

2024

Community Sponsored Awards

RECOGNIZING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Recipients Guide



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RECOGNIZING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Edmonton Public Schools recognizes that the pathways to student success do not occur in isolation. The responsibility to support over 115,000 students on their K–12 educational journey shared 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 the community in sponsoring awards and scholarships that celebrate the learning and achievements of Division students. Each community sponsored award and 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 2024 recipients of the community sponsored awards and scholarships on your well-deserved success!

Ben Sauv  Artstrek Bursary

This bursary allows young people who require financial support to experience the joy of learning while in the Theatre Alberta Artstrek program. Ben was a Grade 12 student who attended the Artstrek program and was passionate about the arts. This bursary was created by Ben’s loved ones in his memory, after he was tragically killed in a traffic accident in 1987.

Recipient



Clara MacLellan

J. Percy Page High School

Clara is a remarkable artist with notable theatrical and technical abilities, leadership skills, and passion for drama and the arts. She consistently looks for ways to build opportunities and new platforms beyond what currently exists for the creative community. In Grade 10, she asked to be the assistant director of a devised musical while also being part of the set crew. Clara quietly watched rehearsals and then every so often offered a beautiful direction to help a scene, support an actor, or create a wonderful moment. In Grade 11 as assistant director of *Urinetown: The Musical*, she offered the production strong and memorable choices more often and with more confidence. This was in addition to being the sound operator for the musical, launching all the sound cues. Outside of the theatre, Clara became the student leader of the school’s broadcasting program, responsible for supervision of daily broadcasts as well as scheduling the anchors and techs, often running some of the tech herself. She planned meetings to enable all members of the broadcasting team to share their ideas, and she regularly tabled ideas on how to connect the platform with other communities in the school. Clara wants to pursue a career in theatre, and Artstrek will give her the opportunity to explore theatre beyond the classroom, collaborate with like-minded artists, and learn in a collective environment.

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 at 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



Niamh Thomas

M.E. LaZerte High School

Niamh is grateful for the challenging experiences that have inspired her to achieve what her younger self once thought impossible. She was a disciplined, highly motivated and hard-working student who balanced a demanding academic load with a range of extracurricular activities. Niamh was a top academic student and proudly achieved 98 per cent in IB English. Her excellent interpersonal and communication skills in multiple languages showcased her dedication to perseverance and success. Teachers admired Niamh's integrity and maturity, and her ability to think independently of others. Her activities exemplified her commitment to actively contribute in a positive manner to improve her community while working through her own adversity. Niamh served as a library club leader, founded the school's library social media team, and found her passion through the Rotary Interact club. She actively promoted the school, particularly the International Baccalaureate program and library, during the open house and various other school events. Niamh's involvements contributed to a better school community and environment—she was a quiet force, actively working to include all races, religions and groups. Outside of school, she volunteered with Edmonton's Food Bank and Ronald McDonald House, and was a lifeguard and swim instructor. Niamh will pursue a bachelor of arts degree at McGill University with her sights set on a career in social work.

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 related to continuing with their studies.

Recipient



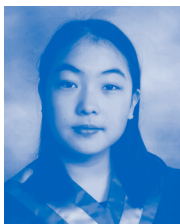
Jade Renner

Dr. Anne Anderson High School

Throughout high school, Jade was a remarkable academic student who achieved honours standing in full Advanced Placement (AP). She was a dedicated and valued member of culinary arts serving almost 300 students each day and volunteering for special school and community events. Beyond cooking and baking, her greatest strengths were in her organization, dedication and leadership. As Grade 12 level AP student, Jade was frequently tasked with managing one of the four kitchen stations, where she developed production plans, delegated tasks, communicated effectively with her team, made decisions on timing, and ensured the taste and presentation were up to standard. She worked hard to refine these skills and her classmates looked to her for advice and leadership. Jade's other major extra-curricular involvement was music, playing the clarinet and saxophone throughout junior and senior high school. During the pandemic, Jade mentored students who never had an opportunity to learn an instrument in junior high. She forged some great relationships with school staff and her peers, and they would say that she made the school a better place to teach and learn. Jade's volunteer work outside of school included assembling freezer meals and hampers, stuffing toy bears and building snack or hygiene kits for a range of charities including Wings of Providence, Little Warriors, Zebra Child and Youth Advocacy Centre and Veterans Association Food Bank. She is keen to continue positively impacting the lives of individuals in need and to find a career in a medical field. Jade will attend the University of Alberta with a focus on biological sciences and film studies.

Catherine and Robert Povaschuk Scholarship *(continued)*

Recipient



Alice Cai

Lillian Osborne High School

Alongside Alice's focus on academic achievement, she worked towards constructing programs and spaces that helped build happier, healthier communities both within and outside of school. She was known by students and staff to be positive, energetic, friendly and always willing to lend a hand. As well, Alice had the top academic average for Grade 11 and continued to have a strong academic standing in Grade 12. She was involved in planning, organizing, gathering data and executing initiatives of the student solidarity committee that brought awareness to issues surrounding social justice, poverty and Indigenous rights, and promoted unity throughout the school community. As lead of the Chinese Lion Dance club, Alice was responsible for facilitating communication between the coach, teacher sponsors and club members, organizing practices and performances, making arrangements with community organizations, and mentoring younger members to lead in successive years. During the pandemic, she organized distribution of healthcare supplies for the ICAN Community Support Project, allowing vulnerable Edmontonians to reduce their risk of exposure to COVID-19. As a founding member of the Literacy for Life program with Link CC, Alice created lesson plans and materials, and ran weekly online literacy workshops to support students in need of academic support. She served as a student page for the Edmonton Public Library, a swim instructor for the YMCA and an executive for the United Nations Young Climate Leaders. Alice will attend the University of Alberta to study pharmacology and computing science.

Catherine and Robert Povaschuk Scholarship *(continued)*

Recipient



Eyas Kadri

Queen Elizabeth High School

Eyas consistently demonstrated a remarkable aptitude for learning and exemplary academic performance. He showed a deep understanding of complex concepts and was adept at articulating his thoughts clearly and persuasively. Outside of the classroom, Eyas made significant contributions to the school community. He established the Muslim Student Association, showcasing his leadership skills and commitment to fostering inclusivity. This initiative not only provided a platform for Muslim students to connect but also promoted understanding and unity among peers. Eyas' dedication extended into the community where he was actively involved in supervising festivals and gatherings, coordinating camps, planning tournaments and volunteering at emergency shelters. He instructed Taekwondo classes and served as a teacher at the Imam Al Shatibi Quran Institute. Eyas' commitment to the local community assisted individuals in finding their identity, understanding their character and realizing their dreams. His devotion to those around him fostered strong, friendly relationships that continue to grow. Pursuing a bachelor of science degree in engineering at the University of Alberta is the next step in Eyas' journey toward excellence.

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 pledged a portion of their estate to fund scholarships for students graduating from Edmonton Public Schools.

Recipient



Khadija Hasan

Jasper Place High School

Throughout high school, Khadija achieved academic excellence and actively participated in a diverse range of clubs and initiatives, each contributing to the vibrant fabric of the school community. She was a reliable and dedicated executive member and role model for the Rotary Interact club. Khadija brought positivity and creative solutions to challenges, helped prepare food for the families of sick children at Ronald McDonald House, participated in regular environmental cleanups, volunteered to play games, visited the elderly, raised money for Edmonton's Food Bank and local homeless shelters, and dedicated time at the Mustard Seed. She was also the president of Best Buddies, a club dedicated to supporting students with special needs. During lunch hours, Khadija kindly helped feed, care for and visit with her peers who needed assistance to take care of themselves. She tutored students, championed participation in Mathletes, contributed to the Rebel Leaders group and cultural club, and participated in the University of Alberta High School Youth Researcher Summer Program. We need more people like Khadija in our world—she will be remembered for her hard work, steadfast dedication, academic skills, kindness and generosity. Khadija will attend the University of Alberta to pursue a bachelor of science honours degree with a major in physiology.

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



Mett Ndoye

J.A. Fife School

Mett was an exceptional language student who demonstrated remarkable dedication and enthusiasm in learning the French language. He exhibited a great deal of passion and his enthusiasm enriched the learning environment for his classmates and teachers. His love of French extended beyond the walls of the school as he actively sought opportunities to practice and improve his language skills outside of class. Mett often tuned into news and programs in French to further his vocabulary skills. He wholeheartedly shared this acquired knowledge with his teachers and classmates. Mett believes that being bilingual poses many benefits for someone in the present and the future. He also believes that learning another language will not only enhance communication but will advance future career opportunities in different parts of the world. Mett's journey in mastering French has truly been an exciting one and has taught him the importance of perseverance and resilience.

French Bilingual Awards *(continued)*

Grade 9 Recipient



Samantha Luchkow

Avalon Junior High School

Samantha's appreciation and passion for French served as an inspiring example for all French language learners. Her love for the language began in elementary school as she explored the countless French stories and poems in the school library. This passion continued as she strengthened her skills in class, and even helped her teacher select books to order for the school. Samantha consistently looked for opportunities to improve and extend her skills and experiences outside of the classroom. She established connections with the French community in Edmonton by enjoying French restaurants, discovering francophone music, and visiting the library at Campus Saint-Jean. Samantha shared her passion for the French language with her family and peers, and encouraged them to be a part of the French community. She even inspired her father to learn French through courses offered by l'Alliance Française. Samantha's diligence, dedication and desire to master second language skills will surely benefit her future endeavours.

French Bilingual Awards *(continued)*

Grade 12 Recipient



Joanna Modayil

Strathcona High School

Joanna has been learning French since Grade 4 and demonstrated outstanding dedication to her language learning throughout her high school journey. While her academic performance spoke for itself, it was her passion and initiative to learn French through community and authentic connections that set her apart. Always eager to learn more, Joanna seized the opportunity to participate in a YMCA work exchange program in 2023 in Longueuil, Quebec. This experience helped Joanna develop new friendships that she continues to treasure and nurture. She also recognized how valuable these experiences and relationships were in developing her confidence as a language learner. This same confidence was evident in the work Joanna did in the school community. Her leadership and dedication could be seen in her participation in the students' union, grad committee and International Language Task Force. Moving into her post-secondary education, Joanna plans to continue learning French at the University of Alberta and will, without a doubt, continue to serve and inspire the community around her.

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 at 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



Melissa Bravender

Harry Ainlay High School

Music is the glue that holds together the various aspects of Melissa's life—it is her way of expressing absolute joy or simple sadness in ways that words cannot, and to connect with friends, strangers and those that have gone before her. Through the years, Melissa's exceptional musical talent, warmth, work ethic, vibrant personality and high intelligence won over many a crowd. She grew up performing at family reunions and funerals, in church and school plays, and in Harry Ainlay's choir, band and theatre productions. She performed a solo in a Schubertiade recital with Denice Bennett Voice Studios, performed with the Edmonton Institute of Religion choir under Cathryn Landreth, and sang the national anthem numerous times at high school events and her Grade 12 commencement. Melissa appreciated her mentors' ability to recognize her best efforts and provide constructive feedback, giving her the confidence to believe in herself and the lasting courage to embrace vulnerability. Melissa was also a member of Harry Ainlay's cross-country, track and rugby teams, ran a half marathon with her dad, completed the 2024 MS Bike—Leduc to Camrose, and aspires to run a marathon before turning 30. She would like to sing in, or with, The Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square in Utah. After serving a volunteer mission for her church, Melissa's goal is to become an ER nurse, mother and exceptional classical vocalist.

Garth Worthington Memorial Scholarship *(continued)*

Recipient



Reetu Arvikar

Old Scona Academic

Music is the constant in Reetu's life—a grounding force and beautiful escape from the hustle and bustle of modern-day life. This talented vocalist honed her skills, technique and breath control by practicing and arranging pieces with other musicians. Reetu developed her cultural and artistic strengths by participating in a wide range of performing arts and connecting with her Hindustani culture. She achieved Level 6 in the Royal Conservatory of Music Speech Arts and Drama, and Level 1 in the Royal Conservatory of Music for Voice. At school, Reetu performed in drama showcases, musical theatre songs, scenes and short plays. Outside of school she studied Hindustani classical singing with guru Rohit Kalsekar, learned the Tabla with Ananda Saha, and placed in many Kiwanis music competitions and performed at their gala. Reetu performed for and instructed younger students, participated in local talent shows and many ensembles. Beyond music, Reetu is most proud of her leadership on the City of Edmonton Youth Council. As well, she started a non-profit initiative to tackle menstrual hygiene access issues to aid young girls in India. She plans to publish some of the renditions of her music and join the Indian Music Ensemble at the University of Alberta where she will pursue a bachelor of science degree. Reetu's greatest goal in life is to make a lasting impact on those in need, both professionally and personally—whether through spreading joy and connection via music or pursuing a more traditional academic path.

Garth Worthington Memorial Scholarship *(continued)*

Recipient



Autumn Chugg

Victoria School of the Arts

Music inspires Autumn daily, and she brings joyful energy and enthusiasm to every lesson and rehearsal. This classically trained singer takes private voice and piano lessons, and studies under the Royal Conservatory. At school, Autumn participated in three separate choirs and her school's dance performance ensemble. Since Grade 7, she has been a prominent cast member in many school theatre productions and spent two summers performing in Fringe musical theatre shows for young audiences. In Grade 12, Autumn directed her first one-act play, managing everything from script selection to set, lighting, and costume design, as well as casting, coaching actors, and staging the entire production. She had prominent roles in three student leadership groups. As the student arts representative for the student council, she coordinated the collaboration of different art forms throughout the school. She facilitated pre-show entertainment, giving opportunities for students to perform. On the student arts leadership team, Autumn assisted with front-of-house duties regularly and several initiatives for the greater downtown community. She ran a dance club for elementary students and co-taught a musical theatre class at Edmonton School of Ballet. Autumn will be attending MacEwan University to complete a bachelor of fine arts degree with the goal of becoming a working performer and teacher in the Edmonton music theatre community.

James P. Jones Scholarship

The purpose of this scholarship is to recognize a Grade 12 student who completes 30-level French courses, 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 at 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



Lucinda Fraser-Suarez

Old Scona Academic

Coming from an immigrant family, Lucinda recognizes the importance of multiculturalism. She began her journey as a French language learner by attending an immersion program in elementary and completed French 30 IB in Grade 12. Her passion for the French language was evident in her proactive participation in class and her consistent growth. She actively sought opportunities to share her knowledge and to further her personal language development. Consequently, Lucinda took on a role as a French tutor in her school’s French peer support program for the past two years. She was active in her school community as a member of the Student Senate and on the executive for Old Scona Academic’s gender and sexuality alliance. Lucinda’s interests and community involvement went beyond the boundaries of the school. She was an active participant in competitive debate, a volunteer in the Community Helpers Program, and an English and French tutor for elementary students. Lucinda loves French Canadian culture and will continue to volunteer in the French community, travel to Québec and work toward a higher DELF certification by continuing her studies in French.

Kinsey Verbeek Memorial Award

This award recognizes Grade 11 students who have had a positive effect on others in spite of facing personal challenges. Kinsey Verbeek was a Grade 11 student enrolled at Ross Sheppard High School who passed away at the age of 15. Despite the personal challenges Kinsey faced, her loved ones remember her as a friend, an ally and an inspiration for positive change in the world. The Kinsey Verbeek Memorial Award was created by her family to recognize other young people who help make the world a better place despite the barriers they face.

Recipient



Grace Zhang

Dr. Anne Anderson High School

Grace has been an indispensable force in promoting diversity, inclusion and unity within the school community. She exhibited remarkable leadership, empathy and a profound commitment to fostering an environment where everyone feels welcomed and valued. Grace spearheaded several exciting initiatives that welcomed student voices and allowed students to create a positive school community. To accomplish her goals, she often collaborated with other student groups and teachers who could support her mission. Her resourcefulness and passion for promoting inclusivity had a tangible impact on school culture, fostering understanding and appreciation for the rich tapestry of backgrounds and perspectives that enrich the school. Grace also excelled academically and her dedication was evident in her consistently high grades and her thirst for knowledge. She approached academic challenges with tenacity, critical thinking and a genuine desire to learn, setting a shining example for her peers. Beyond academics and extracurricular involvement, Grace was a natural leader who led by example, inspiring those around her to strive for excellence and to contribute positively to the school community. In 2023–24, she was a valued member of the Alberta Education Minister’s Youth Council, and she also provided input on a variety of youth crime and victimization issues as an active member of the RCMP National Youth Advisory Committee. There is no doubt that Grace’s future is filled with boundless potential as she continues to make the world a better place—wherever her journey takes her.

Kinsey Verbeek Memorial Award *(continued)*

Recipient



Jordan Stahl

McNally High School

This positive and lighthearted young leader shows up every day and champions the belief that simplifying life for others makes positivity contagious, and inspires people to keep doing what they do. Always at school early, Jordan became the school's tour guide for international students and newcomers. He joined the school's Independent Students' club and welcomed new people there as well. Jordan's gentle, non-judgmental manner helped people settle in even when they were scared or under tremendous stress. Playful and funny, while being unfailingly respectful and loyal, he gained the trust of his peers. As a member of the McNally food security team, Jordan helped to develop strategies to raise awareness about food insecurity and serve those in need of support. Three days a week, he volunteered to make pancakes and soon became the one that took care of everything from preparing batter and cleaning the kitchen to welcoming people and adjusting to even the slightest shift in mood. Jordan ensured students had the space and time they needed to be themselves and gently intervened when he could tell someone was uncomfortable. His work ethic and concern for his peers were evident in his schoolwork, reflected by his excellent attendance record, consistent achievement in the nineties across all classes, and his ability to inspire other students. Jordan has proven that he can achieve anything he sets his mind to in the future; it's clear that his choices will be guided by his determination, commitment to service, and profound empathy.

Kinsey Verbeek Memorial Award *(continued)*

Honourable Mention



Amira Rouzi

Strathcona High School

Empathy, inclusivity, and advocacy are fundamental to Amira’s identity, shaping her actions and guiding her toward making a meaningful difference in the lives of those around her. Amira learned early to be resilient—growing up as the eldest child of immigrant parents presented the challenge of navigating between two cultures and languages. She overcame barriers by embracing independence, finding support through volunteering and cultural engagement, and achieving personal and collective success. At school, Amira volunteered to coach and officiate flag football and created a positive and safe environment while setting up drills and scrimmages, putting away supplies and supervising. She found great fulfillment in volunteering at her junior high school—drawn not only to its warm and supportive community but also to the sense of reciprocity it fostered. Helping others has always been a source of inner joy for Amira, and knowing that she offered the same level of support that she received from this community filled her with a deep sense of satisfaction. Her leadership in the Uyghur community and the Alberta Uyghur Association significantly and positively contributed to the success of various community events. With an average above 85 per cent, her academic achievements showcased her dedication to learning and excellence. As an outstanding student, leader and model citizen, Amira finds fulfillment in connecting with others, building bridges between different cultural backgrounds, and working towards a more inclusive and understanding society.

LeRoy Warden and Associates Scholarship

This scholarship is awarded to a Grade 12 student in need of financial assistance, with clear career goals, 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



Feyi Ogunkoya

Lillian Osborne High School

Feyi's passion for healthcare extended beyond the classroom. Her participation in the Asclepius Medical Camp at the University of Alberta enriched Feyi's understanding of nutrition and dietetics and equipped her with practical skills and foundational knowledge in medical sciences, preparing her for the journey toward becoming a doctor. Feyi's realistic and strategic approach to her career path is a testament to her maturity and pragmatic outlook. This level of foresight and planning exemplified Feyi's ability to set achievable goals while preparing for various outcomes in her future endeavours. Feyi not only excelled as an International Baccalaureate (IB) student but also significantly contributed to the school and community through various leadership roles with the Christian Student Association, Afrobeats dance club, Black Students Association, Students for the Community, graduation council and the Edmonton Public Schools Student Senate. Feyi is thrilled to attend the University of Alberta to complete a bachelor of science honours degree with a major in nutrition, a step closer to fulfilling her passion of going to medical school and working as a doctor in the healthcare industry.

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 at Edmonton Public Schools for 10 years. In recognition of her work, colleagues, friends and family established this award in 1994 and continue to donate to the fund.

Recipient



Samyukta Warriar

Riverbend Junior High School

Writing has always been Samyukta's outlet for expressing her thoughts, a process she says requires months of imagination, curiosity, passion and hard work. Her dedication to the literary arts is truly infectious. Samyukta's commitment to her craft was evident in every piece of writing she produced, whether it was a short story, a poem or an analytical essay, she approached each project with enthusiasm. Her ability to craft compelling narratives and evoke emotions through her words is a testament to her talent and creativity. What set Samyukta apart was not only her literary prowess but also her eagerness to grow and learn. She actively sought feedback and constructive criticism, constantly strove to improve her writing skills, embraced challenges with grace and perseverance, and always pushed herself to explore new styles and techniques. Samyukta's willingness to step out of her comfort zone demonstrated her resilience and determination to excel in her craft. She fostered a supportive and inclusive environment within her literary community, offering encouragement and inspiration to her peers. Whether participating in writing workshops, organizing literary events, or engaging in thoughtful discussions about literature, she consistently demonstrated her passion for fostering a love of reading and writing in others. Samyukta will continue to make significant contributions to the literary world.

Maxwell Li Memorial Award

This award recognizes Grade 11 and 12 students who demonstrate a passion for leadership and a steadfast commitment to helping others and society, giving back to their school and community through volunteer and leadership opportunities. Maxwell Li was a Grade 11 student at Lillian Osborne High School who passed away at the age of 16. He volunteered thousands of hours and was known for his passion, humor, knowledge and admirable character, bringing happiness and love to his family, school and community. The Maxwell Li Memorial Award was created by his family to honour young individuals who inspire others by bringing people together to create positive change.

Recipient



Ashlyn Lu

Harry Ainlay High School

Ashlyn, an exceptional individual and IB Diploma student, demonstrated commendable leadership that had a direct impact on the student population. She was co-chair and executive lead for Titan Tournaments in basketball and volleyball. As the founder of a student chess club, Ashlyn went above and beyond to organize schoolwide and Division-wide chess tournaments. She was also the founder and president of Harry Ainlay's math club where she led weekly meetings, taught mathematical concepts, and promoted STEM opportunities. She was vice-president of the school's business club, an avid member of the Harry Ainlay awards committee, and a Student Senator for the last three years. As Project Lead, Ashlyn was at the heart of the Student Senate and consequently at the heart of promoting positive communal change. Outside of school she dedicated her time to community organizations, volunteering over 200 hours at Edmonton's Food Bank, participating in Youth Leaders in Law and Edmonton Chinatown Care Center, and encouraging her peers to do the same. Ashlyn will strive to continue Max's legacy as a student leader during her post-secondary studies in Toronto.

Maxwell Li Memorial Award *(continued)*

Recipient



Salsabel Aboktef

Ross Sheppard High School

Salsabel is a once-in-a-generation student whose impact extends far beyond the classroom. Despite many challenges, her resilience and determination never wavered—Salsabel’s strength in overcoming obstacles is a testament to her character and serves as an inspiration to all. She was deeply involved in various aspects of school life, including serving on the student council, participating in Model United Nations and being an active member of the Solidarity committee, where she passionately worked to dismantle systemic racism. Salsabel’s commitment to academic excellence was evident in her outstanding grades and her dedication to taking action on issues like climate change and social justice. Her passion for human and environmental rights is truly commendable. Salsabel was selected as a main character in a documentary highlighting Canadian youth climate activists, showcasing her commitment to making a positive impact on the world. Her participation in the COP26 Conference in Glasgow, Scotland, where she represented Canadian youth, further demonstrated Salsabel’s dedication to global issues. Her artistic talents were recognized with a national award at the inaugural ABEEL Shaping the Future Sponsorship Program, for her spoken word poetry, “I am a descendent of warriors,” a poignant reflection of her personal experiences and her commitment to social change. As Salsabel attends MacEwan University to pursue a bachelor of arts degree on her path to law school and a career in human rights, she will continue to inspire those around her and make a positive impact on the world.

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



Emily Berg Noskiye

Academy at King Edward

Throughout high school, Emily grew as an academic, a leader and a community volunteer. She was the type of student who chose to face every challenge head-on, navigating a path marked by resilience amidst adversity. Emily dedicated hundreds of hours to community service, demonstrating a strong desire to help others. Serving as a Student Senator for two years, participating on the volleyball and badminton teams, and volunteering at Monarch Daycare have been pivotal in shaping her character and fostering her leadership skills. In the wider community, Emily volunteered at Fort Edmonton Park, was as a Leader in Training for the City of Edmonton's green shack playground program and worked as a camp lifeguard. One of the most transformative experiences for Emily was participating in an international exchange program to Spain. This experience broadened her cultural horizons and instilled a profound appreciation for diversity and global citizenship. She is grateful for the opportunities that have shaped and empowered her to strive for excellence, both academically and personally. Emily is attending NorQuest College to complete the Indigenous Studies program as a stepping stone to the Faculty of Native Studies at the University of Alberta. Ultimately, she would like to pursue a degree in education to support young learners who may struggle with similar circumstances she has experienced.

Opportunity Through Education

Sandra B. Woitas Scholarship *(continued)*

Recipient



Rebecca Reti

McNally High School

Volunteering has always been important to Rebecca; she is engaged, service-oriented and exceptionally reliable. She maintained honours marks throughout high school and never wavered from her path. Rebecca became deeply involved with the school theatre program and earned the position of stage manager for the school production, dedicating her evenings and weekends to running rehearsals. She assisted with the dance production, set up for the holiday concert, fine arts night, open house and graduation. Whenever anyone needed help with lighting or sound, they called on Rebecca. She was so in demand, it was decided that Rebecca would work directly with the assistant principal rather than having every department head in the school approach her for help! Rebecca was also a founding member of both the Independent Students' club and the Food Security club. Her empathy, common sense and humour helped ensure the success of both groups, which more than doubled in numbers. She always gave more than she received. Volunteering will always be a part of her life, whether through technical theatre, raising funds for transformative organizations like Alberta Dreams, or supporting her school and local community. Rebecca is thrilled to be pursuing a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in theatre production at MacEwan University.

