

# THE ROUND TABLE

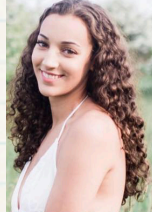
INSPIRING - INFORMING - CONNECTING

**The Black Lives Matter (BLM) Movement** took roots in 2013. After the death of George Floyd in May, BLM received widespread international support with demonstrations in at least 60 countries. The issues of racism and discrimination are felt almost everywhere. At Catapult camp we discovered we have far more in common than we have in difference regardless of skin colour. We believe it is important to hear the lived experiences of our Black catapult family, so that we can better understand the issues, reflect on the unconscious racial bias we carry, and step up as leaders to become part of the solution.

We thank the following Catapulters for sharing their personal experiences with us:



**Sandrico Provo '09**, North Preston (the largest Black community in NS and the highest concentration of African Canadians of any community in Canada).



**Vanessa Hartley '14**, Shelburne (Black Loyalists & escaped slaves made nearby Birchtown the largest community of free Blacks in N. America. In 1784, Shelburne was the site of N.America's 1st race riot.)



**Marcel Desmond '17**, Guysborough (another of Canada's largest Black communities settled by Black Loyalists in 1784).

Marcel sees BLM as an international support system that promotes and protects Black existence. *"There is great power in the collective voices of people around the world, and this makes me feel empowered as a Black man."* For Vanessa, BLM has given her a platform to share her stories and speak on the inequalities within her community. *"BLM gives me hope that someday true equality is achievable."* Sandrico says it's sad that such a movement is still even needed, but *"it shows the strength, resolve and solidarity that Black people have with each other. I don't expect anyone who doesn't know what it's like being a minoritized person to be able to relate, but social media is showing people what it's like being us."*

Sandrico fears that people are seeing so much bad in the news that society has become desensitized to the wrong. *"It's important for society to try and better itself for stability and progression. We need to open our eyes to the sad (and too often, violent) reality Black people face every day. Discrimination, both today and historically, has created a divide in society. That divide keeps growing and we see the haves, the have-nots, the privileged and the disadvantaged grow further resentment for each other. These gaps create tension, and I think we are now seeing these tensions starting to boil over."* Marcel would like to point out how integral Black people have been to the foundation and the shaping of our society. *"Many of the things that we enjoy come from the contributions of the Black community."*

Vanessa is an activist. *"I was co-creator of the march held in my hometown Shelburne. Currently, I develop presentations, consultation, and resources to help dismantle Anti-Black Racism"*. While Marcel did participate in protests, he prefers to work behind the scenes. *"It's been something that I have always done, the recent mobilization of the BLM movement hasn't really affected that."* Sandrico thinks every Black person has a role to play whether that role is big or small, public or private. *"Personally, I've been doing my part to encourage and engage in conversations with the people in my life who cannot relate to my experiences. With BLM being so public (for good reason) we often see the large actions, but it's important to have actors on smaller levels as well ... whether that's having a conversation or instructing a friend on how they can educate themselves."*

*"Systemic racism has an impact on every aspect of my life,"* says Marcel. *"It is very hard to navigate social structures that are plagued with systemic racism. To be where I am today, I had to put in extra work and be more involved, just to be considered as an "equivalent" to my white counterparts."*

Vanessa says, *"Personally, the education system was the hardest experience I had as a Black woman. When I reflect back on my experiences, many times I was*

*victim shamed when I brought forward any racial issues that happened to me and the school system was always reluctant to hold others accountable when in the wrong. I believe there needs to be more African Nova Scotian representation within our schools and more support for students that identify with the BIPOC populations."* According to Sandrico, *"Racism is such a big part of life that I don't notice it much anymore. It can be small things like being out in public and having people stare at me while I am eating my breakfast or walking through a store, or having a harder time finding gainful employment, or someone asking my white wife why she'd ever want to kiss me because I am black. I think that every black person has experienced systemic racism or seen the effects of white privilege."*

So how can the rest of us help? *"Be an ally, not just part of a trend,"* says Vanessa. *"Black lives matter not just one day, but every day. To my fellow Catapulters - you were chosen for Catapult because you are our current and future leaders. Use your skills and abilities to advocate for your community. Help by having the difficult conversations around racism with friends and family, and engage in workshops around culture practices."* Sandrico adds, *"You probably can't relate, but you can still help by being educated and knowing the root of the issues. I do not believe being neutral is an option - being a bystander on racism is the same as condoning it. Don't be afraid to tell people you know that something they've done or said is racist because those are the learning moments society needs more of."* Marcel wants white people to know that this is their fight too. *"We need active allies who are willing to be uncomfortable to encourage learning. This goes beyond protesting and social media posts (although these do help). Being an ally means using your privilege to amplify Black voices. I would suggest getting involved in the Black community, helping to apply pressure on those who are in positions of power, and never being silent in the face of uncomfortability. On a more personal level, racism is emotionally exhausting. Even though we are seeing great growth, there are people making comments that diminish the experiences of Black people. So I highly recommend making sure that your friends are okay."*

**Kiara Sexton '14** (Halifax) also points out the need for the support of friends. *"It gets overwhelming and draining to explain or defend our struggle and why we deserve better. It can take a real toll on our mental health. Don't rely on your black friends to teach you everything. We need places we can go when we don't want to talk about it, where we don't feel the need, and where we feel validated. We need people who are both our friend and our ally!"*



*"All lives don't matter until Black (brown and other minoritized) lives matter." ~ Sandrico*

## October is Mi'kmaq History Month!

You've likely seen the Sant e Marwi omi flag flying throughout NS. Its very symbolic. White denotes the purity of creation. The red cross represents mankind & infinity (4 directions). The sun is for the forces of the day. The moon is for the forces of the night. The number 7 is very meaningful in Mi'kmaq culture with the 7 sacred teachings being love, respect, courage, humility, honesty, wisdom and truth.



Learn about the Centre for Truth and Reconciliation at NCTR.ca

## An extra big Catapult welcome to our Class of 2020!

Our summer was flipped upside down BUT we still managed to pull off a fun on-line leadership experience anyway – in true Catapult style!

Welcome packages were mailed, online icebreakers were enjoyed, comfort zones were challenged, and our student leaders pressed that "button" for 4 days of leaderships, offline team challenges, and of course, family shares. Catapult Plus was combined with Camp each evening and our grand finale had us enjoying many varied talents during a Catapult Coffee House. We look forward to meeting our Class of '20 'in person' next August when they'll be invited to enjoy the traditional Camp Catapult experience at Acadia.

A special shout out to our incredible staff team: Abbey (Camp Director), Ali ('13), Alyssa, Katelyn, Katherine, Kevan, Kiara ('14), Nikki ('12), Zach ('09) and JC Vessa ('17). Their creative ideas and tireless commitment gave our virtual program a genuine 'Catapult camp' feel, making it a truly special experience for all!

By forcing us online, Covid-19 has had the unexpected benefit of showing us we can do more, despite being spread out across NS! So stay tuned for news of new virtual sessions during the coming year!!



## Wise Words from Mr Phil:



African proverb says, "If you want to go fast... go alone. If you want to go far...go with others."

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE AN ALLY?

Let's talk about 'allyship'.

I hope you can all feel the change in the air. With the movements happening in our world right now – fighting for Black lives, fighting for Indigenous sovereignty, fighting for 2SLGBTQ+ rights, and so much more – there is a growing need for support and acknowledgement of all our roles in making the world a better place. Being an ally is one of those essential roles.

Defining allyship is really tricky, but in essence it means using your privilege (the favouring, valuing and validation of your identity) to uplift and amplify the voices and experiences of marginalized and oppressed groups.

This doesn't mean taking blame for historical acts or ongoing oppression. It means taking responsibility and using the tools and opportunities at your disposal to be a leader and stand for and with others.

The word "ally" may be a title that some people hold, but in all truth it's not something you are – it's something you do. It requires an ongoing, conscious effort to be an active listener, and to educate yourself and those around you (including sometimes calling people out). It means you are choosing empathy and compassion, while checking your privilege, and affirming the experiences of others.

Like all the best and most important things in life, allyship is a journey – not a destination. You are going to make mistakes, and you are going to learn, and you are going to grow, all the while building a better future for all.

When we know better, we do better. Let's do better, Catapult!

Contributed by:

Counselor Katelyn Barker, Cassidy Bernard '12 & Kiara Sexton '14

## ALUMNI CONFERENCE

November 8th: 1pm -3:30pm on Zoom

Open to: All Catapulters in Grade 12 and up. Bring a friend!

To register: email [lori@catapultcamp.com](mailto:lori@catapultcamp.com), text 902-830-5704 or register online at [catapultalumniconference.ticketleap.com/2020/](http://catapultalumniconference.ticketleap.com/2020/)

Learning content:

- Personal financial management
- Tips & Tools for Online Learning

Plus:

- Interactive icebreakers and
- Group activities using break out rooms, polls and other features to make it an engaging experience.

Planned and organized by your Alumni Committee: Jacob White '17, Graci Fleet '15, Livi King '16, Mikayla Morrison '17 & Brianna Green '15.

## BLACK LIVES MATTER ... A Catapult Forum

With the help of our community partner, the Delmore "Buddy" Daye Learning Institute, Catapult is hosting an open forum discussion for our Black catapulters to share their stories and life experiences with our non-Black catapult allies. By having difficult conversations together, we can listen. When we listen, we can learn. When we learn, we can step up as leaders and be part of the solution.



Delmore "Buddy" Daye Learning Institute  
Excellence in Africentric Education & Research

Special guests include Chanae Parsons, Coordinator of Youth initiatives and Projects (DBDLI), and Andreas Robinson, Founder and CEO of Infinitus Academy

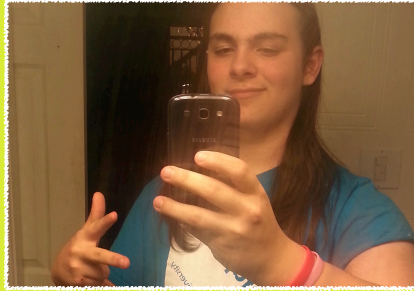
Everyone is welcome!

**MARTINA REDDEN - 2018**



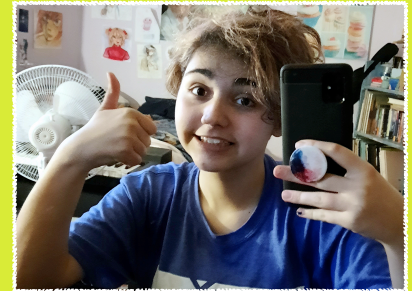
**School:** Citadel High  
**Cool Fact:** I bee keep!  
**Fave Camp Memory:** Every memory is a blessing. **What inspires me:** My grandmother, a strong & caring woman who never lets anyone stop her from reaching her goal.  
**Future Plans:** Vet Tech at Dal Agri Campus. **Fave quote:** "Don't look down on somebody unless you're helping them up."

**DEISEL PILLING - 2019**



**School:** West Kings District High  
**Cool Fact:** I spend my free time drawing & writing music.  
**Fave Camp Memory:** Rock Night.  
**What inspires me:** Civil rights leaders like Martin Luther King.  
**Future Plans:** Surgeon!  
**Fave quote:** "I don't care about what you are. It's who you are that matters."

**GIANNA PELLERIN - 2020**



**School:** Homeschool (formerly Guysborough Academy)  
**Cool fact:** I illustrated all the pictures for a children's book!  
**Fave Camp Memory:** TikTok Challenge & meeting everyone.  
**What inspires me:** Inspiring others.  
**Future Plans:** Work in animation. And write.  
**Fave Quote:** "What would you do if you knew you couldn't fail?"



### On-Line Learning - Tips to Succeed!

If you're in high school, you're probably happy to be back in a traditional classroom. If you're in college or university, you may be feeling added stress from a virtual classroom. Or you may actually choose an online learning program, with the flexibility it provides to fit your lifestyle. Here's some helpful tips:

**\* Manage your time wisely:**

- Use a planner (like a whiteboard or calendar). Get everything out of your head. Schedule your classes and deadlines - but don't forget to schedule time to prepare for those deadlines, as well as any personal time you don't want to miss.
- Study at your best time of day. We aren't all morning people!
- Study difficult or boring subjects first ... when you have more energy and focus.
- Break large or daunting assignments into smaller chunks.
- Avoid distractions. Turn off your phone, TV, and anything else you'd rather be watching.
- Coordinate a virtual study group. It might force you to stay on task.

**\* Create a productive study space:**

- Try to find a spot that is: big enough for everything you need, has good lighting, is free from distractions, and allows good posture. Do NOT study from your bed!
- If possible, leave your work space as your work space. Keep your living space separate.
- Try to follow the same routine as your former in-class routine.

**\* Be intentional about avoiding procrastination:**

The flexibility that often comes with online learning can make procrastination a real problem.

- Don't listen to your excuses. They aren't valid and will just make your life more difficult.
- Set clear, specific goals for yourself.
- Keep your daily planner in easy sight.
- Prioritize. Start with the most important task, not the easiest.
- Create a routine. It'll give purpose to your day and help you avoid procrastination.
- Break large or daunting assignments into smaller chunks.
- Avoid distractions that tempt you to do something else.
- Think about the consequences of putting it off.
- Find an 'accountability buddy'.

**\* Practice self-care:**

- Talk nicely to yourself.
- Take strategic breaks to re-energize and restore.
- Make sleep, healthy diet and exercise a priority.
- Reward yourself for your accomplishments.
- Ask for help when you need it.
- Remember, some stress is healthy, even positive. Excessive stress, however, can be a concern.

A REMINDER FROM

LIAM POWER '10:

Municipal Election Day in Nova Scotia is Saturday, October 17.

(Vote online Oct 6-14; Advance polls Oct 10 & 13). Poised to be the most diverse council yet, YOU get the say. Your vote matters! Municipal councils are responsible for things like public water/sewage/waste, public transit/road maintenance/ snow removal, libraries/recreation, economic development and more. Learn more at yourdecision.ca/for-voters.

**VOTE! VOTE! VOTE!**

**Catapult Alumni Award**

Created by Catapulters for Catapulters!

This new award has been established by Alumni Counselors to recognize the Catapult tradition of leadership, peer support and community contribution. Open to Catapult PLUS graduates who have demonstrated interpersonal leadership, the DEADLINE for application is November 30th! Priority to be based on financial need. If any alumni wish to donate to the fund, please contact Zach MacMillan '09 or Nikki Shahin '12. Donations are tax deductible.

Black Is Power ~ Lyrics by Makye Clayton '17

I'm just a n\*\*a and that's what they say  
Another black man tryna spray the kay  
I don't think you know me  
I live a day to day  
Always have my pride  
But cops will take your fate  
  
Nothing ever change  
The pain and trauma will make you go insane  
Have you switch lanes  
You ain't above the law because the status of your name  
Or the position that you claim  
Everyone the same  
  
I here to tell you something real  
Black people are getting killed  
Why are we threat  
The only reason we grip tacs  
No opportunity brings stress  
Uh. Say it wit my chest  
Black people always had less  
  
Why is it hard to listen  
We just wanna tell you that no one should have privilege  
We all equal on this earth  
But there was just another sequel  
And it hurt  
  
Momma said don't walk wit your hood up  
I'm like .. why is that  
Cops shot a kid wit his hood up  
And cuz he was black  
In my head, like .. damn  
I was never a fan  
Of all the cops that thought  
They had a right to kill a black man.



Catapult is committed to providing our students with a safe place to speak their truth. As an organization, we do not express any political views.

This rap was written & performed by Makye on the steps of the Halifax police station during a march after the murder of George Floyd. You can hear him perform it on Spotify. His song is about giving Black people equal opportunities so they can become all that they can be.

Today's global Black Lives Movement is an important time in history. It's a time to listen, learn, and step up. There has been much said on social media. As leaders, it is our duty to not simply accept what others say at face value, but to do our own due diligence in understanding terminology and to fact check so that we may form our own educated opinion. One of the issues causing confusion is the call to defund the police. "Defunding" does not mean eliminating police. It means re-allocating a portion of the traditional police budget to other community resources like social workers, mental health crisis workers, low-income housing, healthcare, and accessible education. Those who support defunding want to focus deeper on the root causes of systemic racism and devote more resources to improving inequality among marginalized communities.

\*Need to talk?  
kidshelpphone.ca



Mini reunion at an Ottawa Starbucks with Brooke '13 and her Shields Counselor Kevan

Congrats Kevan on receiving Algonquin College's Community Award of Excellence!



CONGRATULATIONS to Tamara Pinch '19 on winning Miss Teen Nova Scotia International 2020. Very impressive!

"Grant me the courage to stand up and speak, and the wisdom to sit down and listen." - Unknown

Big props to Paris Greenlaw-Gray '19 who moved 3 times during Covid quarantine! Wow .. talk about resilience!

THE ROUND TABLE was named with Catapult's medieval theme in mind. King Arthur insisted on having his faithful knights seated at a round table where everyone was treated equally and had an equal voice. Use your voice and send us your submissions for the next newsletter!



**CONTACT INFO**

902.830.5704

lori@catapultcamp.com