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Finding the Edges

Below you will find a great reflection from Northside Rising's Community Lead, Engagement and Collaboration, Megan MacLeod on the lessons that permaculture work has for systems change. "One key concept in permaculture is that the squiggly edges that exist within ecosystems are where the most biodiversity exists," she writes.

We have spent the last few months at Inspiring Communities in the edges beyond our comfort zone.

Since its founding in 2018, Inspiring Communities has made a positive impact in communities, and we've learned much from our work to date. Particularly during the pandemic, we experienced significant growth both in terms of staffing and demand for our work. As is typical with young organizations, this has pushed our resources and understanding of our mission.

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community sites--long time trusted and valued colleagues. We are at our edges. It is hard and uncomfortable, bumpy ground. Yet also there is growth here, and rich learnings.

“I will love the light for it shows me the way. Yet I will endure the darkness for it shows me the stars.”

Og Mandino

Our Digby site, Turning the Tide, recently gained a new lead in the form of Erika Rolston, and her energy and insight have helped us maintain our hope and momentum. Communications Manager Charlene Boyce interviewed her recently, and you'll find that below as well. In addition, we have been building out our partnership and collaboration work.

One main outcome of our mission renewal has been (re)establishing that equity is central to our work: racial and digital equity are two themes you will see in some of the partnerships listed below.

As we enter a new fiscal year, the warmth of longer days and energy of spring growth give us hope that the learning we have done will be worth it, as we rebuild and renew our relationships with each other and our work and you, our community.

We are happy to share the great work our team does, and we'd love to learn more about how you are shaping your community. Please reach out and let us know, or tag us on your social media posts. Together, we are greater than the sum of our parts!

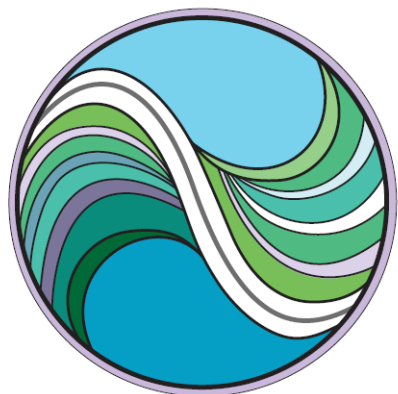
Yours in systems change,



Louise Adongo, Executive Director

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[Read Megan's blog post for inspiration in approaching your systems change work.](#)



TURNING THE TIDE
AN INSPIRING COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE



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So much of our systems change work comes down to a need to change the stories we tell ourselves about ourselves. Read this interview to learn about Erika Rolston's dreams for Digby's story.

Are you interested in joining a Developmental Evaluation Community of Practice?

From its inception, Inspiring Communities has been an early leader in the practice of Developmental Evaluation (DE), a process which helps measure the impact and early signs of change in emergent or innovative work.

The organization built a strong cadre of evaluators through internal coaching and mentoring. Today we see the practice appearing in diverse organizations in Atlantic Canada, like the DBDLI and the MNFC. At this time, it makes sense to evolve our role to focus on deepening and broadening Developmental Evaluation through an external community of practice, while we continue to use DE across our initiatives and in the organization.

The Canadian Evaluation Society Nova Scotia (CESNS) and Inspiring Communities along with other partners will be working on several evaluation initiatives including this CoP. The intention is to include DE practitioners from across the Atlantic Region. Terms of reference will be developed collaboratively within the group.

If you are interested, [please complete this short form](#).

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Louise Adongo

IC Leader Recognized in Atlantic Business' Powerful Women List

"Louise Adongo has made considerable impact on social justice, inclusion, innovation and collaboration within NS. As Executive Director of Inspiring Communities her goal is to continue to magnify voices of underserved communities and encourage public conversations. Congratulations, Louise on being named one of Atlantic Canada's 25 Most Powerful Women in Business."

PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS

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Community Engagement on Street Parties:

We are working with Dalhousie University to address the challenge of large, unsanctioned street parties. These parties, fueled by social media are a growing issue in communities across the country. In terms of mitigation, there is no short-term fix, nor is there a single solution. This complex issue requires sustained cooperation aimed at addressing the root causes of high-risk party culture and finding alternative ways for students to feel connected to each other and their community.



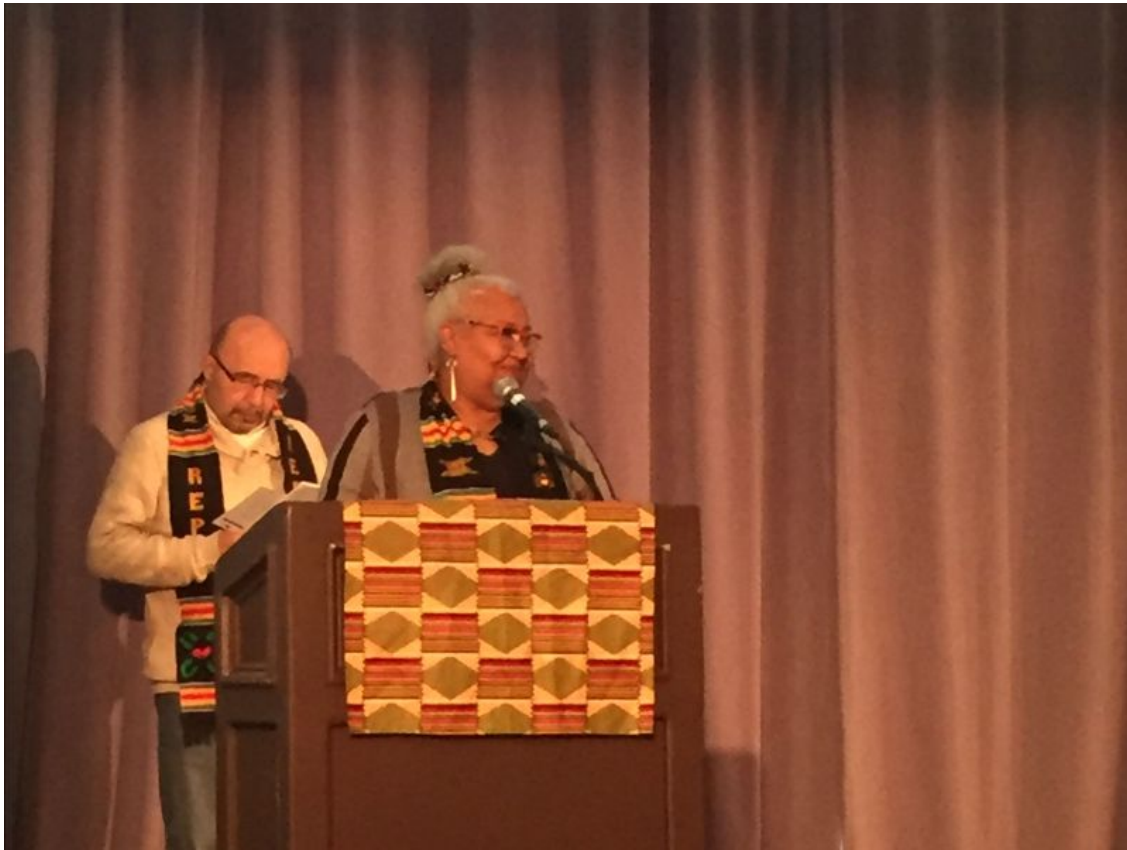
SHIFT | JOURNEYS

Two of our Inspiring Communities folks, Elissama Menezes and Treno Morton, joined panels for Dalhousie Planning School's 2022 Conference. The conference theme was "Journeys", and three panels were offered: People, Places and Goods.

CLIMATE TRANSITIONS COHORT

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the Cape Breton community in their efforts to develop and implement local climate transition plans through Collective Impact.



AFRICAN NOVA SCOTIAN ROAD TO ECONOMIC PROSPERITY & ELDER COUNCIL

Inspiring Communities is supporting Shelley Fashan who is the recruitment coordinator and a member of the Advisory Committee for the African Nova Scotian Road to Economic Prosperity. Among those serving on the Elder Council is Darlene Lawrence, who served as the evaluator for Turning the Tide in Digby until late fall.

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CANADIAN CENTRE FOR
NONPROFIT DIGITAL
RESILIENCE

TECHNOLOGY SHOULD BE AN IMPACT MULTIPLIER, NOT A BARRIER.



IMAGINE
CANADA

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TAMARACK
INSTITUTE

DIGITAL RESILIENCE

Leading Canadian and global organizations, including Inspiring Communities, have joined forces to launch the Canadian Centre for Nonprofit Digital Resilience.

The Canadian Centre for Nonprofit Digital Resilience aims to build a **digitally-enabled nonprofit sector**, where Canada's nonprofits **use data and tech** to advance their mission and multiply their impact.

“Conversations about access have always been something I am interested in – who has it, who doesn't and who holds the door, or the keys to room(s) inside. This is work we explore at Inspiring Communities, as a nonprofit seeking to lead systems change efforts in Atlantic Canada. We may be experiencing a sector-wide (and) pandemic-related 'digital revolution' in which we can no longer deny the benefits and crucial need for transformation in how we fund and use digital tools in nonprofits to administer and deliver programs and services. While we will see a return to in-person supports, we are in a new

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The Canadian Centre for Nonprofit Digital Resilience elevates the conversation and brings a much-needed national strategy and framework to navigate the breadth and depth of issue-focus and issue-exploration surrounding digital capacity and infrastructure among providers in the nonprofit sector. Bringing together partners across funding, non-profits and community advocacy is a welcome shift to hopefully generate some much needed action. I am pleased to be part of the sea change.” – **Louise Adongo, Executive Director of Inspiring Communities**



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