

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Elliott's Story

"I was born in Burlington but have moved back and forth to other places due to my father's work when I was a kid and my own sense of adventure as an adult. Moving back and forth in this way really highlighted the changes happening in the city. At times I have been frustrated by the ongoing development and disregard of green spaces in Burlington. I remember in my early twenties dropping off bags of garbage in a huff at City Hall that I had cleaned out a creek; calling for accountability from the staff member at the front desk for the municipal government to take care of the waters.

Several years later I decided to return to school in the environmental field and when that went online due to the pandemic restrictions, I searched for ways to still stay engaged with fieldwork. I wrote a grant for funding and was able to clean up 850 kg of waste out of Halton creeks and provide a rough quantification of the ecosystem services green spaces adjacent to those creeks provide. I was supported by BurlingtonGreen throughout this process and appreciate the mentorship and contacts they provided. The project is called Creeks and Trees and more information about it can be found [here](#).

I am still just as passionate as when I showed up at City Hall but have learned better ways to channel that emotion and approach the challenges we face. I think it is about creating collaborations that allow us to collectively take care of our green spaces. My hope is that my work inspires action and stewardship in individuals, organizations, and government. There are many ways big and small we can affect positive change and responsibly take care of the land and water we live on."

- Elliott



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