



NL Young Humanitarian of the Year



Maïke van Niekerk

Although working toward a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree at Dalhousie University, Maïke van Niekerk of Corner Brook still volunteers many hours each week to help improve the lives of others.

Drawing motivation and strength from the loss to breast cancer of her mother Katrin, she supports many causes with fundraising, education and awareness activities. In 2014, van Niekerk was one of two youth to win the Start Something with Alesse contest, which awards up to \$5,000 for a new initiative. Hers was Katrin's Karepackage a project to help cancer patients across Newfoundland & Labrador with travel costs to St. John's for treatment. She cycled across the province to raise some \$35,000 for the cause.

Other charities benefitting from her volunteerism include the Canadian Cancer Society, Ronald McDonald House, Breast Cancer Action, the Oncology Unit of the QEII Health Sciences Centre, medical research labs, and Out of the Cold, an emergency shelter in Halifax.

As one of two students to complete the Advocates in Global Health Certificate in 2014-15, van Niekerk travelled to several countries to learn about global health issues. She also raised money for school materials for children in a village in Nepal where she completed a three-week internship. And van Niekerk helps one of her professors to provide indigenous women with products to manage breast cancer treatment side effects.

Recipient of several scholarships, van Niekerk is vice-president, community affairs, with the Dalhousie Nursing Society, and is president-designate of the Dalhousie Nursing Global Health Committee.

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