

President's Message April 2022

As COVID-19 continued to plague us, COBSS was hoping for allocation 2022 to be in person. The seriousness of the virus variants again prevented us from in-person allocation. This is the present state of our organization.

Award Allocation - While allocation is the highlight for donors and volunteers, it was clear allocation could not proceed in person again this year, as we had done for 49 years up until Covid showed up! Small groups of dedicated volunteers worked tirelessly to ensure the best and most deserving students were awarded the bursaries and scholarships. From home offices and dining room tables around the Okanagan, volunteers worked interactively with each other to get the best result. We started March 14th and finished April 12th!

Our Students - While Classrooms in general returned to the "new" normal of in class and virtual hybrid, our local graduates showed us what they are made of. This year we awarded 584 awards. That is up 34 from last year, we awarded \$544,815 up \$55,000 from last year. Our number of applicates dropped by 22 this year. 68% of student applicants got awards, and that is amazing.

Our Donors - Our generous donors continued to do their best to support the post-secondary education of the youth of the Central Okanagan. While a small number of donors had to put their awards on hold, most found a way to fund their award(s). A few donors even established new awards during this difficult time! The tenacity of our community continues to surprise us, and we and look forward to being back to "normal" as soon as possible. We increased donors by 22 this year

Our School Counsellors - Our frontline workers continue to support students as they prepare their 2021/2022 COBSS application packages and coordinate all this information with COBSS. It is a tremendous task at the best of times. We all thank them for their hard work and dedication.

Our Volunteers - Our valued volunteers miss the camaraderie of the group at our monthly meetings and allocation. For now, we stay strong and have become proficient at the use of online meeting platforms. We have tried to have some social events but next year going forward we plan to reinstate our Tea and cocktail parties.

With the continued support of the community, we are staying focused on the graduating student body. And fear not, we will return to our new normal as soon as possible!

Our future – As we go forward, I hope my legacy is to GROW COBSS. We need to be out in the community telling folks the power and effects COBSS has on our community and the future of it. We need to be more focused on adding donors and awards. I don't expect people to go door to door, but just tell your friends about what you do and your passion will come through. Have an elevator speech about COBSS when people ask? I want to separate us from the bread company. This year 189 students did not receive an award and that is a number I'd like to see come down. More awards will do that.

If you are not currently a COBSS donor, we encourage you to keep us in mind for the day when you are in a position to invest in a local student. Thank you again for your support.

John Logel

John Logel, President