

Stephanie Keilhack Recognized with Provincial ACE Award as Rising Star in Accessibility

The Municipality of Cumberland has a rising star.

The municipality's community engagement coordinator Stephanie Keilhack was recently named a recipient of the Rising Star in Accessibility Award at this year's ACE Awards: Celebrating Inclusive Employers.

"She is leading Accessibility, equity, and poverty reduction initiatives in her community, with a strong passion for improving the health and longevity of rural residents," the award's citation said. "She's known for her keen foresight, creative thinking, and ability to build positive, collaborative relationships that move accessibility forward."

Through the Accessibility Confident Employers (ACE) Project, Sea Change CoLab works with employers to build skills for recruiting, hiring, retaining, and advancing people with disabilities. Along the way, it has seen inspiring examples of people putting learning into practice, managers driving culture change and organizations embedding accessibility into their systems.

Within the municipality, some of the highlights and achievements in accessibility include (with support from Cumberland Recreation and Public Works in Springhill and Parrsboro):

Lunch n' learn sessions for Cumberland businesses around accommodations at work, plain language and digi-



Stephanie Keilhack, the Municipality of Cumberland, community engagement coordinator, was recently recognized as a Rising Star in Accessibility by the Accessibility Confident Employers (ACE) Project.

tal accessibility training for several key staff and volunteers, sidewalk assessments in Parrsboro and Springhill, sidewalk improvements in Parrsboro and lights at crosswalks in Springhill.

There has also been an employment equity statement that welcomes people with disabilities to apply for jobs and sharing that accommodations are available.

Other departments are also making excellent improvements in accessibility including the Recreation Department's Equipment Loan Program that features adaptive bikes, hiking poles and more.

In development are initiatives such as learning how to better support autistic children in municipal summer camps, improved entrances to the Springhill administration building, accessibility assessments at the Dr. Carson & Marion Murray Community Centre and Springhill Miner's Memorial Library as well as the use of plain language more often in public communications.

Conversations are also ongoing with Sunset Communities and Cumberland County Transportation Services (CCTS) about improving accessible transportation in the region.

Advocate Harbour Celebrates opening of New Community Library

Several months ago, the Advocate and District Development Association made the painful decision to demolish its community centre due to its deteriorating condition.

It also meant the community was left without a permanent home for its branch of the Cumberland Public Library. It was in the building's basement.

The community came together on Saturday, Nov. 22, 2025, to celebrate the opening on a new library on Mills Road - adjacent to the location of the former community centre.

"Several months ago, we made the painful decision to demolish our community centre. As you know, the log building hosted our local library. With the uncertainty of whether library services would return to our community, the ADDA organization worked very hard to ensure that it did," association president Courtney Morris said during the ribbon-cutting ceremony. "After endless meetings, letter writing campaigns and grant requests we did it."

The library was operating temporarily in the fire hall.

The project had funding support of \$26,000 from the Municipality of Cumberland, funding from the Christie-Smith Community Fund as well as interest-free loans and community donations.

"The support, hard work, time, devotion, determination and donations are what got us to where we are today as we celebrate the grand opening of our new library," Morris said.

Morris thanked Steve McLellan, Mike MacDougall and Kevin Garrett from Spencer's Island Carpentry for supporting the project as well as community and association members for their support and in-kind donations.

Municipality of Cumberland Mayor Rod Gilroy said the library is an example of what happens when a community comes together to support an important project.

"The community rallied be-



Advocate and District Development Association president Courtney Morris (left) is joined by Sarah Griebel and Margaret Griebel in helping Elora Pete Aitken cut the ribbon opening the new library in Advocate Harbour on Saturday, Nov. 22, 2025. Darrell Cole - Municipality of Cumberland

hind this project and I want to thank everyone who supported this library project in any way," the mayor said. "I also want to thank the municipality and the county councillors who were wholeheartedly behind this. It has worked out very well."

He thanked the Smith-Christie foundation for its support saying that organization has worked with the municipality to help things get done in a way that doesn't financially burden either organization.

Charlotte Gallivan, community engagement librarian for the Cumberland Regional Li-

brary, thanked the community for its support for the library.

"You've gone above and beyond," she said. "Without the community and our municipal partners this wouldn't have gone ahead so quickly. Rural access to services is vital and you really showed that it's important and is required."

She also thanked library staff for gathering materials from the former facility and offering library services in a temporary location.

The next step for the development association is building a new community centre to replace the former log building.



Advocate Harbour opened its new library on Saturday, Nov. 25, 2025, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and a number of other events. Darrell Cole - Municipality of Cumberland photo

Extended closure of Springhill Post Office

Cumberland Mayor Rod Gilroy is expressing its disappointment with Canada Post for an apparent lack of urgency in dealing with an extended closure of the post office in Springhill.

"It's very frustrating that the post office doesn't seem to be in a rush to fix this situation," Mayor Gilroy said. "Springhill and area residents must travel 30 minutes to Amherst, wait for their mail and travel back. This is unacceptable."

Municipal staff have met with officials from Canada Post on several occasions to offer space for a temporary location in the administrative building on Main Street in Springhill. Gilroy said there's space on the ground floor of the former town hall building that was recently vacated by

an insurance company.

"Our staff have met with them a couple of times and offered them space in our administration building, but it seems there just isn't any urgency on their part to find a solution. In fact, it doesn't have to be in our building, but there must be a temporary solution very soon" the mayor said.

"I am concerned that as winter weather approaches and travel becomes more complicated some in the community will have no access at all to their mail. I'm hopeful that Canada Post will see fit to provide a temporary solution in the coming days. This is an urgent situation that Canada Post needs to deal with accordingly."

Mayor Rod Gilroy makes statement following devastating fire in Wallace

On behalf of Municipal Council, I want to express our collective heartfelt concern for the residents of Wallace after today's devastating fire.

The Aquashell plant has been a mainstay of the economy of north shore area of Cumberland County for decades. To lose a business and to lose these jobs is truly heartbreaking for all, particularly at this time of year.

We have asked the Cumberland Business Connector to reach out to the company to offer its support to the company and employees in the days ahead.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the volunteer firefighters from countless communities in Cumberland and Colchester counties who responded to this incident today. I can't imagine where we'd be without them.

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