

UNITED for brighter futures

Youth Futures Education Fund 2023/24 REPORT



Photo Credit: AHPotoswpg/istock.com

MISSION:

Creating equal educational opportunities for young adults who have been in government care.

VISION:

Make post-secondary education dreams achievable for young adults who have been in government care.



"[It] has helped me get money that has bought me food and paid bills and rent. I felt safer and more secure with the money there... It feels nice knowing that United Way BC can help me."



Scan the QR code to read Khyna's story.

KHYNA
COAST MOUNTAIN
COLLEGE STUDENT
& YOUTH FUTURES
EDUCATION FUND
RECIPIENT

Message from the Chair

A record number of former youth in care are pursuing post-secondary education as mature students with support from **United Way BC's Youth Futures Education Fund**. Between 2023 and 2024, the number of students over the age of 25 on tuition waiver and seeking support for basic living expenses, grew a record 18.5%.

While an expanded Provincial Tuition Waiver for all ages makes education and training more accessible and affordable, many mature students have additional responsibilities, including working or caring for young families or grandchildren. They may also be driving long distances to get to class and their job, all of which makes it hard to concentrate on schooling.

Supporting and encouraging these individuals to access education means more knowledge, experience and perspective gets shared in a meaningful way with our communities and society. This year, the Youth Futures Education Fund provided almost \$700,000 in barrier-free funds, our highest disbursement to date, to former youth in care so they could study with greater peace of mind. More than half of those students qualify as mature.

Through the Youth Futures Education Fund, United Way BC is proud to be part of these students' journeys. But we couldn't have done it without the generous support of our many donors. All donations to the fund are directly invested in supporting students' success, but the need is still great. Thank you for helping to create a world where everyone has an equal opportunity to make a difference in the world through higher education, and for considering a future gift that will change lives.

Jim Martell
YOUTH FUTURES EDUCATION FUND CHAIR



United Way
British Columbia

2023/2024

\$698,962
DISTRIBUTED TO

580

STUDENTS

\$10,245

LARGEST
ALLOCATION
PER STUDENT

\$27

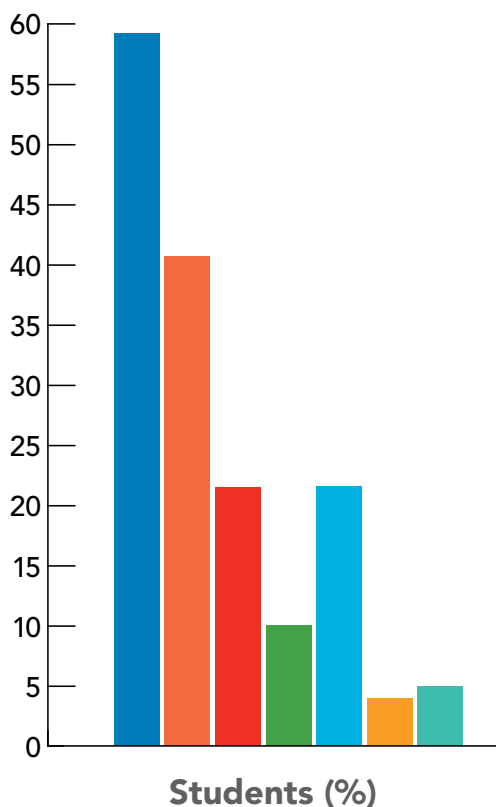
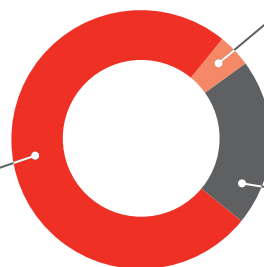
SMALLEST
ALLOCATION
PER STUDENT

\$780,431*
RAISED

\$588,961
FOUNDATIONS

\$27,468
INDIVIDUALS

\$164,002
CORPORATIONS



WHAT DO STUDENTS USE FUNDS FOR?**

59% **LIVING EXPENSES**
(FOOD, DAMAGE DEPOSITS,
PHONE BILLS, OTHER BILLS, ETC.)

41% **TEXTBOOKS**

22% **TRANSPORTATION**
(BUS PASS, GAS, ETC.)

9% **TECHNOLOGY**
(COMPUTER, SOFTWARE,
PHONE, ETC.)

22% **OTHER SCHOOL SUPPLIES**
(UNIFORMS, TUTORING, ETC.)

9% **HEALTHCARE**
(DENTAL, MENTAL HEALTH, ETC.)

2% **CHILDCARE**

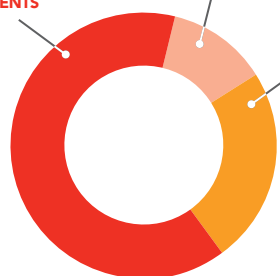
WHO DO WE SUPPORT?

32%
INDIGENOUS
STUDENTS

64%
FEMALE
STUDENTS

12%
OTHER
GENDER

24%
MALE
STUDENTS

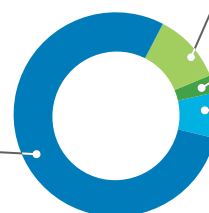


11%
COMPLETED
THEIR STUDIES

3%
STUDENTS
WITHDRAWN

7%
UNKNOWN

79%
CONTINUING
THEIR STUDIES



Thriving thanks to Youth Futures Education Fund



Grandmother of 10 and Sixties Scoop survivor, RavenSong received her Associate Arts degree from Kwantlen Polytechnic University in June 2024 after 23 years of perseverance and hard work. She's part of an 18.5% spike in mature students seeking support from United Way BC's Youth Futures Education Fund for basic living expenses like rent, childcare, transportation, and emergencies.

In 2023, thanks in part to United Way BC's ongoing advocacy, the Government of British Columbia expanded the tuition waiver to all BC former youth in care (regardless of age) as part of StrongerBC's Future Ready plan to make education and training more accessible and affordable. Many individuals formerly in government care, like RavenSong, who did not have the opportunity to pursue education previously are now able to do so.

RavenSong was well on her way to getting her degree, but circumstances intervened. Government agencies threatened to take away her son who had special needs if she continued school, so she quit to take care of him and her oldest daughter. She went on to have two more youngsters and when she became an empty nester, she went back to school.

"It's a big deal to me, a big deal. And I couldn't have done it without [Youth Futures Education Fund's] help," says RavenSong. "It was just amazing that that's even a possibility. I thought I'd be denied because of my age, right? There was no ageism."

The challenges older adult students face is often different from those of younger students. They can be caring for young families or grandchildren, working, and driving long distances to get to class. All these factors make it hard to pursue higher education.

"Supporting former youth in care who are mature students is a way to strengthening communities. When people go back to school, they're not only enriching their own lives—they're inspiring others and bringing fresh skills and perspectives into our communities and the workforce," says Trisha Dulku, Strategic Initiatives Manager, Community Impact & Investment, United Way British Columbia.

RavenSong, who is from the Deh Gáh Got'İę First Nation in the Northwest Territories, was part of the Sixties Scoop when over 125,000 First Nation, Métis, and Inuit children were removed from their homes, communities, and families of birth. Today, she is President of a non-profit society called the Sixty Scoop Indigenous Society of British Columbia and shares her experience nationally and internationally.

"We support 60 scoop survivors and both sides of their families both the white adopted side and the native biological side, because we're all one and I'm tired of the division," RavenSong says. "We support families to integrate both ways. We also support helping Indigenous people return to their families of origin and do the connection process as well."

Youth Futures Education Fund, United Way BC donors and others support bright futures for everyone, no matter what their age.



"Education and training are the best ticket to the middle class and to getting the skills people need to shape their lives. We expanded the Provincial Tuition Waiver Program to make this possible for the approximately 50,000 former youth in care in BC. United Way BC's Fund works with the Waiver Program to break down barriers and help people get the skills they need so they can live the lives they deserve."

MINISTER ANNE KANG
MINISTRY OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION
AND FUTURE SKILLS

Scan the QR code to read RavenSong's story.





Partners and Supporters

Photo Credit: FatCamera/i-Stock.com

The Youth Futures Education Fund was collaboratively established in 2014 by: Coast Capital, The Province of British Columbia, and the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth. The Youth Futures Education Fund is guided by an Advisory Committee and held at the Vancouver Foundation. United Way BC provides in-kind administrative services support.

FOUNDING PARTNERS

Coast Capital
The Province of BC

Office of BC's Representative
for Children and Youth

ADMINISTRATIVE PARTNER AND FUND HOST

United Way British Columbia
(Administrative Partner)

Vancouver Foundation
(Fund Host)

HONORARY PATRON

The Honourable Janet Austin, OBC Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia

SUPPORTERS

The fund is made possible by generous contributions from the following organizations and many private sector individual donors at these funding levels for the 2023/2024 cycle.

\$250,000

North Family Foundation

\$249,999 – \$100,000

Coast Capital
Houston Family Foundation
Morris & Helen Belkin Foundation

\$49,999 – \$29,999

Fred Boyd Foundation

\$24,999 – \$10,000

Kitty Heller Memorial Fund
Tait Family Foundation

Supporters Spotlight

Launching young people for success is more than a passion for Rudy and Patricia North; it is a deep commitment to the belief that all individuals have value, talent, and unique giftings to share with those around them.

Since 2015, the Norths have generously invested over \$600,000 into the Youth Futures Education Fund to help ensure all individuals who were formerly in government care can follow their dreams of pursuing life-transforming post-secondary education.

The North's stewardship of the fund means that students are not only supported on their life journey, but that we can all enjoy the richness of perspectives, understanding and experiences of others.

United Way BC is privileged and grateful to recognize the Norths for their commitment to youth and to acknowledge their impactful role in creating equal access to education for all.



ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meet our 2023/2024 Committee Members

KELSEY BELLIVEAU (she/her)
Youth Representative

VANESSA BERNARD (she/her)
Vancouver Island University

JULIE CZECK (she/her)
Ministry of Children and Family Development

ISABEL DIAVOLITSIS (she/her)
Ministry of Children and Family Development

FEDERICA DISTEPHANO (she/her)
Ministry of Children and Family Development

REBECCA FONTAINE (she/her)
Ministry of Post-Secondary Education
and Future Skills

RORY GREWAR (he/him)
Victoria Foundation

DEVON KEYS (she/her)
BCNET

SARA LEMARRE (she/her)
Vancouver Island University

FEENA MAGENIS (she/her)
Ministry of Children and Family Development

DAN MALONE (he/him)
Foster Parent Services Society

JIM MARTELL (he/him)
(Chair) Research Universities Council of BC

SABRINA MATERIE (she/they)
University of British Columbia

JADYN MCLEAN (she/her)
Youth Representative

LEISIEUR RAQUEL (she/her)
BC Foster Parent Association

KELLY ROWLANDS (she/her)
Ministry of Post-Secondary Education
and Future Skills

ANNIE SMITH (she/her)
McCreary Centre Society

CATHERINE TALBOTT (she/her)
Ministry of Children and Family Development

SUNNY VIRK (he/him)
Public Guardian and Trustee

TARA WALTER (she/her)
Coast Capital

CLARE WHELAN-SADIKE (she/her)
Ministry of Children and Family Development

KIM WINCHELL (she/her)
United Way British Columbia

MALLORY WOODS (they/them)
Youth Representative

MAUREEN YOUNG (she/her)
Coast Capital



United Way
British Columbia

7166-0325

