

SCHOLARLY PURSUITS

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“Receiving an award is a great feeling. It’s like a boost of motivation that keeps you moving forward.”

» Reshma Misra

PHOTO BY MARTIN DEE



ENTRANCE AWARD PROVIDES PASSPORT TO EDUCATION

“The need for secondary education is growing, but accessibility is becoming more and more of a challenge—especially for students from low- and middle-income families,” says Reshma Misra, a UBC alumna who recently completed her BA in Psychology, above.

Like many UBC students, Reshma comes from a rich cultural background. Although she was born in Canada, her parents decided to raise her in their native India, where she could learn about her family’s identity and traditions. After completing high school at an international boarding school, it was UBC’s well-balanced programs, combined with the city’s unique West Coast vibe that brought her to Vancouver.

Initially uncertain about her career path, Reshma knew she wanted something that would allow her to express her vibrancy and creativity. Ultimately, it was a toss-up between arts and business. Reshma submitted her application to the Faculty of Arts and the Sauder School of Business—and was accepted into both.

Along with the acceptance letter, however, she received a delightful surprise. Reshma discovered that she was a recipient of the President’s Entrance Scholarship, a one-time financial incentive

meant to entice brilliant students to UBC. Although making the choice was scary, she eventually gravitated towards the arts and experimented with a few different courses before she settled on psychology.

“I really, really liked psychology, says Reshma. “I could see a wide variety of applications for the skills, and I was fascinated by the concepts. The interesting thing is that I eventually came full circle. I decided to take my training in the direction of business.”

For Reshma, the award was a windfall that eased some of her short-term financial burdens, such as tuition and rent. However, like many students, she still had to take on student debt and get a part-time job in her third year. Reshma began working in the call centre of the UBC Development Office, where she discovered her story was far from unique. Many of her co-workers were students trying to balance full course loads with a need for financial stability and independence.

“The financial burden of education is increasing,” says Reshma, who notes that the cost of tuition has gone up since she started university. “It’s no longer a given that you can work summers and pay off your tuition. When the cost of living is high and the cost of

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THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

MAKING EDUCATION ACCESSIBLE

“What we know when it comes to post-secondary education is students whose parents have not attended university, tend to overestimate the costs and underestimate the benefits,” says Dr. Kathleen Ross (EdD 2011), right. “They feel university is beyond their reach.”

As Associate Vice President of Enrolment Services and Registration, Dr. Ross, better known as Kate, knows what she’s talking about. She was the first person in her family to attend university. Today, a big part of her job is making sure that UBC remains accessible to Canada’s best and brightest students. To support this, she recently established the Kate Ross Centennial Scholars Major Entrance Award, a decision she says was strongly influenced by her own experiences as a student.

Kate grew up on her family’s farm with six siblings. Although neither of her parents had attended university, she made the decision to attend university and began saving for her education at the age of 14.

The first and only member of her family to attend university, Kate faced many challenges. Then something wonderful happened. In her fourth year, she became the inaugural recipient of a new student award. This recognition gave Kate the mental boost she needed to succeed in her final year.

“Realizing someone cared enough to support me was a lifechanging experience, and it shaped my perspective,” says Kate. “Besides making my fourth year financially easier, the feeling you get when someone else sees something in you, and that sense of belonging and attachment that comes from getting some support makes a huge difference to students.”

Although paying it forward was a motivator in creating her own award, Kate’s reasons go beyond that. As the leader of Enrolment Services, she knows firsthand the crucial role awards play in making university more accessible to talented students.

“This is the inspiration behind the Centennial Scholars Program, which is aimed at supporting those academically qualified students who would not be able to attend UBC without significant financial assistance,” explains Kate. “We want to attract students with the attributes and thirst for learning who may not think that UBC is a viable option. Aboriginal students, rural students, immigrants, refugees—

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education is high, it’s difficult. I know students who are working two or three jobs trying to avoid debt, and they’re just scraping by.”

In the future, Reshma plans to combine some business courses with her psychology training in order to pursue a creative career in marketing or strategy. For now, she is happy to be part of the Development Office and work alongside the inspiring donors and alumni striving to make education more accessible for students.



PHOTO BY PAUL JOSEPH

these people all reflect the world we live in. We want to attract a diverse group who will flourish at UBC.”

The Kate Ross Centennial Scholars Award will give domestic students entering UBC \$4,000 towards their education. The award is designated to academically qualified students with demonstrated leadership abilities who would be unable to attend university without financial assistance. Crucial to a student’s continued success, the award may be renewed for up to 3 years – subject to academic standing -- or until an undergraduate degree is earned, whichever comes first.

Award recipients are nominated by their school or community, and recipients will be chosen by the Centennial Scholars Entrance Award Committee.

“I put myself through school, and I know the tremendous impact these awards can have on a student’s life,” says Kate. “Additionally, since Centennial Scholars Program is our initiative, I thought it was important to put my money where my mouth is!” ◆

Entrance awards, like the one given to Reshma, have become a major focus for fundraising at UBC. Many of these merit-based awards are renewable, providing bright students who need a leg up with a vital source of funding throughout their studies.

“When you think of supporting UBC as an institution, it can feel overwhelming—like you can’t make much of a difference. But it’s important to realize that every gift impacts individual lives,” says Reshma, adding that the value often goes beyond financial relief. “Receiving an award is a great feeling. It’s like a boost of motivation that keeps you moving forward.” ◆



PHOTO BY MARTIN DEE

ALUMNUS CREATES CENTENNIAL AWARD FOR UBC STUDENTS

"I think education is foundational for building a community, city, or nation," says Barj Dhan, UBC alumnus (BA 1983) and CEO of the Sandhurst Group, above. "Education leads to equality. It leads to opportunities for all."

Barj, who describes himself as "interested in a bit of everything," comes from a family of eleven UBC graduates. As a philanthropist, his interests are as diverse as his company portfolio, which ranges from real estate and fast food to convenience stores and gas stations. He recently established a major entrance award for Aboriginal students in acknowledgement of the Truth & Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action, which encourages Canadians at all levels of society to advance the process of reconciliation with Aboriginal peoples.

According to Statistics Canada, 9.8 per cent of Aboriginal people in Canada aged 25 to 64 have a university degree, which is a marked contrast to the 26.5 percent of non-Aboriginal people aged 25 to 64 who do. "We're a country of enormous wealth. That kind of disparity should not exist," he says. "The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has articulated 94 recommendations, and quite a few relate to education and removing barriers for First Nations students."

According to Barj, who is also a motivational speaker and yoga instructor, it was his father, Budh Singh Dhan, who first imparted the importance of helping others. Today, as Director of the Canada India Education Society (CIES), Barj supports the advancement of health and education in rural India. He is involved in clean water and sanitation initiatives, and is a huge proponent of girls' education—a movement that initially met some resistance from those who felt schooling was a boy's prerogative.

By establishing the award entitled Honouring the Truth, Centennial Scholars Major Entrance Award for Aboriginal Students, Barj hopes to contribute towards reconciliation by supporting one of the most underrepresented groups in the University.

"As I understand it, reconciliation cannot take place until the economic inequalities are dealt with," explains Barj. "When I started thinking about UBC's Centennial, I was drawn to the idea of Centennial Scholarships—not bursaries but scholarships, where you recognize the academic achievements of the promising recipients and encourage them to continue."

Barj has partnered with family, friends and others in the community to raise \$400,000 which will support 20 students who would be unable to attend UBC without significant financial assistance through their 4 year programs. Criteria include demonstrated academic and leadership achievements. Subject to academic standing, awards may be renewed for up to three years. Candidates will be nominated by their schools or communities and recipients will be chosen by the Centennial Scholars Entrance Award Committee.

While Barj acknowledges that tackling the longstanding problem of inequality will take many hands, heads, and hearts, he expresses a deep-seated hope that the awards will lead to "more happiness and more opportunities" for everyone in society.

"I had the ability to go to university, and I'm grateful to my parents," says Barj. "I want all Canadians to have that same opportunity. If I can open that path for someone, I'll be glad." ♦



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CONNAGHAN FAMILY

FAMILY BURSARY SUPPORTS OKANAGAN STUDENTS

There are many reasons people choose to support UBC. When Erma Connaghan decided to create a bursary it was a decision born of her and her family's passionate belief in education, but it also reflected Erma's personal experience as a student more than 60 years ago.

"I received a scholarship in high school," explains Erma. "I hadn't really considered university before then. I was looking at training, probably nursing. That was the tipping point for me, and it took my life in a different direction."

Today both Erma and her daughter Susan (above) are UBC graduates. In fact, every family member old enough for post secondary education holds at least one UBC degree—and in some cases two or three.

"For me, attending university is about so much more than job training," says Susan (BSc 1984). "It's a place that broadens your horizons. You can meet people you wouldn't otherwise meet, and learn things you wouldn't otherwise learn. There are opportunities to experience diversity and to embrace it. It helps us become better global citizens."

The family's significant history with the University began with Charles Connaghan (1932-2003). Charles was president of the Alma Mater Society in the 1950s and VP of Administrative Services in the 1970s. As an administrator, he worked hard to ensure UBC remained accessible to students. For his lifelong service to the University, Charles was recognized with the prestigious Great Trekker Award in 1995.

"I went to UBC in the 50s," explains Erma. "Back then, it was a

more close-knit community, and that's where I met Charles. He was involved in campus affairs, and I was doing social work. I had taken my social work degree at UBC. Eventually our three children went there as well."

Although Erma acknowledges that it's been a long time since she's been in school, both she and Susan feel that affordability continues to be a roadblock for many bright students.

"It's hard to get an education for the sake of education," says Susan. "There's a lot of pressure for kids today. They have to think about a job as they're getting an education. I think by alleviating that just a little bit, we can open some doors that otherwise might not be opened."

Thanks to Erma and her family, a bursary of \$2000 is now available to students with a declared major in the arts or sciences at the Irving K. Barber School on the Okanagan campus. The Connaghan Family Bursary will alternate annually between arts and sciences, and preference will be given to those with the greatest assessed financial need.

"UBC was the centrepiece of our lives growing up in Vancouver," says Susan, who is a practising lawyer and mother of two. "And now I'm so pleased to have the campus here in Kelowna. My kids play sports there, and they go to camps there. UBC has really become a part of my family community again."

"A little bit of help can mean a lot to students who are facing a tough time in university," adds Erma. "It can also encourage those who may otherwise not consider university." ♦



PHOTO BY IVAN YASTREBOV

ALUMNUS AIMS TO FOSTER EXCELLENCE THROUGH NEW AWARD

"Perseverance, inventiveness and initiative are essential traits for a researcher," says Dr. Sarvajna Dwivedi, UBC Pharm Sci alumnus (MSc 1988, PhD 1992).

As co-founder and chief scientific officer of Pearl Therapeutics Inc., Dr. Dwivedi and his wife, Dr. Seema Dwivedi, have recently established and endowed an award that will support outstanding graduate students in the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences.

"Seema and I wish to support those students who take a deeply scientific approach in understanding and solving the world's medical problems, and those who set high goals for themselves," says Dr. Dwivedi, who focuses on respiratory illnesses and their treatment in his own research.

Despite being a successful scientist and entrepreneur, Dr. Dwivedi takes little credit for his achievements. The Mitchell-Dwivedi Graduate Award in Pharmaceutical Sciences was created in part to jointly honour two distinguished scholars—his graduate supervisor at UBC, Dr. Alan G. Mitchell, professor emeritus of pharmaceuticals and his father, Dr. Rewa Prasad Dwivedi, professor emeritus of Sanskrit, Banaras Hindu University.

The endowment will provide one award of \$10,000 or two awards of \$5,000 annually. It will be offered to graduate students who demonstrate research excellence and impact. Awards will be made on the recommendation of the Faculty.

In 2016, Wenjia Chen, PhD candidate, received the award, and in 2015 the recipients were PhD candidates José Carlos De La Vega and Natalie McCormick, all of whom are diligently advancing research with the potential for life saving applications.

Wenjia's research focuses on how chronic respiratory diseases develop over time, and how the progression of these diseases

affect patients' overall health, their quality of life and health care costs. Specifically she examines how risk factors can be prevented at the onset of disease to ultimately help improve health outcomes. Wenjia had an article published in *The Lancet Respiratory Medicine* July 2015 issue, an exceptional achievement for a graduate student.

José's research aims to investigate the diagnostic and therapeutic potential of rhenium. He has shown that a rhenium-based formulation can be used to enhance the contrast of internal body structures in X-ray imaging procedures. He has also demonstrated that radioactive rhenium could potentially be used in the treatment of liver cancer.

Natalie's work touches on the leading global cause of death—heart failure, a condition that affects 26 million people worldwide, 50% of whom die within the first five years of diagnosis.

"My findings revealed that there are many people whose diagnosis doesn't appear in medical databases, because they suffer from other chronic diseases that get entered into the database instead of their heart failure diagnosis," she explains. By evaluating the accuracy of heart failure diagnoses, Natalie aims to improve healthcare delivery for patients with multiple diagnoses.

For Dr. Dwivedi, it was important to recognize and support the students working hard to improve patient care by deepening our understanding and management of disease and medicines.

"We wish to use this award to encourage a culture of excellence in graduate research at the Faculty," he says, adding that it was a pleasure to find a fitting way to honour his role models. "Theirs are the two really inspiring lives, and I am just a by-product of their excellence." ♦

Above left to right: Dr Sarvajna Dwivedi; 2015 Recipients: Natalie McCormick and José Carlos De La Vega; Dr Alan G. Mitchell

UBC gratefully acknowledges the individuals, corporations, and organizations that generously established the following new awards, approved by UBC Senate between April 2015 and May 2016, in support of our students.

UBC Vancouver Campus

Applied Science

Christopher Spencer Memorial Entrance Scholarship in Engineering
Helen Elizabeth Cawston Bursary in Nursing
J. Kirstine Griffith Memorial Graduate Scholarship in Nursing
John Oades Bursary in Electrical Engineering
Konrad and Andrea Walus Engineering Bursary
Motion Metrics Mining Graduate Scholarship
Norman and Gwendelyne Moysa Memorial Award
Norman Epstein Award in Chemical Engineering
Paul and Helen Trussell Scholarship in Engineering

Arts

Anna Ruth Leith Memorial Scholarship in Science and Health Information
Anna Ruth Leith Memorial SLAIS Scholarship
Dr. Paul Tang Memorial Scholarship in Philosophy
Judy Brown Memorial Scholarship in Canadian Literature
Mo Lin Yu Memorial Prize in the Faculty of Arts
Olivia Sonja Robertson Memorial Bursary
Pan Tianshou Scholarship
Sutton MacGregor Doctoral Student Research Award in Political Science

Athletics and Recreation

Amanjit Payer Memorial Scholarship in Women's Volleyball
Hansen Difference Maker Award in Women's Volleyball
Ken Woods Thunderbird Award
Robert Miles Webster Annual Baseball Award
Robert Miles Webster Endowed Baseball Award

Campus Wide

Undergraduate Enrichment Scholarship
Youth Futures Education Fund Bursary for Youth In Care

Dentistry

Dental Corp. Canada Outstanding Student Leadership Award
Dr. Nancy Scott Memorial Award for Outstanding Patient Care in Dentistry
Dr. Perry H. Trester Leadership Award in Dentistry
Thompson Okanagan Dental Society Scholarship
Vancouver Dental Education Centre Study Group Award

Education

Albon Pearson Health Professions Educational Research Scholarship
Dorothy Osborne Educators of Students with Visual Impairments Award
Dr. Richard L. Ramsay Award in Kinesiology
Rudolph and Eleanor Kaser Memorial Education Bursary
Sara Hodson Kinesiology Co-op Student of the Year Award
Sylvan Learning Bursary

Forestry

Albert Allan Brown Bursary in Forestry
B.A. Blackwell & Associates Scholarship in Fire Science
Braham G. Griffith Memorial Graduate Scholarship in Forestry
John and Jill Innes Aboriginal Award in Forestry
Peter H. Pearse Forestry Award
Peter Marshall Centennial Scholar Entrance Award in Forestry
Stewart Family Forestry Award

Graduate Studies

Arvind Gupta and Michelle Pereira Graduate Scholarship Award
Peter Rennie Memorial Award

Land and Food Systems

Clear Ocean Seafood Graduate Scholarship in Food Science
Kin's Excellence Award in Food Science
Philip A. Jones Fellowship

Law

Alexander Won Cumyow and Gordon Won Cumyow Memorial Bursary in Law
Allard Scholar Bursary
Allard Scholar Graduate Fellowship
Allard Scholar Renewable Entrance Scholarship
B. Vincent Reed, Q.C. Award in Law
Bull Housser Prize in Labour Law
Gervin Prize in Advocacy and Criminal Law Reform
Graduating Class of Law 1965 Bursary
John J. and Patricia A. Campbell Scholarship in Law
John M. S. Lecky Foundation Award in the Peter A. Allard School of Law
KazLaw Course Prize in Personal Injury Law
Koffman Kalef LLP Prize in Business Law
Law Foundation of British Columbia Public Interest Awards
Peggy and Tom English Q.C., Bursary in Law

Medicine

Aboriginal Award in Medicine
Aboriginal Health Career Bursary (IMP)
Brigitte Raudzus Memorial Award in Physical Therapy
Dennis Wardman Aboriginal Prize in Medicine
Dr. Stephen D. Clarke Resident Travel Award
Elizabeth C. Watters Research Fellowship
Helmut and Donna Meisl Scholarship in Medicine
IMPACTBC Scholarship in Health Care Research and Development
John M. S. Lecky Foundation Master of Health Science Award
Laurel L. Watters Research Fellowship
Necia Elvin Memorial Prize for Schizophrenia Research
Pun Bursary in Medicine
Strengthening Mothers Through Perinatal Research Award
The Shooting Stars Foundation Bursary in HIV and AIDS Prevention and Care
Van Leest Family Southern Medical Program Award
William Martin Island Medical Program Bursary
Zoltan Tallan Award for Medical Residents in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

Pharmaceutical Sciences

Dr. Wendy Ko Scholarship in Pharmaceutical Sciences
James E. Axelson Outstanding Graduate Scholar

Sauder School of Business

Aquilini Family Aboriginal Awards in Business
Clear Ocean Seafood Ltd. Award in Business Operations
Gary and Anne McPhail Award in Entrepreneurship
Hoegg Family MBA Scholarship
HSBC International Business Award
John M. S. Lecky Foundation Award in the Sauder School of Business
Lauren Wilmot Memorial Award
Maharaj & Co. Award in Accounting
Maharaj & Co. Scholarship in Accounting
New Coast Realty Award in Urban Land Economics & Real Estate
New Coast Realty Prize in Urban Land Economics & Real Estate
New Coast Realty Scholarship in Urban Land Economics & Real Estate
Sauder School of Business UBC Swimming Award

Science

Dr. John and Barbara Petkau Scholarship
John I. Watters Research Fellowship
Margaret Wylie Memorial Scholarship in Statistics
Murray and Kathy Newman Bursary in Science
Oluna and Adolf Ceska Award in Mycology
Paul and Helen Trussell Scholarship in Science
Robert Cathro Memorial Bursary in Geological Sciences

UBC Okanagan Campus

Campus Wide

UBC Okanagan Aboriginal Bursary
UBC Okanagan Youth Futures Education Fund Bursary for Youth In Care

Health and Social Development

Global Citizenship Award in Nursing
Bette Mushta Award for Mature Students in Nursing

Thank you very much for investing in the future of our students and for partnering with the university to help ensure that every qualified student, regardless of their financial situation, can gain an invaluable UBC education and go out into the world equipped to make a difference.

A QUICK GUIDE TO AWARD TYPES

SCHOLARSHIPS

These monetary awards recognize academic achievement and help students with the cost of continuing their education. Scholarships are merit-based, and recipients must be in the top 10% of their class or have an average of 75% or higher.

BURSARIES

Bursaries are non-repayable awards that help to fill the gap between a student's assessed financial need and available government assistance. UBC's Policy 72 states that "No eligible student will be prevented from commencing or continuing his or her studies at the university for financial reasons alone."

FELLOWSHIPS

These prestigious awards enable graduate students to concentrate full-time on their studies and research. They are granted on the basis of academic excellence and/or research productivity.

PRIZES

Students can receive prizes for academic excellence or achievement in a particular subject area. Prizes usually take the form of a monetary award.

AWARDS

Awards recognize either (or both) academic excellence or achievement in a range of non-academic fields such as, community service, student leadership, volunteerism, and athletic or artistic performance. They are given to both undergraduate and graduate students.

Please contact us for more information on how to set up your choice of award at UBC.

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If you want to support UBC students, we can help. Our experience and expertise can help you turn your ideas into student awards.

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