

Title: "150 Profiles: Candice Lys"

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150 Profiles: Candice Lys

By Candice Lys

As a way to mark the 150th anniversary of confederation, The Philanthropist profiled Canadians from across the non-profit sector and put a face to 150 individuals who work or volunteer in Canada's social sector. As 2017 drew to a close, we published our final profile of 2017 — reaching our target of speaking with 150 people! The Philanthropist recognizes that Canada's history did not begin 150 years ago. And it will continue beyond 150 years. In this spirit, we will continue to profile people in the non-profit sector throughout 2018.

Name: Candice Lys

Current role in the sector: Executive Director, FOXY — Fostering Open Expression among Youth

Years working and/or volunteering in the non-profit sector: Nine years working and several more volunteering.

What was your first job in the sector or a defining moment?

I worked for the university as a peer health educator during my undergrad at the University of Alberta, where I facilitated health promotion activities about sexual health, harm reduction, and stress management. Being a peer health educator triggered my interest in health promotion and led me towards volunteering overseas with Youth Challenge International, completing a Masters in Health Promotion and to the University of Toronto where my PhD work focused on the development, implementation, and evaluation of FOXY.

Describe your desk/workspace.

Organized chaos. A plethora of colour-coded post-its are on the wall, along with encouraging thank you notes from my elders and youth that I have collected over the years, a collage of family and FOXY/SMASH (Strength, Masculinities, and Sexual Health) photos, and a hand drawn copy of a diagram that includes the leadership profile types for all the members of the FOXY/SMASH staff team. A smudge bowl with traditional medicines sits on my window sill, and my beagle office mate Maple often sleeps in her bed by my feet. My trusty graphing calculator from ninth grade sits beside my laptop and gets used every day. The giant novelty cheque from when we earned the \$1 million Arctic Inspiration Prize is up on the wall!

What are you reading or following that has expanded your understanding of the non-profit sector?

My latest read is *The Leadership Challenge* by Kouzes and Posner recommended to me by a

professional mentor. The book was written 30 years ago, but I think its perspectives on leadership traits and how we learn leadership rather than are born with these traits are still valid today.

What do you think our sector needs to be thinking about?

The non-profit sector needs to think about systems change. I think this is happening to some degree, but how can we all work together to really get at the roots of issues, to advocate for structural change and truly address those social determinants of health?

Do you know someone we should profile as part of this series? Email us at philanthropistprofiles@gmail.com