

2021  
**Community Sponsored Awards**  
RECOGNIZING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Recipients Guide



# 2021

## **Community Sponsored Awards**

RECOGNIZING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Edmonton Public Schools recognizes that the path to student success does not occur in isolation. The responsibility to support our 105,000 students on their K–12 educational journey is a shared one between the Division and the broader community. We work closely with community partners to best leverage the community's interest and investment in the success and well-being of our students and their families.

We are grateful for the generous support provided by community members to sponsor awards and scholarships to recognize the learning and achievement of Division students. Each community sponsored award or scholarship has its own criteria and application requirements. Every year, adjudication teams review applications submitted by the students to determine the recipients who best exemplify the award or scholarship criteria.

Congratulations to the 2021 recipients of the community sponsored awards and scholarships on your well-deserved success!

# Betty Finch Scholarship

The purpose of this scholarship is to assist a student who is completing high school while receiving specialized support to accommodate a learning disability, and who also requires financial support to attend a post-secondary program. Betty worked for Edmonton Public Schools for three decades, mainly as a specialist who focused on students with learning disabilities. This scholarship was established to recognize her commitment to education.

## Recipient



### **Maya Pardeahtan**

*McNally High School*

Maya is known for her strong work ethic, perseverance, and advocacy for herself and others. She takes education seriously and shares her experiences from her own learning journey to influence the success of others. Maya's hard work and perseverance has carried over to other areas of her life. As a competitive soccer player she focuses on self-improvement, working with coaches and trainers to help achieve her goals. She spent her time during the pandemic training hard, conditioning and improving her endurance, strength and agility, which resulted in her earning a spot on Team Alberta for the North American Indigenous Games. Maya is now at the University of Alberta Augustana Campus pursuing a bachelor of arts in physical education, kinesiology and sports studies. After that, she plans to work toward a masters in physical therapy.

# Catherine and Robert Povaschuk Scholarship

This scholarship recognizes a Grade 12 student who has honours in academic courses, demonstrates commitment to extracurricular and community involvement and will attend the University of Alberta. Catherine and Robert Povaschuk wish to assist scholarship recipients with expenses associated with proceeding with their studies.

## Recipient



### **Eric Au**

*Ross Sheppard High School*

Eric's long standing community involvement clearly demonstrates his passion and dedication to impact the lives of others and make the world a better place. Over the course of Eric's Grade 12 year, his principal was in awe of Eric's accomplishments and what he stood for. As a full International Baccalaureate (IB) student, Eric never had a mark below 90 per cent during high school and graduated with a 98 per cent grade average. Eric scheduled Interact Club volunteer events and fundraised for the school's long-term relationships with two schools in Belize. His passion for the environment was revealed through his co-ordination of Project Green environmental initiatives around the school. Eric founded the Debate Club, and he became well known for making significant contributions to the high school Model United Nations as a two-time winner of the Best Diplomat award in 2019 and 2020. He was an executive member of the Connect Crew to welcome Grade 10 students and team captain for the Lion Dance Club. Since Grade 5, Eric has been volunteering and recruiting others to support several city festivals. Bettering his community through service and leadership is his core. He is attending the University of Alberta pursuing a bachelor of science honours degree in neuroscience.

# Esther and Peter Cunliffe Scholarship

This scholarship recognizes a Grade 12 student who demonstrates excellent academic performance, outstanding personal and leadership qualities and who requires financial support to attend one of the following post-secondary institutions: University of Alberta, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology or MacEwan University. In the spring of 2000, Esther and Peter Cunliffe made a commitment for a portion of their estate to be made available for scholarships for students graduating from Edmonton Public Schools.

## Recipient



### **Seniha Gulluk**

*M.E. LaZerte High School*

Seniha achieved honours with distinction throughout her high school years. Her everlasting optimism, positivity, determination, creativity, attentive listening, and passion for helping others were part of what made Seniha such an amazing student and strong school leader. Small tasks around the school, like decorating for Halloween, or large responsibilities of leading events and activities, were all executed with complete effort. As vice president of communications for the Student Union, she focused on building community both in and outside of school. Seniha helped develop spirit days, created videos for school news and special events, and co-led a fundraiser that resulted in 30 food baskets for families living in crisis zones throughout the month of Ramadan. Her unlimited passion for serving her community and getting involved to create positive change supports children, youth, adults and seniors. Seniha volunteers with the Boys and Girls Club, Alberta Health Services, the Edmonton Public Library and the YMCA. She is a bilingual youth leader with the French for the Future organization and participates in the Alberta Council for Global Cooperation Hub program. Seniha is attending the University of Alberta pursuing a bachelor of science degree with a minor in French language and literature.

# French Bilingual Awards

The purpose of the French Bilingual Award is to recognize one Grade 6 and one Grade 9 French Immersion student, and one Grade 12 student enrolled in French programming. These students demonstrate overall performance in French and have positive attitudes towards learning French. This award was made possible by the Edmonton French Bilingual Education Society (EFBES).

## Grade 6 Recipient



### **Mia Jordan**

*Rio Terrace School*

Mia is conscientious of her role in creating a French-enriched environment. She embraces and promotes the French language in her community and recognizes that it is part of preserving and maintaining an Albertan and Canadian identity. Mia persevered a great deal to learn and improve her French language skills. She worked intensively to improve her reading fluency and comprehension by completing extra reading assignments at home and actively participating in her home reading program. Mia was part of her Grade 6 school French podcast where various topics were explored. She also created a checklist system to encourage students to speak in French regularly. For Mia, the French language is not only a language but an expression and extension of her character. She is continuing as a French Immersion student for junior high school.

## French Bilingual Awards *(continued)*

### Grade 9 Recipient



### **Sophia Keeling**

*McKernan School*

Sophia is an excellent student who demonstrates an appreciation for and a willingness to engage in her French-language studies. A strong contributor to class discussions, Sophia goes the extra mile by pursuing ways to engage with others in French by offering suggestions for French-language media. She enjoys taking on challenges such as reading difficult French novels in order to become more informed on social issues. Sophia has been able to travel to francophone communities where she has been able to use her communication skills in a variety of ways. Sophia is even teaching her dog tricks in French! This deserving award-recipient is continuing to learn French through the high school French Immersion program.

## French Bilingual Awards *(continued)*

### Grade 12 Recipient



### **Amy Smith**

*Harry Ainlay High School*

Amy has been passionate about learning French since Grade 1, first as a French Immersion student and then in high school where she excelled in her French as a second language IB classes. She has always been passionate about the French language and participated in a four week exchange to France. Amy consistently offered support to her peers and contributed positively to the classroom environment. She volunteered as a French tutor and helped create projects for elementary students in order to promote interest in the French as a second language program. Amy is taking French elective classes and joined a French conversation club at university in order to maintain and continue learning the language and culture.

# Garth Worthington Memorial Scholarship

The Garth Worthington Memorial Scholarship recognizes a high school student with outstanding talent and skill in vocal or choral music, who is also actively pursuing vocal or choral music studies. Garth spent three decades teaching music in Edmonton Public Schools, conducting thousands of students in school bands and choirs. He was also a talented musician and singer. The Garth Worthington Memorial Scholarship fund was established to keep his passion for music alive.

## Recipient



### Emily Levine

*Victoria School of the Arts*

Music surrounds Emily—she wakes up and listens to music, goes to school to study music and in her free time, she writes, plays, produces and teaches music. While achieving honours with distinction in Grades 7–12, she sang in the junior high choral classes, was a soprano in the high school vocal jazz ensemble and concert choir, was part of mainstage musical productions, and played a lead role in the musical revue, *No Day But Today*. Emily’s music teacher says Emily sings perfectly in tune, locks in on complicated harmonies and maintains her vocal line, and sings a variety of musical styles with confidence. She is an exceptional leader, both vocally and personally, encouraging those around her to do their best by offering support and suggestions to help them on their musical journey. Emily rounds out her musical skills with natural acting skills, great energy, a sense of humour, positivity and strong communication skills. Emily is attending the University of British Columbia pursuing a bachelor of arts degree with a major in music and a minor in psychology to one day become a music therapist.

## Garth Worthington Memorial Scholarship *(continued)*

### Recipient



### **Xavier Svekla**

*M.E. LaZerte High School*

Music plays an important role in Xavier's life as a source of happiness and strength. His future aspirations include inspiring many through music and pursuing a career in vocal music. Xavier's voice and piano instructor of six years says Xavier is an outstanding performer who excels in his ability to emote and connect with an audience, and he leaves his heart on the stage with every single performance. Xavier has an advanced understanding of technique and voice, versatility across genres and instruments, and he consistently demonstrates focus and discipline in all musical endeavours. Xavier has worked both on stage and backstage, completing Audio 15/25/35, leading his high school K-pop Dance Club, working as an audio technician for the City of Edmonton Youth Program, and being a student, band member and lead vocalist at the Centre of Arts and Music. He is known for his preparedness, patience, leadership and ability to work effectively with others. Xavier has achieved the goal he set for himself back in Grade 8, and is now attending MacEwan University pursuing a bachelor's degree in jazz and contemporary music.

# James P. Jones Scholarship

The purpose of this scholarship is to recognize a Grade 12 student who completes French courses to the 30 level, has a positive attitude toward learning French, a sincere interest in continuing French language studies beyond high school and who demonstrates excellent academic performance and citizenship. James (Jim) P. Jones worked for Edmonton Public Schools for nearly three decades, mainly as a supervisor of second languages. Jim’s friends and family, along with language teachers in the Division, established this scholarship to acknowledge his tremendous work and dedication.

## Recipient



### **Essiyah Weis**

*Harry Ainlay High School*

Essiyah is an impressive student. She began learning French as a late French Immersion student in Grade 7. Her hard work and love for language learning allowed her to progress quickly. Essiyah has worked very hard to maintain her honours with distinction standing in Grades 10 through 12. She has volunteered with numerous events to promote the French language and culture in the community. She deeply appreciates her ability to express herself with ease in both of Canada’s official languages. Essiyah is at the University of Alberta pursuing a bachelor of science in engineering. She continues to study French at Campus Saint-Jean and enjoys having the opportunity to meet francophones from around the world.

# LeRoy Warden and Associates Scholarship

This scholarship is for a Grade 12 student who is in need of financial assistance, who has clear career plans and who will attend one of the following post-secondary institutions: University of Alberta, MacEwan University, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology or University of Alberta Campus Saint-Jean. When LeRoy Warden is asked what motivated him to establish the scholarship, he replies, “I simply want to help because it resonates with my soul, and lending a helping hand may make the world of difference for one person.”

## Recipient



### **Ana Sofia Parra Sanchez**

*Old Scona Academic*

In her pursuit of medical school, Ana Sofia sees her future centred around community involvement whether it be volunteering, advocating for peers, teaching, or conducting research. She has demonstrated remarkable tenacity and commitment to her studies and related pursuits. Throughout junior and senior high school, she consistently earned honours with distinction while pursuing a variety of volunteer and extracurricular activities. Noted accomplishments include co-authoring a forthcoming abstract publication in the Canadian Science Fair Journal, and an invitation to assist Dr. Perdomo at the International Agency for Research on Cancer following undergraduate experience. Ana Sofia’s high school counsellor describes her as not only intelligent, resilient, and determined, but also kind, compassionate and generous with her time. As she looks toward the future, her goals of personal growth and community impact will continue to guide her endeavours. Ana Sofia is attending the University of Alberta pursuing a bachelor of science honours degree majoring in physiology.

# Margaret T. Stevenson Talented Young Writer Award

The purpose of this award is to recognize a Grade 8 student who exhibits a sincere dedication to the literary arts and demonstrates personal growth as a writer. Dr. Margaret T. Stevenson served as a Language Arts supervisor with Edmonton Public Schools for 10 years. In recognition of her work, colleagues, friends and family established this award in 1994 and continue to make donations to the fund.

## Recipient



### **Manuthi Fernando**

*D.S. MacKenzie School*

Manuthi has always had a profound love of the literary arts. This talented young writer specifically curated the portfolio she submitted to include a diverse range of pieces that would showcase her versatility, skills and interests. The five pieces of writing demonstrated her passion and devotion to writing, and her love for historical fiction, poetry, academic writing and realistic fiction. It was also important to Manuthi to show her growth as a writer, and how her writing has evolved over time. Manuthi's work demonstrated exceptional maturity, use of very sophisticated language, exceptional understanding and empathy. Her teacher shared that Manuthi frequently reworks her assignments, incorporating feedback from peers and her teachers, and her perseverance serves as a model for other students. She challenges herself as a writer by taking risks and attempting very complex pieces successfully. Writing allows her to be creative, express herself, and above all, teach and help others.

# Opportunity Through Education

## Sandra B. Woitas Scholarship

This scholarship assists a Grade 12 student who has attended Edmonton Public schools for at least four years, demonstrates a commitment to volunteering, has a positive attitude toward school and their studies, and requires financial support to attend a post-secondary institution in Edmonton. Sandra B. Woitas served as Director of the Edmonton Public Schools Foundation from 2009 to 2014. This scholarship was established by Sandra's colleagues, friends and family in recognition of her hard work and many contributions.

### Recipient



### Ana Sofia Parra Sanchez

*Old Scona Academic*

Ana Sofia, who is also the recipient of the LeRoy Warden and Associates Scholarship, has many passions that span a broad scope of disciplines—what they all have in common is that they allow her to leave a lasting impact on her community. Ana Sofia contributed to her school culture as vice president of the SMILE club by inspiring other students to volunteer and fundraise for local charities. She was elected as class representative to the Student's Union. As a junior investigator for Youreka Edmonton, Ana Sophia engages in meaningful, self-directed research projects to contribute to positive advancements, both locally and globally. Ana Sofia volunteers with the Chatter Program to work alongside speech pathologists to help deliver lessons and provide valuable opportunities for communication and social skills. At the hospital, she screens hospital staff and visitors for COVID-19 symptoms and helps visitors find their destination. Ana Sofia's maturity, empathy, social skills and attention she brings to working as a math and reading tutor sets her up to be an excellent teacher. Ana Sofia is attending the University of Alberta pursuing a bachelor of science honours degree majoring in physiology.

## Opportunity Through Education

### Sandra B. Woitas Scholarship *(continued)*

#### Recipient



### **Brooke Larratt**

*Victoria School of the Arts*

Brooke does whatever it takes to be the best possible version of herself. She is admired for her positive attitude and for rising above adversity without allowing it to define her. Brooke uses her strength and resilience to become exceptional at everything she can. She strongly believes supporting and helping others is fundamental to living a full and truly successful life. Brooke actively searches for every opportunity possible to make a difference. While maintaining an honours average through high school, she was actively involved and made positive contributions in dance, theatre, track and field, student leadership programs and cheer. The cheer coaching allowed Brooke to make connections with younger students and be a guiding force in their lives to help them make good ethical choices. Many of them still reach out to her for advice on life, health and school, and if they just need to talk to someone. Brooke has found that the littlest things can make a difference. Whether it be smiling at a stranger or simply complimenting someone you will likely never see again, someone's day has improved, and Brooke hopes they love themselves a little bit more. She is attending the University of Alberta pursuing a bachelor's of kinesiology with a major in physical activity and health.

