

Young Forester of the Year Award March 15, 2023



Jessica (left) accepting her award from ARPFNB President Jasen Golding.

One of the primary reasons for AVG's sustained success is not only exceptional business performance but also individual excellence. And Jessica Prior who began her journey with AVG in November 2017 exemplifies this spirit. A Bsc in Forestry graduate,

She has strong work ethics, leads by example, and makes recognizable efforts to grow the quality of the industries work.

Jessica is from Grand Banks, Newfoundland, has always been passionate about forestry and seen value in natural resources, the backbone of various small communities. "My grandfather spent his career in central NL, cutting wood using a chainsaw and skidder. Besides my family connection to forestry, I have always loved being outside. To be a forester, you must connect to the outdoors and the environment you work for. Forestry deals with the outdoors but working with people also plays a large part."

Crediting her leaders in this journey, Jessica adds "I have been fortunate in my career to have had leaders and mentors that have propelled me by encouraging, mentoring and placing me in situations that helped me grow independently and professionally. I love the variability in forestry, there are consistent challenges, no day is the same, and you must be a problem solver and think outside the box."

While the covid 19 epidemic left the world in a tizzy, Jessica dealt with her fair share of challenges. She explained: "Many of our contractors were on their last blocks going into spring. We were fortunate to stay working. We faced issues primarily with wood deliveries, mill shutdowns, changing markets, and stalled shipments. It created a lot of uncertainty among our contractors about the future. Our primary objective was to keep everyone working. We had to change our plans, the licenses we were operating on, and the species and the wood specs people were cutting but everyone kept going. Our woodlands team kept everyone informed and that for every challenge, there were solutions- everyone stayed positive and continued to roll with the punches."

A promising young leader, Jessica is looking forward to her future and lean six sigma training. She is currently doing her greenbelt project on fuel use and carbon reduction and recently started a new role as assistant Forester. Moreover, Jessica is happy with her professional journey as the world moves to a post-covid state. She says, 'I hope we can transition to a world where post-covid exists! Its hard on people to not be around families and friends, especially for such a long time. Covid provided a lot of obstacles, it led to better learning experiences. Since joining ABG in 2017, I have received tremendous support from my work colleagues, who have always put me in positions that are challenging but lead to tremendous growth.

An outdoor enthusiast, Jessica deeply cares about nature and believes humanity has some catching up to do in the face of a mammoth challenge- climate change. She adds :”My only worry is the world is behind where it should be in terms of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. We must be progressive and proactive. We know sustainability is super important and will be something we do without thinking about it. The woodlands Freehold landbase just became FSC certified, a massive feat for a forestry company in New Brunswick. Forests can sequester carbon – so we are in a great place to be as a company.

General info

Jess started in Nov 2017. Worked at scales until May 2018. Worked on silv summer fall 2018, worked on harvesting from winter 2018 until spring 2021. Returned as Assistant Forester in spring 2021 until present.

