

**Anna Fitzgerald (Class of '86)
Alumni Volunteer of the Year 2013**

Can you imagine how many volunteer hours it takes to justify a full-time paid position? The recipient of the Agricultural Campus' 2013 Alumni Volunteer of the Year Award would know. Although she is much too humble to say, Anna Fitzgerald dedicated so much of her time helping International students over the years at AC, that eventually a full time position was created.

As a volunteer student advisor for International students, Anna always went the extra mile for the students. She helped launch the International Student Association and continued to assist the group by taking care of the "behind the scenes" work. Anna spent many weekends chauffeuring groups of students. She took them sightseeing and on outings that would enhance their cultural experiences. Anna organized potluck dinners. She helped the students open bank accounts. She listened.

"There's a fine line between mothering and helping," says Debbie Mellish, former colleague and close friend of Anna's. "Anna was very good at that. She's a very caring person."

Anna could always be counted on for campus fundraisers, including International silent auctions. She was never hesitant to help raise funds for students in need by donating pieces of her beautifully hand-crafted jewelry, which she made in her spare time.

Anna took her work and offered her expertise to developing countries during international stints, in Colombia and The Gambia. Her ability to teach and work with international students was perhaps best demonstrated by two six-month work terms in The Gambia where she delivered courses in botany, zoology and plant physiology at Gambia College. She also established and equipped a laboratory for teaching science during her stay at Gambia College.

One may argue that the international experiences were part of Anna's regular job description. However, such endeavors require a lot of extra commitment – above and beyond your regular duties. Anna was very well received during her international trips. She was always very open to adapting herself personally to new cultures. She recognized she had a lot to offer, but so did the locals.

For her energy, dedication and commitment to excellence in internationalizing the former NSAC, Anna was presented the 2003 Award for Internationalization.

International is not the only department or organization that has benefited from the generosity of Anna and her good sense of humour.

As a well-respected lab instructor for 25 years, Anna became heavily involved with local science fairs, volunteering her professional skills. She drew on her knowledge, gained from years in the Environmental Science department, to provide advice to the general public. Quite frequently, Anna could be found with a member of the local community as they questioned her on their sick plants. Anna never turned anyone away, but advised cautiously.

Finally settling into her new home in St. Andrew's, NB with her husband, Michael, some lucky organizations in the community are bound to be touched by Anna's generosity.

Anna is a perfect example of the belief that one person can make a difference.

It is most fitting that Anna Fitzgerald be named the 2013 recipient of the Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture's Alumni Volunteer of the Year award.