

# Green Thumbs UP



**School:** Reynolds Secondary School;  
Victoria, BC

**Grades:** 9-12

**Program:** The Green Group, a student-led club which oversees several ongoing environmentally-conscious projects at the school.

**Reynolds Secondary truly walks the talk** when it comes to teaching its students about environmental sustainability. Most of the credit for this goes to the school's active Green Group, facilitated by student leadership advisor Heather Coey.

"A strong interest in environmental projects came up through our Leadership group, so we formed a subgroup to look at opportunities that were of an ecological nature; things like taking part in Earth Week, encouraging bike/walk to school days and sourcing and selling stainless steel water bottles and organic t-shirts," Coey says.

Within a few years, the Green Group has successfully taken on a number of projects to reduce the school's impact on the environment, such as implementing a

**"Following the inspiration of students is very important or they won't be invested in the project."**

zero-waste system which includes recycling organics, plastics, paper, glass, metal, electronics and batteries. The group has entered some of their projects in the BC Green Games, a province-wide competition designed to motivate action, enable sharing and reward and celebrate the green efforts of schools.

For their efforts, the students have won solar panels for the roof of their school from Solar BC – not to mention recognition and respect from environmental groups such as the Sierra Club and Life Cycles Project Society.

To date, one of the most significant projects of the Green Group has been the multi-year Green Spaces Project, a way to engage students and staff in the value of the school's courtyard.

"Initially, the idea was to create an urban food garden in our inner courtyard," Coey says, explaining that its goals were understanding sustainable growing, promoting healthy foods, supporting local food shelters by donating crops and creating connections with other schools and the community. "The idea 'grew' as students took on the project and starting looking more at the school spaces and the concept of greening the school grounds to make them a more attractive place to go."

With the help of Leadership Victoria (a community-based, voluntary organization committed to developing, supporting, >



Fisheries and Oceans  
Canada  
Coast Guard College

Pêches et Océans  
Canada  
Collège de la Garde côtière

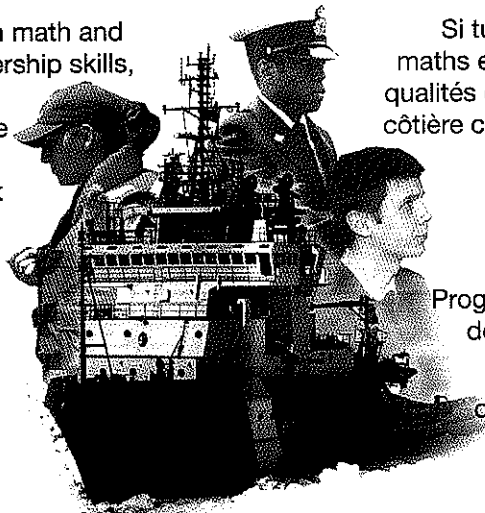


## Searching for a career and tuition-free degree?

If you enjoy travelling, excel in math and physics, and have good leadership skills, the Canadian Coast Guard College offers a 4-year degree program in navigation or marine engineering that might be just for you.

Canadian Coast Guard  
Officer Training Program:

Call 1-888-582-9090 or  
visit [www.cgc.gc.ca](http://www.cgc.gc.ca)



## Tu cherches une carrière sans frais de scolarité?

Si tu aimes voyager, tu excelles en maths et en physique et que tu as des qualités de chef, le Collège de la Garde côtière canadienne offre un programme de 4 ans en navigation ou en mécanique maritime menant à un diplôme universitaire.

Programme de formation d'officiers  
de la Garde côtière canadienne :

Composez le 1-888-582-9090  
ou visitez le site [www.cgc.gc.ca](http://www.cgc.gc.ca)

Canada




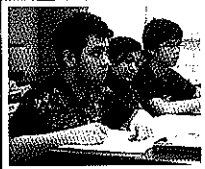
recognizing and honouring community leaders), the Green Group convinced the school district to remove asphalt from the courtyard and contracted landscape architects to design the new space. The students then built raised garden beds, compost bins, cold frames, as well as bat and bird houses to encourage wildlife and provide natural insect control.

"The students have been part of coordinating groundbreaking activities and monthly 'garden parties' to get students and staff out in the courtyard - to use it and see what is happening. They play music, paint signs, have food and dig in the dirt," says Coey, who, as coordinator of the Green Spaces Project, handles grant proposals, keeps track of receipts and other administrative duties.

"Following the inspiration of students is very important or they won't be invested in the project. But students also graduate and leave, so it is also very important to have a passionate teacher/advisor who sticks around to ensure continuity over the years," she says. "A supportive principal, like the one we have in Alana Charlton, can also make all the difference. Ideas are supported, not blocked."

Coey says that the Green Group, which has a core group of 25 students with the support of many others who pitch in with the activities, currently has several projects on the go that will continue to sharpen members' leadership skills.

**YOUR PATHWAY  
to University**

- First & second year university programs for transfer to University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, University of Victoria and other major Canadian universities
- Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees
- University Foundation Programs (Grade 11 and 12)
- Academic ESL Program

*Intakes in January, May and September for the above programs*


International students in a university program at Columbia College may work part-time (up to 20 hours per week) while studying at Columbia College.

For further information, contact:  
Admissions Office, Columbia College  
500-555 Seymour Street  
Vancouver, B.C. V6B 6J9  
Tel: 604-683-8360 Fax: 604-682-7192  
Email: admin@columbiacollege.ca

**COLUMBIA COLLEGE**  
founded 1936

[www.columbiacollege.ca](http://www.columbiacollege.ca)

**You** know there's more to healing and wellness...than a prescription or a five-minute consultation, and you believe that teaching people how to be well goes a long way towards disease prevention and building a strong, healthy society. You want to change the future of health care in Canada, and you're excited about being part of a sustainable health-care system.



**Change the future  
of health care in Canada**



The Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine is Canada's premier institute for education and research in naturopathic medicine. CCNM brings new thinking, new research and new approaches to health care, harnessing science to unleash the healing power of nature. For more information on becoming a naturopathic doctor and changing the future of health care in Canada, visit [www.ccnm.edu](http://www.ccnm.edu) or call 1-866-241-2266.



"This year our recycling program has a big focus on reducing. This will include speaking to our neighbours like Tim Hortons about packaging (as the discarded garbage often) ends up at our school," she says.

Presently, the Green Group is working on a practical guide to help other schools follow in their ecological footsteps (more info at [www.greenspaceproject.org](http://www.greenspaceproject.org)). In the meantime, Coey advises those interested in setting up a similar student club to think long term, and most importantly, don't give up.

"Get support from your administration and give lots of positive reinforcement when you 'catch' students and staff acting in positive ways, like using a recyclable container," she says.

As an offshoot of the Green Group, Coey has created an Environment & Sustainability course so that students can contribute and further their passion in the academic setting and perhaps even cultivate future careers.

"One of the most gratifying things has been seeing students follow related careers by going on to Environmental Studies at the University of Victoria or to the Horticultural program at Royal Roads University. Others are just being positive forces in their families and communities, leading a paradigm shift to thinking about how we are living and impacting our planet," Coey says.

"I can see seeds that were planted here starting to sprout, both figuratively and literally. I can see the difference we are making." ♣csc

*Talkback: We want to hear about your "Great Idea" including successful programs, student initiatives or special events in your school. Contact us at: [info@marketzonepro.com](mailto:info@marketzonepro.com).*



## what will you become?

On the road less travelled, you will find a unique university experience, perfect for 21st-century explorers. Memorial University of Newfoundland is a comprehensive university featuring four campuses, shaped by our North Atlantic location. Memorial is the largest university in Atlantic Canada, offering more than 100 diverse undergraduate and graduate programs. We also have incredibly affordable tuition. To find out what you can become, take a virtual tour online.

1-866-354-8896 (in North America)



[www.mun.ca/become](http://www.mun.ca/become)