

Restaurateur, farmer, teacher, Red Seal chef, and entrepreneur...these are just a few words that describe one of this year's recipients of the Inspiring Young Alumni Awards.

Eastern PEI's Terry Nabuurs graduated from Dalhousie University with a Bachelor of Science in kinesiology in 2014 and his Bachelor of Education from UPEI in 2015. His story, however, begins well before university.

In 2005, as a grade 9 student, Mr. Nabuurs received the Inclusion in Education Award at Montague Intermediate School for the kindness he showed to other students through inclusion in sport- and school-related activities. In 2010, he was named Volunteer of the Year by Sport PEI for his coaching with Special Olympics PEI, and in 2013, he was awarded Special Olympics Coach of the Year. He has coached PEI teams at multiple Special Olympics Canada Games, and in 2019, he received his 10-year volunteer pin from Special Olympics PEI.

Mr. Nabuurs knew from a young age that cooking was going to be a big part of his life. He started in the kitchen as a dishwasher at 13 and worked his way up, pushing himself to learn the culinary crafts. Growing up on a farm, he also knew the value of working the land and in 2013 purchased 75 acres to start a blueberry operation. In 2015, while attending UPEI, he purchased the iconic pink food truck that most have come to recognize as Terry's Berries. Then he purchased a vacant former restaurant property in Georgetown and opened The Wheelhouse in the spring of 2018.

Terry's Berries Food truck spent the summer of 2019 outside of Lone Oak Brewing in Borden-Carleton before Mr. Nabuurs moved inside Lone Oak to open The Abby Restaurant in 2020. He also partnered with Lone Oak in 2020 to produce Terry's Berries Blueberry Lemonade, a drink using his blueberries to create a tasty beverage now available at all PEI liquor stores.

Mr. Nabuurs' blueberry products are used by the PEI Brewing Company, Copper Bottom Brewing, and the 2 Crows Brewing Company in Halifax. His team also produces and distributes purees, juices, and individually quick-frozen fruit to restaurants, bakeries, and wholesalers. All his berry products are produced at the Bio-Food Tech Centre in Charlottetown.

Throughout the pandemic, Mr. Nabuurs has continued to grow his operations and employ additional staff on a year-round basis. His company is providing school lunches for four rural schools as part of the PEI School Food Program, and last year he and his team at The Wheelhouse provided free Christmas dinners for those in need in the Three Rivers Area.

Terry's Berries was a finalist for the Excellence in Collaboration Award from the Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce in 2021. Throughout all of this, Mr. Nabuurs continued to grow the culinary program at Bluefield High School and now Montague High School while continuing with his volunteer efforts in sport. He also is a member of the Premier's Council for Recovery and Growth and has served on the board of directors of the Tourism Industry Association of PEI for the past two years.

Mr. Nabuurs is quick to attribute his success to the great team of over 50 employees that he has been fortunate to build and collaborate with.

For showing outstanding determination in achieving success at a young age, the UPEI Alumni Association is proud to present Mr. Terry Nabuurs with a 2021 Inspiring Young Alumni Award.