

## Examples of Self-directed Learning Projects

1. A **business student** must develop a business plan as a course assignment. The assignment's objectives and expectations for student performance are provided. The student believes she has truly viable idea that could offer summer employment to high school students in her neighborhood. She sees this assignment as an opportunity not only to learn how to develop a business plan but also an opportunity to develop communication, leadership, and entrepreneurial skills. She set additional objectives of her own. As per the assignment requirements, she conducted research, and determined the human, financial and other resources necessary for her business plan. She also sought input from faculty and fellow students. She conducted further research into student employment and government funding. She gathered information from the high school principal, students, and their parents and teachers. She spoke to representatives from the municipal council. She modified her business plan and, after practicing her 'pitch' with several family members and friends, successfully pitched her plan to a committee of school representatives and a local business sponsor. Success of her learning will be determined by the employment of 12 high school students over the summer months, the effect that the work has on the students and the community, and the business student's own reflections.
2. While at home for the funeral of her grandfather who had lung cancer, a **pharmacy student** notices and is concerned about the number of adults in the community who smoke. In one of her pharmacy courses she was introduced to the many products available to assist those who want to quit smoking. She speaks to her instructor about nicotine addiction, the role of the pharmacist, and the efficacy of nicotine reduction therapy. She plans to return home for her pharmacy placement experience and is determined to learn about smoking cessation and help community members quit. She read numerous articles, reviewed smoking cessation program literature, interviewed smokers and those who successfully quit, took an on-line course in motivational interviewing, and eventually, with the help of her instructor, developed her own process and resources for smoking cessation. She tried it out on two student volunteers and it worked. During her pharmacy placement she and the pharmacy team will speak to clients about smoking and offer smoking cessation counselling. She will keep records of these interactions and her own reflections on the process.
3. An **arts student** who has an interest in Canadian Exploration Literature is conducting research for a class assignment when he comes across an obscure reference to a female nurse who travelled coastal Labrador in the late 1800s. At the start, he was simply curious about this person but he soon realized there was a story to tell. He conducted research—research of historical archives and community and church records, and genealogical research—he looked for and interviewed the woman's descendants. Throughout the process, he sought the advice of faculty members and government archivists. He eventually published an article about the woman in the *Canadian Journal of History* and was contacted by a community museum in Labrador to prepare a display on her life and travels. While in Labrador he also plans to visit a local high school to tell the nurse's story and to illustrate for students how everyone has a narrative of their own that contributes to local history.