



COBSS

CENTRAL OKANAGAN BURSARY & SCHOLARSHIP SOCIETY

Newsletter 2020/21

Providing financial assistance to our local Grade 12 graduates in order that they may further their post secondary education



JUNE 2020

647

Student Applications

567

Awards

Total Value of Awards

\$513,480



Neil Dawson (b. 1956-)
Mentoring, 2020
Watercolour on paper
Gifted to COBSS by the artist

This thought provoking, original artwork reminds us of the power of education - how it transcends age, time, and culture. Canadian Artist Neil Dawson has gifted this piece entitled "Mentoring" to COBSS and we proudly share it with you.

Students from the following schools may apply for COBSS awards:

Aberdeen Hall Preparatory School
Central Programs School
Ecole de l'Anse-au-sable
George Elliot Secondary School

Heritage Christian School
Immaculata Regional High
Kelowna Christian School
Kelowna Secondary School

Mount Boucherie Secondary
Okanagan Christian School
Okanagan Mission Secondary
Rutland Senior Secondary

A Message from COBSS President Lorraine Miller

Just as we became aware of COVID-19 last March, COBSS was preparing for allocation 2020. The seriousness of the virus took us by surprise, and like the rest of Canada we had to pivot quickly to keep things on track for students and donors alike. Here is a look at how COVID has affected everything about COBSS.

Award Allocation - While this three week period is the highlight for donors and volunteers, it was clear allocation could not proceed in person, as we have done for 49 years! After much discussion, a small committee from the Executive volunteered to allocate all 567 awards online. From home offices and dining room tables around the Okanagan, volunteers closely reviewed the donors' criteria and analyzed each application. We started March 23rd and finished April 10th!

Our Students - While "virtual learning" and living at home was not the post-secondary education experience any student envisioned, our local graduates showed us what they are made of. Of the 567 awards allocated, 51 students chose to defer until fall 2021 and five surrendered their awards to alternates.

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.

Our School Counsellors - Our frontline workers continue to support students as they prepare their 2021 COBSS application packages and coordinate all this information with COBSS. It is a tremendous task at the best of times.

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. The COBSS volunteers were disappointed to have to cancel 2020 Spring Tea, our Fall Wine & Cheese Mingler and the Spring 2021 Tea. 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!

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.

Kind Regards,

Lorraine Miller

COBSS President



The George Elliot Memorial Bursary was created by my father, Alan Elliot, in memory of his father after whom the school was named. He started the Sharon Porter Memorial Bursary in honour of his daughter who was tragically killed in a traffic accident and the Alan & Bea Elliot Family Bursary as a legacy. My parents were strong believers in the power of education, although they didn't have the opportunity during the time that they grew up. My wife and I started the David & Audrey Elliot Bursary as we were both teachers and saw the struggles that students today have in funding their education.

David Elliot, David & Audrey Elliot Bursary

Creative ways to fund an award...

Donor Eleanor Rusk started her first bursary with COBSS in 2011; it was called the 3 R's and valued at \$500. She was a believer in recycling and as such decided she would save cans, bottles, etc and donate what she raised. This year, Eleanor's "little recycling project" has raised \$8000, permitting her to allocate 8x \$1000 awards. She says that the pandemic has given her and her husband lots of time to pick up recycling from people all over town!

TWP Fitness is a family owned and operated fitness facility. Community support is one of their many goals, so in 2019 they set their sights on establishing a Bursary for a deserving local graduate. Funds were raised through coffee bar tips and a variety of specialty programs such as 'HIIT in the Vineyard', Parking Lot parties, and 'Bootcamp & Beer Events'. They even rented out their facility for a donation to the TWP Bursary.

The KSS PAC was creatively looking for alternate ways to raise money for their awards. Then COVID-19 arrived, making any fundraising so much more challenging! The KSS PAC was determined and decided to try a GoFundMe campaign. Together, the KSS community raised over \$4,000 by the COBSS deadline in late November, enabling their PAC to sponsor two \$1,000 bursaries and two \$1,000 scholarships for their 2021 graduates.



The JAGTAC NURSING BURSARY encourages male students to study nursing. This award supports diversity in the profession and aims to change the view of what a 'typical' nurse might be. Talent has no gender.

John Logel

In 1971 our founders,



Mr. Harry Dewar Mr. Ken Harding



Mr. Lou Dedinsky Ms. Rosemary King

created COBSS.
We honour and thank
them for their vision.

Did you know...

there are three ways you can choose to help students through COBSS?

- Bursaries are allocated to students with financial need;
- Scholarships are distributed to those with outstanding achievement;
- Awards are given based on a variety of criteria specified by the donor.

COBSS proudly partners with the Central Okanagan Foundation to find just the right students for their awards.



— CENTRAL OKANAGAN —
FOUNDATION

empowering generations to give.

So many people assist COBSS in doing our work. Sincerest gratitude goes out to...

**Central Okanagan Public Schools | RBC Dominion Securities | FH & P Lawyers
KPMG | First West Credit Union | Paul Leinemann Construction Ltd.**



A Recipient's Experience

Despite COVID challenges, Rutland Grad Keneisha continues to give back to her local community

Nearly two years ago in 2019, I graduated from Rutland Senior Secondary. At the time, I was hopeful for the future, but money always seemed to be the factor between me and my dreams.

Scholarships completely changed my journey.

At graduation, I was honoured to receive four scholarships through COBSS and ten scholarships from other organizations nationally. Knowing that my community believed in me enough to support me financially was an incredible honour. With this support, I moved to Toronto and began my Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) at Ryerson University.

Over my first year, I was not only able to deepen my knowledge through classes, but find belonging within a greater Black and 2SLGBTQ+ community. I also continued my community leadership work and celebrated with Rutland as several students and alumni were

featured on the CBC hit reality show *Dragons' Den* for *Operation Take Two*, the plastic recycling workspace we founded at RSS. I am still connected to the project with two other RSS alumni and we are working to establish a non-profit to distribute the \$60,000 in funding we received to support other youth in starting their own workspaces.

Life shifted in March with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in Canada. Along with many students, I was scrambling as I was given only a few days' notice to leave my university residence. Thankfully, I was able to find stable housing by returning to Kelowna. The challenging combination of remote learning, my family members' jobs in healthcare, and the re-traumatizing surge of awareness of anti-Black racism made the next six months difficult. However, now back in of university, I'm feeling more grounded and

As I reflect on the past two years, I recognize just how integral scholarships have been to my journey. I'm doubtful that I would be where I am today without this support. Recognizing this, one of the highlights of my 2020 was successfully advocating for the creation of a biannual \$1000 scholarship for BIPOC students (Black, Indigenous, Person of Colour) from my workplace.

As I continue to learn about community care through my studies and my own continued activism, I look forward to co-creating new ways of supporting my community just as scholarships did for me.

With gratitude,
Keneisha Charles (she/they)



Toronto and halfway through my second year hopeful for the future.

Canadian Federation of University Women Kelowna believes strongly in the benefit of post-secondary education for women in order for them to achieve both their personal and career potential. Through COBSS we have supported more than 75 young women in their pursuit of further education and plan to continue for the foreseeable future.

Pat Scarlett, CFUW Kelowna

Visit us on Facebook and Twitter @okCOBSS



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