News

College provides bursaries

"Their generosity makes it possible."
— Kathy Butler

Morning Star Staff

Hard work, determination, and commitment for 38 Vernon students translated into a boost to their education fund.

The Okanagan College Foundation distributed 54 awards totaling $41,036 to students studying at Okanagan College's Vernon campus during the 2013-2014 academic year.

"When students go above and beyond, either in their academic achievement, community contribution, or personal conviction they deserve to be recognized," said regional dean Jane Lister.

"These award recipients motivate and inspire other students to achieve great things."

One such student is Gabriella Carr who is completing her human service work diploma this year at the Vernon campus.

Recently, personal circumstances saw her marriage dissolve and this meant she became the sole provider for three children under the age of five.

This life-change was motivation enough for her to go from dreaming of post-secondary education, to making it a reality, and soon to graduate.

"Receiving these awards is the determining factor for education being within reach, especially as a single mom," said Carr.

Carr received the Canadian Federation of University Women first-year bursary, Rotary Club of Vernon scholarship, P.E.O. Gwenn Maeland Memorial Award, and the Alf Peters Memorial Award, totaling $3,500.

"It's not simply financial support, it's encouragement that keeps my focus fixed and emotional support that propels me through this process. It's people believing in me enough to invest in my education, career, my life and my children's lives," said Carr.

"The generosity of these awards not only affects the quality of our lives while I am studying, but also impacts our future as I can now access a career-path which was previously unattainable."

She aspires to continue her studies in order to one day earn a PhD in psychology.

"Our donors are an integral part of our community here at the College," said Kathy Butler, executive director of the Okanagan College Foundation.

"Their generosity makes it possible for students to pursue their studies and explore new careers. These awards not only help relieve the financial pressure and support students being able to stay in school, but beyond that they let students know that there are donors in the community behind them, celebrating their successes."

The 54 Vernon awards represent a portion of the total number of awards, bursaries and scholarships granted each year by Okanagan College.

In the 2013-2014 fiscal year, the Foundation disbursed 647 scholarships and bursaries totaling $541,851 and Okanagan College also awarded 880 financial awards amounting to $404,462, for a combined total of $946,313.

Students are encouraged to apply for OC awards, bursaries and scholarships for the September 2015 intake. Specific awards information, deadlines and application details can be found at www.okanagan.bc.ca/awards.