

# Helping youth develop entrepreneurial skills

by Stella Shepard

The **Young Millionaires** program is offered Island wide by five regional service agencies, and has operated since 1991. The program teaches basic business skills to youth ages eight to 16 and helps them start a business of their own over the summer months.

They develop basic business skills such as record keeping, customer service, public speaking, and life skills. Participants attend workshops on marketing, customer service, accounting and basic business planning. Participants submit a business plan that outlines their business, ideas, goals and a request for funding of up to \$150 towards start-up costs.

"This year, more than 200 students enrolled in the program across the Island, and they started 145 new businesses," says **Karen Duffy**, Coordinator of the program.

"I see students come into the program shy and leave much more confident. It's easy to measure the success of each business based on profit and growth, but it is far more important to see the value of the program in terms of business education and confidence building."

## Some of the students' presentations at St. Peter's Business Complex

**Tanner Ansems** is 11 years old and in grade six and his brother **Nicolas** is nine years old and is in grade four. They both attend French Immersion at Montague Consolidated School. Their business is called **Secret Treats**.

"My brother and I pretty much do everything together, so when the Young Millionaires Program was offered at our school, we decided to sign up," says Tanner. "It sounded really fun and it didn't hurt to know we could make money."

"We decided to make candy for kids and dog treats for dogs," adds Nicolas. "The next thing was to decide on a business name. This was probably the hardest part because we wanted to have a name that was catchy."

"We also made keepsake Minions. They were made out of paper towel rolls and you could take their head off and put secret things in it," adds Tanner. "We learned a lot about starting a business, about how to keep track of money to buy supplies and the money we got from sales," says Nicolas. "We met a lot of people and we had lot of fun."

They plan to continue making and selling their products because of the popularity of their sales.

**Ella Burke**, 10, and **Taylor Gallant**, 11, attend Souris Regional School. They are best friends and opened a summer business called **The Garden Girls**.

"I was so excited when I heard about the Young Millionaires Program at school," says Ella. "Taylor and I convinced our moms we could run our own business."

"I decided to paint lady bug rocks and make garden mushrooms and sun catchers from repurposed glass vases and bowls. I staged the booth with flowers and driftwood to attract customers. My lady bug rocks were definitely the most popular."

"It was a good experience, and I soon realized how much work it is to run your own business. Anyone can do it if you work hard enough. I am using the money I made to pay for riding lessons."

"I want to do this again next year," says Taylor. "It was a great experience, and it helped me to be better at math and at saving money. I learned how to talk with customers and answer their questions."

Ella plans to become a veterinarian, caring for animals. Taylor plans to become an animal advocate and own and operate an animal shelter.



From left: Tanner and Nicolas Ansems, sons of Chantale and Barry Ansems, Whim Road.



From left: Ella Burke, from Bay Fortune, is the daughter of Barbie Lavers and Carl Burke. Taylor Gallant, from Eglington, is the daughter of Tracie and Mark Gallant.

The program was hosted by the **Rural Action Centre** in Montague. Visit [www.ruralactioncentres.ca](http://www.ruralactioncentres.ca) For more information about the **Young Millionaires Program**, visit [www.youngmillionairesprogram.ca](http://www.youngmillionairesprogram.ca)



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# Human Resource services will continue for Eastern Kings businesses

by Stella Shepard

In 2016, **Montague Rural Action Centre** hired a Human Resources Project Officer for a year to develop effective Human Resources best practices for small business owners in Eastern Kings.

"We are pleased to have secured funding for another year to continue this much needed support to small business owners," says **Martina MacDonald**, General Manager, Rural Action Center in Montague. "Human Resources Project Officer **Margaret Gallant** will continue to work with local businesses. Small business owners don't have the time or the funds to hire an HR specialist."

## Margaret provides a wide range of services such as:

- developing HR policies, programs, manuals and succession planning
- implementing leadership training to conduct staff reviews
- identifying best practices within the workplace
- processing and assisting with recruiting, interviewing, and retaining staff

"The HR need was validated by the successful results of last year," says Margaret. "Working together resulted in creating jobs and increased business confidence in relation to their HR planning."

"Goals for this year include helping the businesses continue to create employment, to bring employees to rural PEI, and have them remain here."

Funding is provided in whole or in part through the Canada/PEI Labour Market Development Agreement and Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.

## Testimonials

**Grandview Welding** – Rick Speelman, Owner

"Being a part of this HR project was transformational. Our needs were assessed, and an HR strategic and change management plan was implemented. The HR project had a significant impact on our company and its people practices."

**Cahill Construction** – Chris Cahill and David MacAulay, Co-Owners

"The HR Project Office developed a working plan that over time was adjusted to meet our needs. She connected with funding programs that we could take advantage of to ensure we were meeting current industry standards."

"We valued that Margaret was there to reach out and focus on the plan and keep it going with minimal impact on our day to day work."

"A year later, we have key people in place who were needed, we have realigned some roles, and we feel very confident that our company is in a better place because of the HR project and Margaret's leadership."

All services provided by **Rural Action Centres** collaborate through a cooperative service model to ensure complete and seamless access for support to develop programs for business start-ups, the business community as a whole, and other community groups.



Margaret Gallant, Human Resources Project Officer, works out of the Rural Action Centre, Montague.

For more about **Rural Action Centres**, visit [www.ruralactioncentres.ca](http://www.ruralactioncentres.ca)

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