

Over 400 Indigenous students share over \$1.4 M in awards

VICTORIA, BC – Brody Sanderson is a First Nations student studying to become a teacher. He is working towards his goal with a little help from the BC Scholarship Society who recently granted him a \$3,000 *Indigenous Student Award*.

Sanderson is one of 430 Indigenous students to receive over \$1.4 million in *Student Awards* from the Society in support of their studies at public post-secondary institutions throughout the province. Sanderson shared that the *Award* is about more than money. “As an Indigenous student, receiving this recognition not only helps me financially, but also affirms the importance of Indigenous presence and leadership in education. I am committed to giving back to my community, and this award encourages me to continue pursuing my goal of becoming an educator who can help strengthen and support future generations.”

The Society’s Indigenous Student Awards program is funded from the returns on a \$10 million endowment fund established by the Province of British Columbia in 2007. It was created to assist in removing barriers to higher education for Indigenous peoples. Awards of \$3,000 to \$5,000 each are issued every year through a competitive process open to Indigenous students studying at all post-secondary levels, from trades training to doctoral programs.

“The Indigenous Student Awards help reduce barriers and open doors to post-secondary education for Indigenous students,” said Jessie Sunner, Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills. “Supporting their success is vital to our commitment to meaningful reconciliation. Our government is proud to support their educational journeys, which help strengthen communities across British Columbia.”

The Indigenous population in British Columbia is growing at more than triple the rate of the non-Indigenous population, with nearly 45% under the age of 25.

“These awards recognize the talent, resilience, and leadership of Indigenous students across British Columbia,” notes Society Chair, Firas Abbasi. “Education is a powerful pathway to strengthening communities, cultures, and future generations, and we are honoured to support students as they pursue their goals in fields ranging from trades to doctoral studies. The BC Scholarship Society is proud to work alongside the Province and Indigenous communities to help remove barriers to post-secondary education and contribute to meaningful, lasting reconciliation.”

This award program supports the achievement of Article 21 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: “Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.” It also addresses UN Sustainable Development Goal #4, namely to “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.”

The BC Scholarship Society provides scholarships and awards to students attending public post-secondary institutions throughout the province and internationally. Since its inception, nearly \$40 million has been distributed to B.C. students through its six scholarship and award programs. The Victoria Foundation provides administrative support to the Society.

Information about 2026 Indigenous Awards can be found at
<https://www.bcscholarshipsociety.ca/indigenous-awards/about-this-award/>

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