JOB POSTING: Research Assistant (MA-level) – Qualitative Study of Community-Based Water Activism (Part-time, November 2022-April 2023)

Seeking:
1-2 students currently enrolled in or accepted to a master’s program in environmental studies, applied sociology, community psychology, social work, or related field to assist with a variety of tasks related to a community-engaged comparative study of community-based water activism.

Project Background:
This SSHRC-funded project aims to generate theoretical and practical insights about community organization and the mobilization of social action from a comparative case study of communities opposing corporate water bottling in Canada and the United States.

Corporate water bottling proliferated in North America in the early 2000s, with local and multinational corporations buying properties, acquiring or building bottling plants, and mining groundwater for bottling in communities across Canada and the United States. A leading company in this regard, at least until early 2022, has been Nestlé Waters, and in nearly every community where Nestlé Waters has set up shop and started pumping and bottling water, anger and opposition at the community level has accompanied it.

While not always completely successful in opposing water bottling in their communities, the different sites of contestation have made significant gains. In the process, they have tested a variety of approaches to community organization and policy change, and (presumably) have uncovered some consistent themes in the dynamics of activism, water governance, and the exercise of corporate power. This project, designed and conducted in partnership with the Water Watchers, an Ontario-based water advocacy organization, aims to capture some of the lessons learned from the people involved at the grassroots in communities in Maine, Michigan, Colorado, and California.

Research Assistant Duties
Specific duties may vary depending on RA skills and emergent needs but includes opportunities to work directly with the community research partner and the local organizations at the centre of the study. Working closely with the Principal Investigator and/or the community research partner, the Research Assistant will:

- participate in research team meetings, and the planning/design of research activities
- organize and analyze interview data
- find, organize, and analyze documentary, social media, and internet information on the case study sites
- develop community-oriented case study summaries based on the data
- participate in design/development of additional data gathering tools (e.g., possible community attitudes on-line survey)
• manage data and data gathering logistics
• lead project communications (including contact management, webpage updates, etc.), in conjunction with community research partner staff and volunteers
• collaborate with the community research partner personnel in the development of community-oriented knowledge mobilization strategies and tools
• participate in the development of academic outputs, such as article manuscripts and conference presentations

**Qualifications:**
• current student at the Master's level in a Canadian post-secondary institution, or currently accepted for a Master’s program with the intent of starting the program in 2003/04
• training and/or experience in qualitative data collection and analysis
• experience with on-line survey design and administration
• strong writing skills
• friendly and effective communication skills, and an ability to liaise with a variety of existing community network partners and contributing to expanding these networks
• self-directed and highly organized, with great attention to detail
• interest and familiarity with the water (or environmental) activism movement in Canada and the US, including knowledge of key players, is an asset

*Indigenous students and students from other equity-seeking communities are strongly encouraged to apply. Maximizing diversity of personnel, perspectives, and approaches within our research team is a priority.*

**Remuneration**
This RA position pays hourly at $26.50/hour, depending on education level and experience, for approximately 150 hours of work (2 positions available).

**Work Setting**
The successful candidate is expected to use their own computer and to complete the work at a location convenient to them. Neither a workspace nor a computer will be provided for this project. The work can be done anywhere and at any time within the bounds of project deadlines but will involve regular meetings with the research team for progress updates and troubleshooting. Some meetings will require the RA(s) to travel to Waterloo or Guelph.

**To Apply**
Those interested in this position should email Dr. Robert Case (rob.case@uwaterloo.ca) *as soon as possible* and no later than November 11, 2022, with a CV demonstrating relevant experience, a sample of past work relevant to this project, and the names and contact information for one or two references.

Robert Case
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