, social, and political issues in Mexico; a country that many of us often visit, but never make ourselves aware of the current contexts. We also had an amazing time engaging in the culture through the food we ate, the museums we visited, the Indigenous ceremony we were invited to take part in, and the people we laughed and talked with. While the Quest program showed me just a glimpse of the social injustice present in our world, I feel as though it educated and motivated me to want to pursue a more humane, just, and sustainable world.

Student Refugee Program Update

Student Success, Ready for Year 2!

Ellen Algera

Micah Centre Administrative Assistant

Last August, King's welcomed its first-ever WUSC Student Refugee Program scholarship recipient! Academically-speaking, this student was well-prepared and has enjoyed his studies. All students coming to Canadian universities through this program (150 per year and counting) attended school in refugee camps and due to circumstances beyond their control, were unable to access university education. King's has partnered with World University Services Canada to sponsor one such student each academic year, subject to fundraising efforts.

We are ready to welcome a second SRP student this August! The Micah Centre provides oversight for SRP student support, and a local committee made up of King's students, staff, and faculty guides refugee student adjustment. Donations to the SRP fund go towards basic living needs for the students: groceries, clothing,

laptop computer, bus passes, textbooks, medical/dental needs, and any other costs beyond tuition and housing support. The local committee provides instruction on daily life in Canada - walking alongside, offering friendship. It's been an incredible, positive year of learning!

If you are interested in donating time, material goods, or monetary funds to the SRP Fund at King's, please email Ellen (Ellen.Algera@kingsu.ca). We welcome your participation as we look forward to setting up another dorm room at King's!



Change a life.

Give a student in a refugee camp an education at King's.

Right now there's a person in a refugee camp waiting to come to King's. Right now there's a student at King's who lived in a refugee camp last year.

The King's University has partnered with World University Service of Canada (WUSC) to give university students who are refugees an education. In addition to funding their first year of academic study at King's, donations support a refugee student's physical, financial, and social well-being.

WUSC is a Canadian non-profit founded in 1939 with the goal of providing better opportunities to young people across the globe. Since 1978, the Student Refugee Program has assisted more than 2,200 deserving students from 39 countries resettle to Canada for their university education.



Learn more or make a gift:

kingsu.ca/srp



Refuge Canada Tent

Exhibit at King's!



*Exhibit displayed on campus,
North Academic Building*

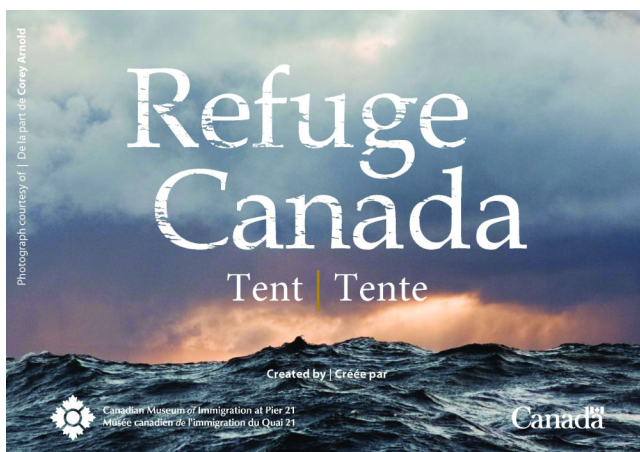
During the months of February and March, the Micah Centre partnered with the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 in Halifax, NS, hosting their travelling exhibit entitled Refuge Canada Tent. King's held the display in the North Academic Building foyer, where 1,000+ students, staff, faculty, and visitors could explore the topic over a six-week period. The exhibit shines a light on the long history of refugee resettlement in Canada, telling the stories of specific people groups who have been displaced by conflicts from World War 2 to the present.

The tough question was also asked, "Could you be a refugee?" with the answer being, "Yes, we could all be unwillingly displaced!" We are grateful to experience this fantastic educational tool created by the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, with the support of The Birks Family Foundation. If you missed the exhibit at King's it is currently at the Galloway Station Museum in Edson!



*Tinalbarka, a refugee from Mali, does
schoolwork inside her family's tent in
Mbera refugee camp, Mauritania,
April 14, 2016.*

Credit: © UNHCR/Agron Dragaj;



**Canadian
Museum of
Immigration
at Pier 21**

Honduras Water Project

Meet the 2024 Team!



Honduras Water Project

Meet the 2024 Team!



Alyssa Yorke
Hometown: Ardrossan
Major and year of study: Biology, third year
Interests/Hobbies: Basketball
Career Goals: Veterinarian
Why HWP?

This will be my second year as a member of the Honduras Water Project team, and I am very excited to once again be a part of the amazing impact that the project has. This year I am looking forward to building upon previous relationships that I have created with members of the project as well as creating new ones!



Celena Kingma
Hometown: Edmonton, AB
Major and year of study: Elementary Education, first year
Interests/Hobbies: Spending time in nature, bouldering, photography, and anything that allows me to be creative.
Career Goals: Elementary teacher
Why HWP?

I am passionate about social justice, experiential learning, and building relationships. I love to gain a deeper understanding of our interconnectedness.



Emily Reitsma
Hometown: Calgary
Major and year of study: Biology and Chemistry, third year
Interests/Hobbies: Hanging out with friends, running, hiking, and being outside!
Career Goals: Something biology-related :)
Why HWP?

I would love to learn about Honduran culture while building relationships with new individuals and serving the community.



Ethan Nanninga
Hometown: Neerlandia, AB
Major and year of study: Chemistry, third year
Interests/Hobbies: Science, sports
Career Goals: Something that involves some kind of science
Why HWP?

It is important for me to experience other cultures outside our bubble in Canada. I also think it is important to help those experiencing poverty.



Hailey Yorke
Hometown: Ardrossan
Major and year of study: Biology, first year
Interests/Hobbies: Basketball, hiking, camping
Career Goals: Undetermined
Why HWP?

I believe it is a great opportunity to learn while actively helping strengthen other communities. I am excited to be able to build new connections and learn about a different culture.



Kayla Soetaert
Hometown: Spruce Grove
Major and year of study: Politics, History, & Economics, fourth year
Interests/Hobbies: Basketball, snowboarding
Career Goals: Advocacy work/international development
Why HWP?

This will be my second time in Honduras. I'm excited to learn more about community development and build upon the connections that I made with community members last May.



Kevin Zarate
Hometown: Edmonton Alberta (Heredia, Costa Rica)
Major and year of study: Sociology, third year
Interests/Hobbies: Hiking, mountain biking, canoeing, sports, travelling
Career Goals: I want to serve others
Why HWP?

I enjoy meeting new people and cultures, sharing my life while making new friends, and learning from them and helping with what I can while enjoying God's creation.



Nicholas Apoll Gray
Hometown: Edmonton
Major and year of study: Major: Politics, History, & Economics, second year
Interests/Hobbies: International Development
Career Goals: Travel, music
Why HWP?

I seek to experience working with communities and ID work in general, as well as the opportunity to see a different part of the world.



Sadie Sullivan
Hometown: Sturgeon County
Major and year of study: Interdisciplinary Science: Biology and Chemistry, third year
Interests/Hobbies: Hanging out with friends and family, sports, outdoor activities, audiobooks, backgammon
Career Goals: Not sure yet, everything looks so amazing! I am open to suggestions! :)
Why HWP?

I think it is an incredible opportunity to build relationships with people in a new community, be immersed to learn and serve, gain new perspectives, and strengthen my faith.



Scott Mora
Hometown: Edmonton
Major and year of study: Biology, first year
Interests/Hobbies: Piano, cello, basketball, volleyball, and soccer; coaching, teaching, and mentoring
Career Goals: Medicine (epidemiology)
Why HWP?

It's a learning experience involving community development and personal growth. Understanding different worldviews is critical in moving forward with my goals, living Christ's message of serving.



Casey Belway
Hometown: Eckville
Major and year of study: King's alum '23: Biology
Interests/Hobbies: Hiking, paddle boarding, and basketball
Career Goals: I want to pursue something in healthcare!
Why HWP?

I have a passion for social justice, and I want to show love and kindness to others but in a sustainable way that empowers their own worthiness, abilities, and power.



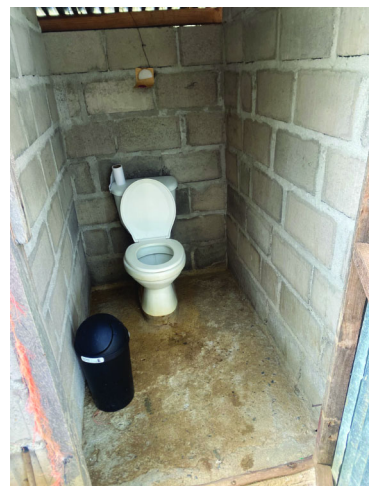
Erin Greidanus
Hometown: Peace River
Major and year of study: King's alum '19: Environmental Studies, Biology concentration
Interests/Hobbies: Hiking, backcountry & downhill skiing, travelling, chilling with my cats
Career Goals: Applying to become a veterinarian
Why HWP?

The HWP is inspiring and meaningful to me. I participated twice before as a student, and love that it fosters relationship-building and deep learning, not just poverty/injustice content. I hope to help facilitate some of that learning for this year's team!



Josh Dubutz
Hometown: Edmonton, Alberta
Major and year of study: King's alum '20: Social Sciences-Kinesiology; current Elementary Ed. student at King's
Interests/Hobbies: Hiking, painting/drawing, playing guitar
Career Goals: Elementary teacher, future Master's in Education
Why HWP?

I had the privilege to go to Honduras in 2021, and the beautiful culture I experienced deepened, illuminated, and challenged so many aspects of my life. To facilitate this learning experience with university students is something I am passionate about as I know firsthand the impact HWP can have.



HWP May 1-17, 2024: local celebration in El Espino and Cedrito



Students learning about aquaponics success

Healthy Homes initiative

Pakitinâsowin Fund Update

Building Bridges, Supporting Change

Jonathan Nicolai-deKoning

Micah Centre Program Director

Momentum continues to build for our support of Indigenous-led reconciliation and reparations. Our Pakitinâsowin Fund granted \$10,000 to two Treaty 6 initiatives – one led by elder Russell Auger, the other by community leader Verna Fisher. We have received excellent reports from both programs! Elder Russell's healing circles are overflowing with participants, and word is spreading among the community about the work of restorative healing happening under his guidance. Verna's Oskya Metchewawin ('New Beginnings') circles have been so successful that they have already given birth to new community programming.

We are looking forward to supporting a new initiative at the summer solstice in late June, with elder Russell and Verna serving the Pakitinâsowin Fund as mentors for the next recipients.

If you are interested in supporting grassroots Indigenous-led programming, perhaps as one small way to embody your commitment to reconciliation and repair with Indigenous peoples on our shared land, please consider supporting the Pakitinâsowin Fund. You can find out more at King's website: <https://www.kingsu.ca/give/other-giving-opportunities/pakitinasowin>



Micah Centre

at The King's University



give here



follow IG

The Micah Centre is located on land governed by Treaty 6. We acknowledge and celebrate all the many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit whose footsteps have marked these lands.

The Micah Centre relies on the support of our partners to continue our work: building a global vision of justice and renewal with King's students and community.

Thank you for your continued gifts of prayer, time, and encouragement to us and our students.

If you are interested in supporting us financially, you can visit [kingsu.ca/give](https://www.kingsu.ca/give), and designate your gift to the Micah Centre.



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