

Sheryl Martens



What motivated you to volunteer with The Pencil Patch? I had volunteered in elementary and secondary schools while our children were in school. Our youngest graduated in 2016, and I wanted to continue to volunteer and make a difference with students. I have a passion for farming and this was a perfect fit for me to share my passion with students.

Have you volunteered with any other BCAITC programs? No, but when I volunteered at our children's elementary school, I saw the children eating the fruits and vegetables from BCAITC. I also saw how excited the middle school age students were about growing their Spuds in Tubs in their classrooms when I was a noon-hour supervisor!

What positive impacts have The Pencil Patch had on students? Many students do not have their own garden at home. At each station the children will learn something very important about growing a garden. The children's eyes light up with new knowledge and especially when they get to harvest lettuce, a radish, or pumpkins.

What positive impacts have The Pencil Patch had on teachers? Teachers were also learning new facts about gardens, the environment and eager to continue to use the BCAITC resources in their classrooms with the students.

What is the most amazing thing you have experienced at The Pencil Patch? I grew up on a dairy farm so teaching the children about cow's and their digestive system was very exciting and giving them a milk beverage from Fraser Valley Dairy Farmers was definitely a highlight for me!

What do students learn about agriculture in the Pencil Patch? Students learn about the type of soil needed for farmers to plant crops. They learn about invasive plants, greenhouses to start crops earlier, to conserve water, learn to find insects that are helpful in our gardens, the importance of bees as pollinators, milk station, and so much more!

What benefits have you personally experienced from volunteering at The Pencil Patch?

- ✓ Provides a connection to others
- ✓ It is good for my mind and body
- ✓ Provides learning opportunities for me
- ✓ Brings a sense of fulfillment to my life
- ✓ I love to see children learning about agriculture
- ✓ It's nice to get outside and enjoy the great outdoors
- ✓ It's fun!

VOLUNTEER PROFILE

"It has been a pleasure to volunteer at The Pencil Patch. The staff at The Pencil Patch are friendly, organized, and welcoming. It is exciting to prepare for the schools that arrive at The Pencil Patch and to see the children all prepared and excited for the field trip ready to learn. It is so cute when the children ask why we have large colourful pencils in the garden and we remind them that there is lots to learn about at The Pencil Patch."

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