



PETERBOROUGH KAWARTHA HALIBURTON  
**Sustainability Education Network**  
*Located on Michii Sagiig Territory*

**6<sup>th</sup> RCE Meeting of the Americas - Regional Conference**  
**September 13-15, 2017**  
**Summary and Takeaways**  
**Created by Carlotta James**

30 participants from 7 countries (USA, Canada, Japan, Brazil, Guatemala, Colombia, and Australia) were invited to share their regional initiatives, including the role that education for sustainable development plays at the local level, at the 6<sup>th</sup> RCE Meeting of the Americas in Vancouver, Canada from September 13-15, 2017. Dorothy Taylor, Brianna Salmon, Jane Gray, and Carlotta James from Peterborough, Ontario participated in the conference. Below is a summary of the event.

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**RCE Vancouver (Dr. David Zandvliet - Simon Fraser University)**

- Research institute based out of SFU; governance structure through SFU
  - Status: Institute for Environmental Learning acts as the research institute and RCE host
  - Challenges: lack of roles & responsibilities, decision-making and irregular meetings of organizations involved in the RCE network
  - For more information: [eco-learning.org](http://eco-learning.org) and [walkingthetalk.bc.ca](http://walkingthetalk.bc.ca)
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**Global RCE Network (Phillip Vaughter - UNU staff)**

- UNU: resource and training institution within UN system
- UNU focuses on research and capacity building
- UNU has campuses around the world that are working on many global issues
- UNU-IAS (Institute for Advanced Sustainability) focuses on sustainability science, encompassing a broad range of issues related to governance and resilience
- SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals): 17 goals for global citizens, a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure all people enjoy peace & prosperity



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- ESD Program priorities: Global Action Plan on ESD; sustainable consumption and production; biodiversity & ecosystem services; climate change and disaster risk reduction
- Goals: creating links between Ministry of Education and Ministry of Environment
- *From knowing to doing*

### **GAP (Global Action Programme) – Priority Action Plan:**

1. advancing policy
2. transferring learning and training environments
3. building capacities of educators and trainers
4. accelerating sustainable solutions at the local level
5. empowering & mobilizing youth → **UNU would like to designate a youth focal point within each RCE** → youth is considered 16-35 years old!

### **Next Steps:**

- Projects → what can we work on together?
- Communications → what is desired? (Via Facebook, Twitter, Email, etc.)
- Exchange and collaboration → can RCEs in the Americas design international exchange programs between universities and community groups?

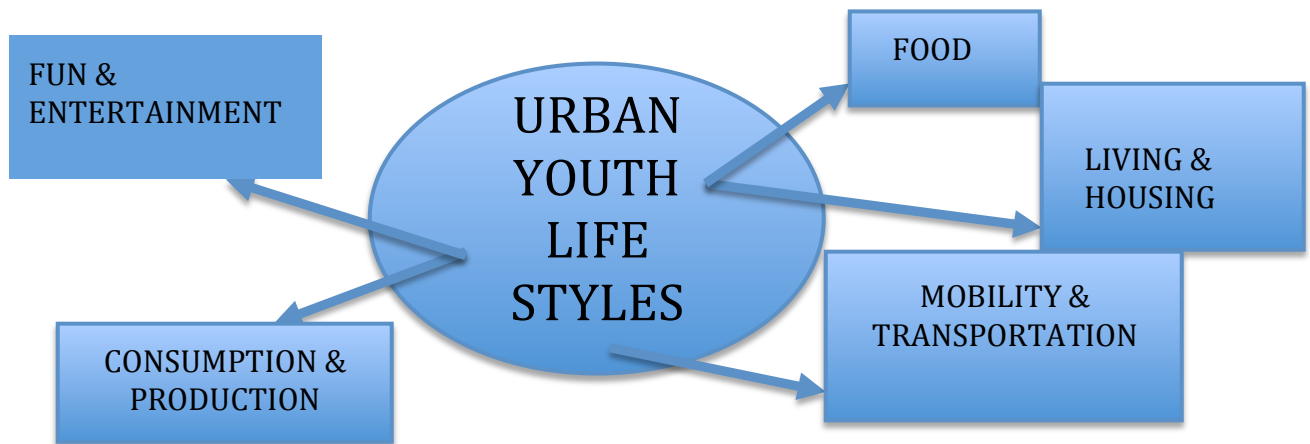
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### **RCE Bogota (Dr. Moreno - Universidad El Bosque)**

- Established in 2009
- Focus: environmental learning
- Activities: conferences on environmental education and environmental school projects, known as *PRAE – Proyectos Ambientales Escolares* → all public schools must have a *PRAE*; all universities are encouraged to have an environmental university project, known as *PRAUS – Proyectos Ambientales Universitarios*
- Forums: Indigenous communities, UN Decade of ESD
- Issue: Limited resources, however, they can still make things happen!
- Current Project: Urban Youth: How to achieve sustainable low carbon lifestyles? (*Proyecto: Estilos de Vida Sostenibles*)
  - o Project looks at lifestyles from holistic perspective



- Determinants of lifestyles: access, infrastructures, and attitudes
- 1,000 youth given questionnaires
- Phase 1: *Trueque* (exchange) → bike rides, books, clothes, and food



Graphic of Determinants of Lifestyles for Urban Youth Project

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### **RCE Guatemala (Dr. Sacayon)**

- The RCE Guatemala is based on one activity → Mayan Communities & Bio-cultural Diversity Course
- The RCE in Guatemala is working on cultural and natural heritage with Mayan communities

#### **Background:**

- Guatemala is home to 63 groups of Indigenous peoples
- 50% of the population are Indigenous; they live in conditions of extreme poverty
- Meaning of Guatemala: *Land of Trees, Place of Forests*
- Communal lands managed through collective action
- Challenges faced at universities: local knowledge is never investigated; ignorance of local customs and traditions is common at universities, and the domain of Western knowledge
- This is why RCE is so important → to elevate local knowledge holders



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- *Dialogue of knowledge* is the tool of intercultural exchanges → professors and ***accountants of Mayan time*** (spiritual leaders) are viewed as equal partners at the sites.
    - On the field trips, students visit Mayan communities, volcanoes, and forests.
  - New projects: developing a student-centred ESD school & developing wisdom dialogues
  - The new school movement uses a pedagogical model based on the following educators: Montessori (*creating*), Dewey (*doing*), Decroly (*laughing*), and Freinet (*living*)
    - The new school movement promotes active learning and learning communities in Guatemala
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### **RCE Curitiba-Parana (Dr. Charvet)**

- Goals: Fostering ESD and empowering educators to lead changes for a sustainable future.
- Curitiba-Parana → Green capital of Brazil; various projects focused on sustainable urban planning
- Biodiversity: Araucaria Pine Tree → birds do the planting!
  - The Araucaria Pine Tree is victim to unsustainable commercial logging, and a critically endangered species.



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Araucaria Pine Tree

### Projects:

- CRIE Magazine (Centro Regional de Integração de Expertise)
- Virtual Conference for youth, though no focal points yet
- Certificate for recognition on SDGs
- StoryMax: an initiative with start-up company to promote Youth and SDGs through a free app → Story-telling on poverty, zero hunger, and access to water
  - o Languages available: Spanish, Portuguese, English
  - o To learn more: <https://storymax.me/en/#aplicativos>

### Next Steps:

- Biodiversity and Ecological Services
- Sustainability Collection, Videos, and Sustainability Centres
- [The Economics of Ecosystems & Biodiversity](#) (TEEB) project partnership with business people, traditional knowledge and biodiversity services
- Partnership with businesses & NGOs: [Green-Blue Water Coalition Partnership](#)



## **RCE Greater Burlington (Dr. Poleman – University of Vermont) – Part 1**

- Status: RCE through University of Vermont
- Partnerships: between University of Vermont, City of Burlington, Shelburne Farms, and Burlington School District
- **Burlington Geographic** → As part of the PLACE (Place-Based Landscape Analysis and Community Engagement) Project, **Burlington Geographic** explores the unfolding story of the landscape and community of Burlington
  - *Personally, I thought this was the most interesting project taking place through an RCE! The Burlington Geographic project involved many sectors of society, multigenerational voices and backgrounds, and looked at Burlington through a “layered cake” landscape to tell the rich story of Burlington’s cultural heritage, natural history, and ecological potential. I would love to explore the possibility of creating a similar project here in Peterborough.*
  - Burlington Geographic consisted of a six part series using a systems approach → The project also looked at the SDGs as they relate to “place”
  - The Burlington landscape was discovered and celebrated through the lenses of a “layered cake” → What’s underneath affects what’s going on above.
    - Layers: community needs, economy, society, land use, wildlife, vegetation, soil, geology, and water

### **LANDSCAPE LENSES**

One framework to look at the cultural and natural history of Burlington is using three lenses:

the physical landscape  
the cultural landscape, and  
the ecological landscape

This framework draws attention to the ways in which the stories and processes inherent in each landscape are closely intertwined with those of the others. For example, the agricultural history of Burlington and the surrounding area is largely determined by the underlying geology, and, in turn, exerts tremendous influence on the type and quality of wildlife habitat. Through using all three of these lenses, we can move toward seeing Burlington as an integrated set of patterns shaped by a series of natural and





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6 part series on:

- Urban Wilds → field trips into forest systems
- Burlington Flowing → water systems
- Burlington Illuminated → energy systems
- Pathways & Pavement → transportation systems
- Burlington's Edible History → food systems and food landscape
- Burlington Underfoot → physical landscape
- To learn more: <http://www.uvm.edu/place/burlingtongeographic/>

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### **RCE Greater Burlington (Dr. Hudspeth – University of Vermont) – Part 2**

- Conference at UVO on Climate Change Economy
- Sustainability Champions → 200 individuals or groups who inspire, empower, and encourage others
- RCE Burlington is stitching together what already exists:
  - For example: Farm to Table initiative through the Intervale Center
  - Intervale Center (NGO) → community model to support local food systems
  - Intervale Center Farm Program → 1 million pounds of organic produce across 11 farms is produced annually → The program leases land to farmers in perpetuity



Intervale Center



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### **RCE Georgetown (Dr. Martin - South Carolina)**

- Status: newly designated
- Official government structures around the world are changing → they noted that local and global governments are merging together
- Biosphere Reserve for Atlantic Southeast
- Activities: youth group; RCE Task Force; curriculum development
- RISE Project → Resilience, Innovation, Sustainability, and Education Project

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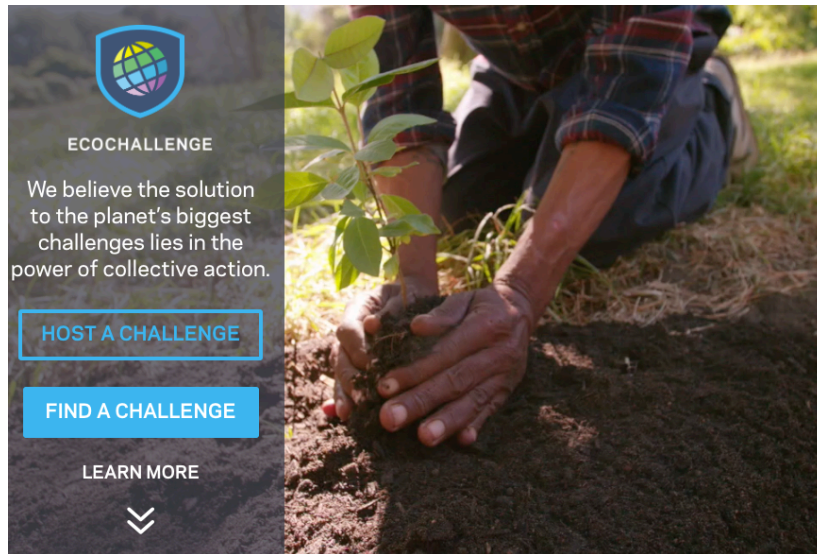
### **RCE Portland (Dr. Kim Smith)**

- Known as: GPSEN (Greater Portland Sustainability Education Network)
- Status: designated in 2013
- On-going questions: How can ESD/RCEs help our region? How can we increase our collective impact?
- Climate Action Plan → creation of a progress report
- Promotion of Sustainability Literacy Test (SuLi Test)
- Using RCE status to apply for funding
- Promotion of youth network
- GAP commitments → GPSEN submitted report to UNESCO
- 17 SDGs → GPSEN found 17 organizations that were already working on these goals → they helped people to network and how 17 SDGs coincide with each other
  - o *What organizations in Peterborough, CKL, Halliburton are also doing the same work? Can we map out each organization within our network and how they relate to each SDG?*
- On-going Newsletter → organizations/partners submit activities → newsletter is a conduit for stories!
- EcoChallenge from October 11-25: <https://ecochallenge.org/>
  - o The EcoChallenge gives people the tools and inspiration to reduce their impact on the planet and contribute to a healthy, vibrant and sustainable future. The EcoChallenge is part of the Northwest Earth Institute, a non-profit in Portland. The Northwest Earth Institute mapped their courses to the SDGs, using a simple table to determine where SDGs are excelling or falling behind.





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### **RCE Grand Rapids (Dr. Lorr – Michigan)**

- WEGE prize for designing circular economy
  - o WEGE prize is an annual international student design competition:  
<http://www.wegeprize.org/>
- Annual virtual youth conference
- Seeds of Promise → Place-based, urban community improvement initiative:  
<https://seedsofpromise.net/>

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### **RCE Saskatchewan (Dr. Petry)**

- Status: In order to get the designation, the team found out what their values are in the community, the ministry, etc.
- When meeting with governments/companies, RCE Saskatchewan talked about money & numbers → this is how agencies/institutions can relate!
- RCE has a lot of power because of the Yancoal case → they used systems thinking to win the case
- RCE Saskatchewan sent response to government of Saskatchewan on conditional approval of the [Yancoal Southey Potash Mine](#)
- They used an environmental impact assessment intervention (using water as the environmental considerations) for this case
- Sustainability goals achieved through advocacy and partnerships



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### Conference Takeaways:

- **RCE Kawarthas** → different capacity because of staffing and funding; all the RCEs at the conference work through universities; professors are spearheading the initiative, but it also means there isn't a POC
- **RCE Kawarthas** → only RCE hosted at community-based organization (GreenUP)
- **Communication** → use of Twitter and Facebook could solve some communication challenges between RCEs
- **Capacity-building** → North American RCEs have greater access to funding and resources → RCE Kawarthas could provide capacity, expertise, and skills to regions in the south
- **Exchange and Collaboration** → an opportunity to design international exchange programs between RCEs in our region and other regions
- **Pathways to Stewardship & Kinship Initiative** → RCE Guatemala (Dr. Eduardo Sacayon) was really interested in this initiative, and asked whether we could translate it into Spanish as they don't have the capacity or funds to do so
- **Mapping RCE Kawarthas to SDGs** → look at each region and what they are doing and how it relates to SDGs → This will feed into the Expert Database
- **Empowering & Mobilizing Youth** → UNU would like to designate a youth focal point within each RCE → We can start to think about engaging youth on a more regular basis



The RCE in the Americas Conference Group