

## **CHOGM on the Rock 2018: Chairs Report**

The second annual CHOGM on the Rock youth conference in St. Johns NL was held on March 10th and 11th to great success. Despite a snowstorm and delayed opening, we had 29 delegates representing 17 Commonwealth countries with board members filling in for partners who dropped out last minute. Delegates debated food security and discussions focused on sustainable agriculture, food exports and transport, intellectual property rights to food, and agricultural education. Over the course of two days, delegates came to learn the difficulties and rewards of consensus-based decision making. As usual, there were occasionally tense moments when at the last minute a placard went up and held back consensus. Delegates eventually learned that diversity is the Commonwealths strength and that we are stronger because of it. If any lesson was to be taken from the event, it was that. Before sharing a meal on Commonwealth Sunday, delegates took photos as part of the Commonwealth Big Lunches initiative to be showcased at the upcoming CHOGM in the UK. There feels to be an exciting movement in Newfoundland and Labrador around the Commonwealth, and 10 delegates and board members have expressed interest in seeking membership in RCS NL. This summer will begin the process of drafting a constitution for the CHOGM on the Rock organization to ensure that it becomes a lasting educational organization in the youth debate circuit. We would like to thank once again RCS Canada and RCS Ottawa for providing support of materials and advice, and of course RCS NL for their generous financial and moral support.

On behalf of the board of CHOGM on the Rock, we extend our sincere thanks to all the delegates who participated. We will see you again next year.

*Luke Battcock*

*Chair, CHOGM on the Rock Board*

*March 2018*



