



# **BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE**

# **BURSARY**

**2025 Award Winners**

**This scholarship, bursary, and award initiative recognizes student perseverance and achievement to encourage our members to continue their educational pursuits.**



# **\$1000 Syilx Siya Award for High School Students**

Sponsored by FortisBC

## **ABBHEY COYNE**

Princeton Secondary School

"To be empathetic and thoughtful applies to everyone in my community, as I feel that no one succeeds if many people are left behind. I will use these traits to build a successful career in teaching. "

Abbey graduated from Princeton Secondary School. Her plan is to attend University to obtain her Bachelor of Education Elementary degree.



# \$1000 Syilx Siya Award for High School Students

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## CASHANEA HOLMES

Similkameen Elementary Secondary School

“I am a strong young Native woman; I am clean and sober as I work hard to break the cycle of colonization. As I participate in my culture, I am stopping cultural genocide. I am currently working academically towards college, as well as participating in my culture, where I will continue to grow.”

Cashanea, graduated from Similkameen Elementary Secondary School and will be attending Okanagan College this September in a graduate degree program





## **\$1000 Syilx Siya Award for High School** Sponsored by EMB

# **DEMPSEY COHEN**

W.L. Seaton Secondary School

“I try to historically and politically educate myself and my peers to show them the injustices against our people and how they never stopped resisting. I believe this of great importance because for Indigenous people to ever liberate ourselves from colonial oppression. We must be educated to pressure and leverage the government to right their wrongs through returning stolen land and providing more for our communities.”

Dempsey, graduated from W.L Seaton Secondary. He will be attending the University of British Columbia Okanagan, pursuing a degree in Health and Exercise Science starting in September 2025



# **\$1000 Syilx Siya Award for High School Students**

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## **KEANU MANUEL**

Merritt Secondary School

“I want to keep the teachings alive and help out where I can. I am proud of the manhood training I have completed and I will always do my best at everything I pursue. If I focus on myself and my family, my community will become stronger and in turn the syilx nation will become that much stronger. That is my aspiration for the people.”

Keanu graduated from Merritt Secondary School. He will be continuing his education at Okanagan College. He plans to study in the Carpenter and Joiner Foundation program, beginning September 2025.



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# **TEHYA CARPENTER**

*Dutchess Park Secondary School*

"I show up for my nation by carrying myself with grace, I always walk and talk in a good way. I try to always be friendly and open up to meeting new people. When I play sports, I always play with good intentions sportsmanship and pride passion. I want to lead by example. Once achieving my degree, I'd like to work for the betterment of indigenous peoples, children and families."

Tehya, graduated from Dutchess Park Secondary School and will be attending the University of British Columbia this September to Indigenous Education.



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## **YAKMAXN LOUIE**

Similkameen Elementary Secondary School

“By combining my background in ranching with the advanced training provided through this program (Environmental Resources Technology Program), I aim to contribute to the ongoing growth and sustainability of my community. I am excited for the opportunity to learn, grow, and give back in ways that honor both my ancestors and the future generations.”

Yakmaxn, graduated from Similkameen Elementary Secondary School. He will be attending the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, pursuing his certificate in Environmental Resources Technology





## **\$1500 Education for Life**

Sponsored by FortisBC

# **NIKKI MARCHAND**

University of British Columbia Okanagan  
Master of Arts, Indigenous Knowledges

“My life goal and passion for sharing my story and my tools forward, in hopes to bring healing to our people is a path that is bigger than just myself. I feel that the Creator gave me these gift and experiences to share and walk forward speaking my truth, knowing that my Ancestors are beside me. I have learned the most listening and watching our Leaders speak from their own experiences and how they found a way to follow a good path.”



## **\$1500 Education for Life**

Sponsored by FortisBC

# **KRISTEN PIKE**

University of British Columbia Okanagan  
Master of Arts, Indigenous Knowledges

Reflecting on my journey, I realize my family prepared me to take risks outside my comfort zone. From there – people around me provided encouragement, leading to a career working on the priorities of First Nations communities. I have prioritized *i?* *sqəlx<sup>w</sup>cawtət* *u† i?* *nqilx<sup>w</sup>cntət* (our ways and our language) as how I show up for my relatives now. I look forward to applying my strengths to our *syilx* language and culture as the next stage of my career.



## **\$3500 EMB Engineering Scholarship** Sponsored by EMB

# **KEILAN THOMPSON**

University of British Columbia Okanagan  
Bachelors of Applied Science

I believe excellence isn't just about getting good grades; it's about being consistent, committed, and giving your best effort no matter what's going on around you.



## **\$1500 EMB Walking My Learning Forward**

Sponsored by EMB

# **CELY-RAE STREET**

Thompson River University  
Juris Doctor Law

Syilx teachings remind me that leadership is not about power - it's about service. Our ways of knowing (relationality, accountability, and balance) are foundational to the kind of advocate I am becoming. They remind me that success is not measured by status, but by how we uplift our communities.





**\$1500 EMB Business**

Sponsored by EMB

# S'KI'AYCIN PETER WAARDENBURG JR

Okanagan College  
Bachelors of Business

My educational path hasn't been easy. I've faced several challenges along the way, but each roadblock has taught me the importance of perseverance. No matter how difficult things have gotten, I've learned to keep pushing forward because I know the outcome can be life changing. not just for me, but for my future and my community.





## **\$1500 EMB Walking My Learning Forward** Sponsored by EMB

# **KARA ROSS**

University of British Columbia Okanagan  
Masters of Education

“Our teachings remind me that I am never alone; we are always in relationship with our ancestors, land, and people. Our stories, language, and ceremonies have carried us through generations of challenge, and they remind me that healing and knowledge go hand in hand. This grounding in Syilx values helps me stand strong in institutions that weren’t built for us. It reminds me to carry our teachings forward, not just for myself but for the generations yet to come.”





**\$1500 Progressive Fence Syilx Bursary**  
Sponsored by Progressive Fence

## **GRACI GALLICANO**

University of British Columbia Okanagan  
Bachelor of Arts

Growing up I realized that I love being involved in my community and making a difference. I'm always speaking with confidence and wanting to inspire youth to know that its possible to be successful and stand out, especially in a system where indigenous people are oppressed.



***Progressive Fence***





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Congratulations!

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