

For Immediate Release

Irving K. Barber British Columbia Scholarship Society
Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training

Nov. 6, 2021

Scholarships continue to create opportunities for women in tech

Vancouver – For Sophie Collins, who is studying Mathematics at Thompson Rivers University, the pathway into the tech sector just got a bit easier, thanks to the \$10,000 Women in Technology/Indigenous Women in Technology Scholarship she just received from the Irving K. Barber British Columbia Scholarship Society.

“Kukwstetemc (Thank you) to the Society for awarding me this scholarship. Every day I strive to be a good ancestor and in doing so, I aim to inspire other young girls, specifically Indigenous girls to work for their dreams. I want young girls to push the boundaries by going into STEM programs and to hold a strong presence while being the minority in the room. With a scholarship like this, I am thrilled to be able to show younger girls there are opportunities to further their education and achieve their goals, no matter how big.”

Sophie is among 15 students who have been awarded the Women in Technology Scholarships this fall based on academic achievement and a demonstrated commitment to pursuing a career in computer/data science, engineering, or mathematics. Funding for the Scholarships are from grants to the Society from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training in 2018 and 2020.

“It is my honour to recognize and celebrate women who are breaking down barriers in their field and representing the future of science and technology in B.C.,” said Anne Kang, Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training. “I’m proud that our government is empowering a new generation of women and Indigenous women to enter sectors that will provide fulfilling, family supporting careers and contribute to critical innovations to benefit society.”

Women are under-represented in tech-related disciplines such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). In the 2019-20 fiscal year, women received 39 % of STEM credentials awarded by the B.C. public post-secondary system, compared to 61% of non-STEM program credentials.

“As a female entrepreneur who co-founded Canada’s first woman-owned and operated video game studio, I know it’s possible for women to train for the tech sector and thrive in rewarding careers,” said Brenda Bailey, Parliamentary Secretary for Technology and Innovation. “I encourage all women to consider the possibilities and get enrolled in a tech program because there are opportunities for well-paying tech jobs in nearly every sector.”

The tech sector in B.C. is one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy generating about \$35 billion in revenue, supporting over 131,000 high-paying jobs. The province is home to more than 11,000 tech businesses. Labour market forecasts expect more than 74,000 tech-related job openings over the next decade for computer programmers, software designers, engineers, and others. Women represent only about a quarter of the tech workforce.

“A career in STEM is an inspired choice”, noted Society Chair, Melvin Berg. “These women will be inspiring other women to follow in their footsteps. They will be mentors and peers to those who are developing similar skills, and leaders in a more diverse and inclusive workplace. The Society is pleased to play a part in empowering their potential.”

2021 Women in Technology & Indigenous Women in Technology Scholarship recipients:

LAST	FIRST	INSTITUTION	PROGRAM
Blankers	Chloe	UVIC	Computer Science
Collins*	Sophie	TRU	Bachelor of Science
Hutchinson	Lauren	UVIC	Mechanical Engineering
Kirk	Kira	CAMO	Civil Engineering Technology
Law	Brielle	UBC	Computer Engineering
Lin	Rebecca	UBC	Computer Science
McCreight	Meghan	OK	Water Engineering Technology
Moss	Elena	UVIC	Mathematics
Petrone	Stephanie	TRU	Computing Science
Phillips	Taylor	UBC	Mechanical Engineering
Quon	Stephanie	UBC	Electrical Engineering
Restan Perez	Milena	UVIC	Biomedical Engineering
Rose	Emma	UBC	Civil Engineering
Vogl	Anastasia	UBC	Engineering Physics
Wong	Jesse	UBC	Computer Science

*Indigenous Women in Technology Scholarship

Learn More:

Eligibility criteria and applications for Women in Technology Scholarships and Indigenous Women in Technology Scholarships are available at: <http://www.ikbbc.ca>

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