



GRATITUDE REPORT 2020-21

Saige Girouard is the first Okanagan College recipient of the Lieutenant Governor's Medal for Inclusion, Democracy and Reconciliation.



Your impact on students | by the numbers

\$54k
in emergency
funding

\$1,027,629
disbursed to
students

756
awards to
477
students

43
new award
funds created

Bree Edler

“I’m in shock. I have never received anything like this before so I feel very fortunate. With my entire program online this is something I really needed.”



Bree Edler was among one of 30 students to receive a laptop or funding from Okanagan College Foundation donors including Staples and Best Buy Kelowna. The funding allowed students to purchase the technology needed to participate and complete their programs online.

Thanks for staying connected to student success

Online cooking class raises \$315,000

In the midst of a lockdown, Okanagan College Foundation donors tuned in for a virtual evening of festive cooking and giving with the proceeds fueling the education of health-care professionals.

Season's Eatings saw participants cook a gourmet meal led by Okanagan College Culinary and Pastry Arts instructors and students. Donor generosity was on the menu with the Dec. 3 event raising \$315,000, surpassing its \$250,000 goal. The proceeds went to the Our Students, Your Health campaign for a new Health Sciences Centre.



Ford delivers hands-on training

Ford of Canada and Orchard Ford donated a 2020 Ford F-150 to the College to be used by students in its motor vehicle service training programs. In addition to the vehicle, Ford of Canada is also providing students and faculty in the motor vehicle service training programs with access to their online Automotive Career Exploration (ACE) training.



Donors make lunch program possible

Generous support made it possible to launch and build OC Serves Up, a program that saw Culinary Arts students prepare 50 nutritious meals per day, which are provided to OC students free of charge.

Valley First, a division of First West Credit Union, the TELUS Friendly Future Foundation, Royal Bank of Canada (RBC), the Okanagan College Students' Union and Sysco donated to OC Serves Up, which will allow the program to continue into Spring 2022.



Year in review

Income

Total revenue
\$7,300,171



Student support
\$1,002,024



Program support
\$411,872



Capital projects
\$3,403,220



Investment
and other income
\$2,488,055



Expenses

Total expenses
\$2,572,304



Student support
\$1,027,629



Program support
\$173,187



Capital projects
\$1,152,167



Fundraising
and other expenses
\$219,321



Note: Net revenue is designated for future capital and other projects.



RBC and AO support hands-on entrepreneurship

The Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) and Accelerate Okanagan (AO) are supporting the development of an innovative program that will teach hands-on entrepreneurial and business skills.

RBC is donating \$50,000 from its Future Launch initiative and AO is giving \$15,000 along with connections to their community.

The Experiential Entrepreneurship program will launch in 2023 and see business students design, plan, launch and run their own businesses.

Friesen family gives to health-care education

A decades-long connection to Okanagan College and a desire to give back to community is inspiring a \$150,000 donation by the Friesen family to the Our Students, Your Health campaign. This gift comes from Rod and Dianne Friesen and their two sons, Shawn and Jason and their families.

Dianne worked at Okanagan College in the mid-1970s. In 1984, her husband Rod started Voyager RV and their son Jason who is running the business is grateful to be able to hire graduates from the College's RV Technician program.





STUDENTS EXPANDING BOUNDARIES

This year tested us all in different ways. Hear from students on how your support is helping them turn challenges into opportunities. . .

A young man with dark hair, wearing a grey t-shirt with 'ANTLETS SURF CO' printed on it, is smiling and pointing his right index finger at a human skeleton model. The skeleton is white with some red and blue painted details on the muscles and joints. It is hanging from a white metal stand against a grey concrete wall. The lighting is soft and even.

Ty Sideroff

“It is eye-opening once you experience mental stress and I want to be that person to help in any mental or physical way.”

I have always been interested in our anatomy and exercising so I enrolled in OC's Kinesiology Diploma program.

My first year was going really well, then COVID-19 hit. I was able to finish the first year in an online format. However, starting school in September completely online, I was struggling to stay engaged with my studies.

Before COVID, many of our classes would be active and in the gym. I found it hard to stay present with everything online and not having the same conversations with the instructors or my classmates.

When you are at home every day at your desk and you only see people through your computer, it takes a toll for sure. I was struggling mentally. I felt alone and separated from everyone. It was a lonely road with no one knowing what was going to happen next.

Time is so incredibly important. I learned that I need to give myself time to do my school work and time to do stuff for myself.

This is what student awards give you, the time to take care of yourself. I made sure I got outside every day even just for a quick walk. I also found ways to connect with my classmates online. If I didn't have those awards, I would have been working more and I wouldn't have been able to have taken that time.

I hope I can do something like this for a student in the future.

Growing up I played a lot of hockey and enjoyed learning, but I never took school too seriously. Joining the Kinesiology program, I discovered people with the same interests as me and that I can excel in school. I'm transferring to UBCO this fall to finish my degree. Afterwards, I hope to continue on to medical school to become a doctor.

It is hard to help someone if you do not know what it's like to be in their position. It is eye-opening once you experience mental stress and I want to be that person to help in any mental or physical way.

A portrait of Saige Girouard, a young woman with long brown hair, smiling and wearing a blue top and large gold earrings. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green foliage and a light-colored wall.

“Higher education makes such a huge impact in someone’s life.”

In my second year of studies I connected with a classmate over our shared curiosity to learn more about our Indigenous backgrounds. I’m Métis, but my family didn’t practise Indigenous customs.

My classmate went on to be very successful in reconnecting with her culture. Watching her hit those milestones I knew that if she could do it, I could do it too.

I’d say the tipping point for me was winning a bursary from Okanagan College to attend the Indigenous Women’s Leadership Summit. I wasn’t even sure I should apply. I felt because I wasn’t as connected to my culture, I might be stealing the opportunity from someone who would benefit more.

It was an absolutely transformative weekend for me. I never thought I was Indigenous enough to be involved in my own culture, but at the summit I learned I wasn’t the only Indigenous person who felt that way.

It was one thing when I thought I was unique but when I realized this was common practice and that so many people did not have that connection, I just knew that I had to act.

We are never going to have a successful society where Indigenous people can thrive if Indigenous youth are blaming themselves for not having that cultural understanding and knowledge of their languages, practices and traditions.

I came home and I thought, ‘now that I have all of this knowledge with the tools that I have in my life what is the next step for me to do something?’

Saige Girouard
Red River, Métis Nation

I am in the Bachelor of Business Administration Honours program and I decided to use my Honours project to focus on how Indigenous students can engage more with Aboriginal Services at Okanagan College.

Awards played a big part in my education. I knew I did not want to graduate with a lot of debt and that meant I worked two to three jobs when going to school. Anytime I got an award in any amount, it was just that little extra stress off my plate.

Higher education makes such a huge impact in someone’s life. In their ability to be happy and healthy and their earning potential. Education also plays such a huge role in building a better tomorrow and a better society and I’ve been fortunate enough to experience this throughout my education.

I feel incredibly thankful every single day that I was lucky enough to be able to get a degree and have this experience. The funding and the support from everyone involved in the process is unbelievably generous and absolutely essential, so my deepest thank you from the bottom of my heart.



Lawren Richards

“I think I expanded my boundaries and I did something I was apprehensive about.”

I am a single mom to 17-year-old twins. We had been living in a 400-square-foot cabin about an hour from town when an opportunity came up that would allow me to purchase some land and build my own home closer to town and my kids' school.

I have always been interested in natural building but I don't have a carpentry background so I enrolled in the Carpenter Foundation program in Salmon Arm.

I was the only woman in the class and much older than my classmates, so I was a bit nervous at first, but I got over it quickly and really enjoyed the class. The instructor was just amazing, and I always felt like part of the crew even though most of the other students were my kids' age.

When COVID-19 first hit, we were still in the classroom, and the College got us up and running online with only one missed day. It was very well organized and executed. Although the onsite portion was delayed a bit, that gave me some extra time to work on my straw bale

home, with frequent calls to the instructor as I encountered challenges.

Awards are hugely important. There are a lot of barriers to people who are low income or women entering the field non-traditionally, and the support is what makes it possible. The grants and awards enabled me to take enough time from work to complete the course and support my family; I could not have done it without this support.

I am planning to take what I am learning from building my home and my experience running a business to help other home builders interested in natural building. It is exciting, challenging and sometimes overwhelming to build my own home. The Carpenter Foundation class taught me to take it one step at a time, and gave me the confidence to keep going.

I think I expanded my boundaries and I did something I was apprehensive about.

I never thought I would find myself going back to school again, but I am glad I took the leap.

Because of you, students felt supported during an uncertain time

This past year challenged all of us including you our donors to adapt. In the months that followed the initial lockdown we had to get comfortable with, and gain insights from, new ways of thinking and doing.

The student stories we highlight in this gratitude report demonstrate the best of this ideal. While these stories are not all related to the pandemic, they are examples and indeed a celebration of our ability to get through difficult or doubtful moments and come away with a new appreciation of our abilities and maybe even a desire to inspire change.

Your continued support during the pandemic made the transition easier for students as they faced financial uncertainties and anxiety associated with a very different learning environment. Thank you for all that you do.

Your unwavering support helped raise \$4 million towards our \$5 million fundraising goal for the new Health Sciences Centre. With the Centre opening this fall, we're hopeful we can raise the remaining funds and ensure students have access to the very best facilities and

equipment when they return to face-to-face learning in September.

We recognize that the tragic confirmations from former residential schools have been difficult for the survivors, families and Indigenous communities across the region, province and country.

We are committed to continue working with, learning from and listening to Indigenous communities, and engaging community to support our Indigenous learners and employees. Saige's story is an example of the role post-secondary can play in supporting Indigenous learners.

As we look ahead, we are grateful to you our community. Your support made a difference to students in an uncertain time and they are making a difference to our community.



Gladys Fraser
Chair
OC Foundation



Helen Jackman
Executive Director
OC Foundation

100% impact

Okanagan College Foundation does not charge donors any administration fees, meaning 100 per cent of your gift directly benefits students.



Making education accessible for all

Jim Hamilton's association with Okanagan College spans 41 years, during which time he has held various positions including professor, board member, administrator and, for the last 16 years, president.

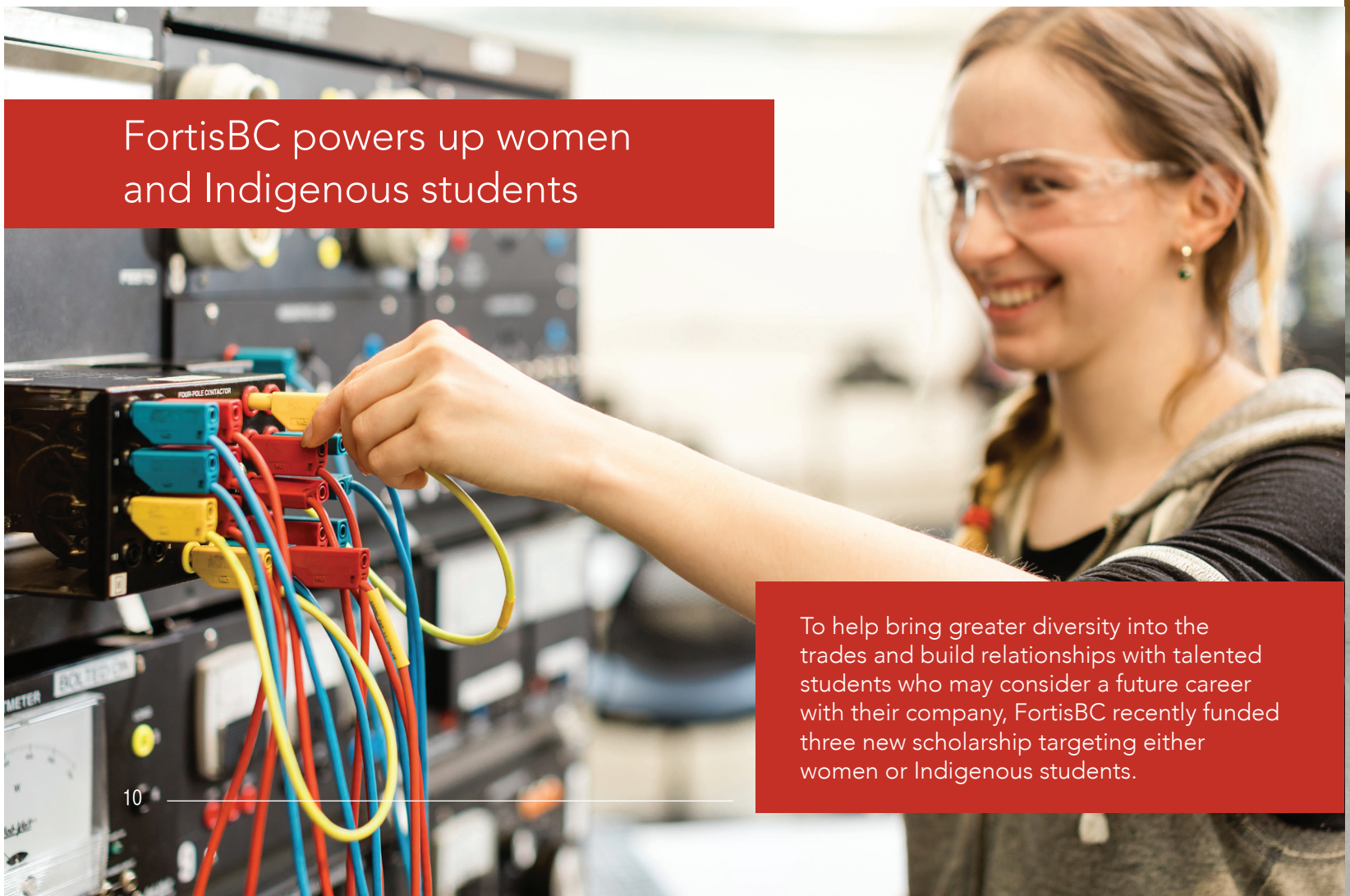
A key passion for Jim has been improving education for all, and during his time as president the College saw a fourfold increase in the number of Indigenous learners.

Jim officially retired March 31, 2021 and in recognition of his contribution to post-secondary education locally, provincially and nationally, Okanagan College and the Okanagan College Foundation, along with donors, established the Hamilton Recognition Award Fund.

The \$40,000 fund will support Indigenous learners in any program and campus, a purpose Hamilton wholeheartedly supports. The first recipients will be selected in Fall 2021.



FortisBC powers up women and Indigenous students



To help bring greater diversity into the trades and build relationships with talented students who may consider a future career with their company, FortisBC recently funded three new scholarship targeting either women or Indigenous students.

A gift to support health-care shortages

They are the ones who support patients with personal care and attention. Licensed Practical Nurses and Health Care Assistants are at the heart of patient care but they are also critically short in supply. This is why a Kelowna couple are choosing to support these professions today and for decades to come.

John and Monica Shantz have set up two bursary funds that will support students in the Health Care Assistant or Practical Nursing programs. One of these funds is a legacy gift that will benefit students for generations.

"We hope it will be a great thing for the students personally and for the community," says John.

"There is a need for the people in the fields we've chosen to support and we wanted to make a contribution that can impact our community as a whole."

The Shantzs add that supporting students who are working on the frontlines of health care means a lot to them.

"We think the practical, hands-on care from people working in these fields is so important and something we've benefited from personally," says Monica. "We are grateful for the care we've received and we wanted to pay it forward."

This is the first gift the Shantzs have made to Okanagan College. The couple value the role education plays in helping people launch their careers. John worked in a number of roles in the tree fruit and wine industry including Executive Director of BC Wine Institute and Monica built her career in the financial services industry.

When it came time to make a gift, the couple were impressed by the fact that 100 per cent of funds they provide for awards will go to students.

"We really like that money goes directly to the people who will benefit," says John.



STAND UP

— BE PROUD —
YOU'RE CHANGING LIVES



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