

# My Educational Influences



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# MY UNCLE



Camp Potlatch, Boys and Girls Club

I would not be the person I am today without the love and support of my aunt and uncle. My uncle was instrumental in the Boys and Girls Clubs (BGC) and growing up he would always let me tag along when he visited BGC locations and trips to check in at Camp Potlatch. My uncle was a strong advocate of connecting with youth and helping people to understand how impactful it can be when children have significant, positive influences in their lives. When I reflect back on my life, he has had a very strong influence in my desire to become a teacher because of the way he connected with me during some of my hardest years growing up. I am one of those youth that his impact has shaped who I am today. He showed me that it is possible to have a positive influence on children no matter what their circumstances are. I want that to be reflected in how I teach and connect with students.





# HOMESCHOOL

My oldest son has a chronic medical condition and spent a lot of time in and out of BC Children's Hospital and Sick Kids Hospital in Toronto. I never thought I would homeschool but I felt at that time, it was the right thing for my children. I reflect back on the struggles and challenges of navigating teaching three different grades and different abilities, but also having to sometimes be creative where we spent our time learning at hospitals, hotels and on airplanes. There were also many rewarding moments in being a part of my children's education. I was able to find ways to make learning fun even when you're connected to IV lines and stuck in a hospital for holidays. My daughter loved school and I was able to tailor her curriculum to enrich her learning and allowed her to work ahead in some subjects.





# HOMESCHOOL





# THROUGH A PARENT'S LENS

I am grateful that I was able to see positive school experiences through a parent's lens when it came to my kids being in classrooms. There are many moments along the way that I could say influenced my desire to be a teacher, but one that stands out is a teacher that my oldest son had in grade 4. When I reflect on my time as a parent volunteer in her class, it was the learning that happened outside of the classroom walls that made me want to be a teacher like her. Fort Langley was the perfect place for her to connect her class to outdoor education whenever possible. She would have elders from the Kwantlen First Nation take the students for nature walks and connect the learning in class to the community around them.





# THROUGH A PARENT'S LENS





# NAVIGATING SPECIAL NEEDS

When my youngest son was in grade 4, he was diagnosed with an intellectual disability. If you ask my children they will tell you I am a pretty good advocate in the medical world, and I assumed this would similar. I was wrong. I wish I could say that we had the assessment, we received funding and a CEA and we all lived happily ever after. That is not our story. My son did qualify for CEA funding, but as we know resources are limited and he was not high enough on the priority list. His teacher and the learning resource teacher in elementary school did the best they could. It meant he was pulled out of class regularly for assistance and became isolated from classmates as he was different. He spent recess and lunch walking with the monitors as no one wanted to play with him. He was never invited to birthday parties and no one came to his. Highschool came and I felt like I had no real choice when they offered to pull him from academics and he was only enrolled in life skills and electives. He missed science and although he likes sports, he didn't want that many pe classes. It was heartbreaking to see a system that wasn't as inclusive as they seemed to promote. I watched with pride as he graduated with an Evergreen diploma and hoped the ESTR program at TRU would give him opportunities to grow. I reflect back on the frustration and tears (from both of us), the countless hours of advocating for my son and watching him fall through the cracks. His story is a big part of why I want to be a teacher because of what we experienced. I want to be a part of creating some positive changes in the classroom.



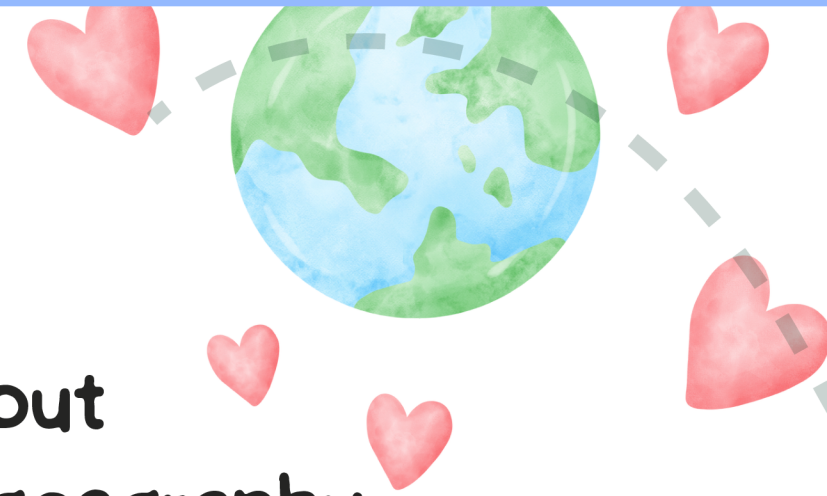


# THIS IS AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY





# UNIVERSITY GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES



My first human geography course I took I really wasn't sure what I was in for but geography seemed like a good teachable subject. In that class I learned that geography was way more interesting than I remembered from school and I learned that teaching and learning can be something that is engaging and fun. The professor had an impact on how I viewed school and learning. I used to dread small group discussions as I was not usually one to contribute in class. Their method of co-teaching/co-learning changed that for me and I quickly started to look forward to those classes. By creating a safe space for everyone to have a voice, I knew that was something I wanted to have in my own classroom.







THANK YOU FOR  
BEING A PART OF  
MY JOURNEY

