



THE IRVING K. BARBER

British Columbia Scholarship Society

ADMINISTERED BY THE VICTORIA FOUNDATION

NEWS RELEASE

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Over 650 Indigenous students share \$2.3 M in awards

VICTORIA – Jeff Shemilt is an Indigenous student with his sights set on securing a master’s degree in Public Administration. He’s moved closer to achieving that goal courtesy of an Indigenous Award he’s recently received from the Irving K. Barber BC Scholarship Society.

Jeff is one of 663 students who will share more than \$2.3 million in Awards in support of their studies at public post-secondary institutions throughout BC.

“This award will cover a substantive portion of my program costs, allowing me to focus energy on maximizing my success within my academic program” said Shemilt. *“As my personal and professional ambitions involve working toward the public interest, I am certain your contribution will also ultimately benefit those other than just myself”*, he added.

The Society’s Indigenous Awards program is funded from the returns on an endowment fund established by the Province of British Columbia. It was created to assist in removing barriers to higher education for Indigenous peoples. Awards of \$1,000 to \$5,000 each are issued every year through a competitive process to students studying at all post-secondary levels, from trades training to doctoral programs.

“Scholarships like this make a huge difference in the lives of Indigenous students,” said Anne Kang, Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training. *“By breaking down barriers to accessing post-secondary education, these awards support Indigenous youth to gain the knowledge and skills they need to start their careers and contribute to B.C.’s economy.”*

The Indigenous population in British Columbia is growing at more than triple the rate of the non-Indigenous population, with approximately 42.5% of the Indigenous population under the age of 25.

“The Society is pleased to be able to remove some funding barriers to post-secondary education by providing awards that are both available at the beginning of a program and renewable for future years of study” commented Board Chair, Melvin Berg.

The [Irving K Barber BC Scholarship Society](http://www.ikbbc.ca) provides scholarships and awards to students attending public post-secondary institutions throughout the province and internationally. Since its inception, nearly \$29 million has been distributed to B.C. students from its six scholarship and award programs. The Victoria Foundation provides administrative support to the Society.

Editors Please Note: A list of 2021 Indigenous Student Award recipients can be found at:

<http://www.ikbbc.ca/aboriginal-awards/about-this-award/>

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