

# UNITED for brighter futures

YOUTH FUTURES EDUCATION FUND  
YEAR IN REVIEW 2024/25



Photo Credit: O2O Creative

## 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.



"United Way [BC] gave me the space to transform struggle into determination — I fight every day to climb out of circumstance and turn hardship into purpose; I'm determined to be remembered as a success story within my community that shows love and perseverance change lives."

**TRINITY**  
OKANAGAN  
COLLEGE STUDENT  
& YOUTH FUTURES  
EDUCATION FUND  
RECIPIENT

## Message from the Chair

Across British Columbia, many young people are facing an uncertain future. Rising living costs, a volatile job market, and high youth unemployment are reshaping what it means to be a student today. As post-secondary institutions look to strengthen domestic student participation, this is our moment to invest in learners who have historically been left behind.

For young adults who have aged out of government care, higher education represents more than a credential — it's a pathway to stability, belonging, and independence. Yet, too often, financial hardship forces these students to choose between rent and textbooks, or food and focus. **United Way BC Youth Futures Education Fund (YFEF)** exists to ensure those choices never stand in the way of a brighter future.

This year, we supported 663 students — the highest number in our history. Nearly 40% of recipients identified as Indigenous, reaffirming our commitment to reconciliation and a reminder that a disproportionate number of youth who are in government care identify as Indigenous. More than one-third of students received support for the first time, while 61% were returning students — proof that sustained, reliable assistance ensures these youth have the stability they need to stay in school and graduate. Since 2021/22, graduation rates of students have more than doubled.

But growth also signals need. Even with the Provincial Tuition Waiver Program removing tuition barriers, and the Learning for Futures grant, which supports with educational supplies, students still face major expenses for rent, food, textbooks, technology, and mental health support. Each year, 1,100 youth leave care at age 19<sup>1</sup> and with the current climate, more students than ever are turning to our fund.

Generous donors and partners are helping to make post-secondary dreams reality for students. Your investment in the Youth Futures Education Fund doesn't just fund education — it prevents homelessness, strengthens BC's workforce, and affirms that every young person deserves the chance to reach their potential.

As we look ahead, one thing remains clear: the need is urgent, and the return on compassion is immeasurable.

Jim Martell  
CHAIR, YOUTH FUTURES EDUCATION FUND



<sup>1</sup> <https://mcf.gov.bc.ca/reporting/services/child-protection/post-transition-supports/performance-indicators>

# 2024/2025 BY THE NUMBERS

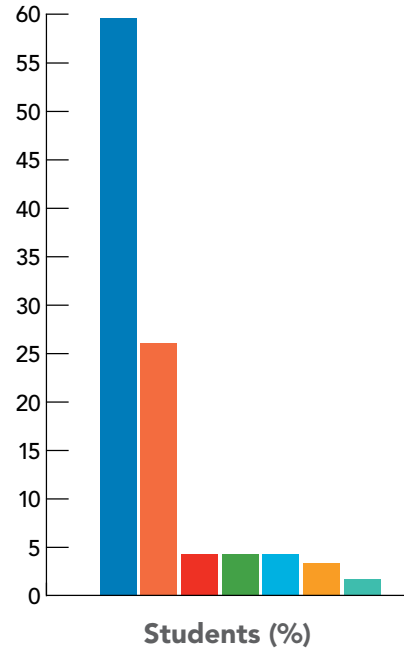
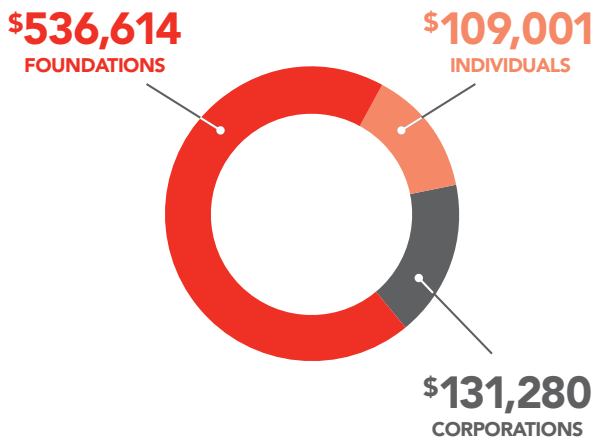


\$600,000  
DISTRIBUTED TO  
**663**  
STUDENTS

**\$7,910**  
LARGEST  
ALLOCATION  
PER STUDENT

**\$15**  
SMALLEST  
ALLOCATION  
PER STUDENT

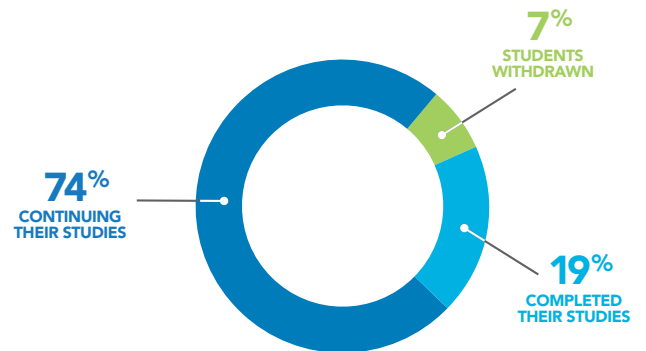
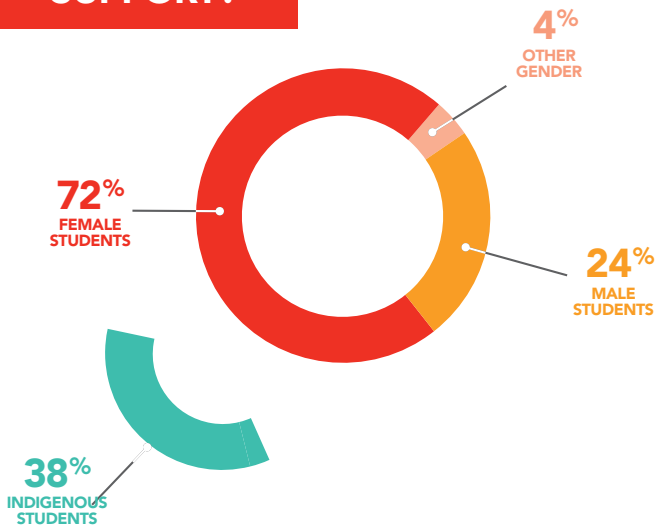
## \$776,895\* RAISED



### WHAT DO STUDENTS USE FUNDS FOR? \*\*

- 57%** LIVING EXPENSES  
(FOOD, RENT, DAMAGE DEPOSITS, PHONE BILLS, OTHER BILLS, ETC.)
- 26%** TEXTBOOKS
- 4%** TRANSPORTATION  
(BUS PASS, GAS, ETC.)
- 4%** TECHNOLOGY  
(COMPUTER, SOFTWARE, PHONE, ETC.)
- 4%** OTHER SCHOOL SUPPLIES  
(UNIFORMS, TUTORING, ETC.)
- 3%** HEALTHCARE  
(DENTAL, MENTAL HEALTH, ETC.)
- 1.5%** CHILDCARE

### WHO DO WE SUPPORT?



### STUDENT STATUS

# Investing in potential: Josh benefits from YFEF support



Josh is learning, studying, and laying the foundation for his future as a kinesiologist at Victoria's Camosun College. And he's doing it with the support of the Youth Futures Education Fund (YFEF).

Josh, who was in government care as a youth, was eligible to tap into the United Way BC Youth Futures Education Fund for basic living expenses like food, rent, technology, and more.

Josh, who speaks with a quiet self-awareness that belies his 24 years, explains how the fund helped him. Though he works full-time during summer months, he's not had to work during the semester. "Getting a grant like the YFEF puts me in a position where I don't have to work a job and sacrifice the quality of my schoolwork by limiting the amount of time and energy I can spend on it. I'm not nearly as stressed out. And I can focus on my studies and perform to my best ability."

Josh says that knowing he can get support from the fund "feels incredibly relieving" and the support from United Way BC donors who support the fund is "incredibly kind and inspiring."

"At Camosun, we provide people with tools to learn, grow, and build a better future for themselves," says Dr. Lane Trotter, President of Camosun College and member of the United Way BC campaign cabinet. "Because former youth in care who are studying at Camosun may experience hurdles on their paths to success, we appreciate United Way BC's role in ensuring beneficiaries receive YFEF funding for everyday needs, so they can focus on their studies."

Thinking of his academic path, the support offered by the YFEF, and the United Way BC donors and others who make it a reality, Josh says, "If I were ever in a position to donate money like them, I would love to do so, to help students on their journey."

## AWARD-WINNING WORK

Each night, an estimated 6,000 Canadian youth experience homelessness. Many are disconnected from education or employment. The Youth Futures Education Fund was recognized with an Honourable Mention at the 2025 Making the Shift Youth Homelessness Prevention Awards at the National Conference on Ending Homelessness.

This national recognition reflects what our donors already know: that investing in education is one of the most effective ways to prevent homelessness and break intergenerational cycles of poverty.



"The Youth Futures Education Fund is a powerful example of what happens when we remove barriers to education. Our government is proud to support former children and youth in care as they pursue their studies at a BC post secondary institution, at the Native Education College, or an approved trades training provider, with their tuition waived. Their determination inspires us to continue building a better future where everyone has the opportunity to succeed."

**MINISTER JESSIE SUNNER**  
MINISTRY OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION  
AND FUTURE SKILLS



# 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

Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia  
The Honourable Wendy Cocchia, C.M., O.B.C., LL.D. (Hon)

## 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 2024/2025 cycle.

### \$250,000

North Family Foundation

### \$100,000 – \$249,999

Houston Family Foundation  
Northbridge Financial Corporation  
Margaret Corbett

### \$25,000 – \$49,999

Fred Boyd Brown Fund  
Coast Capital

### \$10,000 – \$24,999

Tait Family Fund  
Kitty Heller Memorial Fund

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### Meet our 2024/2025 Committee Members

**JACLYN BATES** (she/her)  
Ministry of Children & Family Development

**KELSEY BELLIVEAU** (she/her)  
Youth Representative

**ASHLEY FRERICHS** (she/her)  
Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills

**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)  
Caring Families Society

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

**LISA MARTIN** (she/her)  
Ministry of Children and Family Development

**JADYN MCLEAN** (she/her)  
Youth Representative

**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

**KIM WINCHELL** (she/her)  
United Way British Columbia

**MALLORY WOODS** (they/them)  
Youth Representative

**MAUREEN YOUNG** (she/her)  
Coast Capital

“It may seem long or impossible, but tuition waiver and the Youth Futures Education Fund provide an opportunity that allows space to become stable through obtaining education and it is worth it.”

**AMANDA**  
UBC GRADUATE & YOUTH FUTURES EDUCATION FUND RECIPIENT

## THE ROAD AHEAD

The economic and social landscape for youth in BC is shifting rapidly. As government, institutions, and communities adapt to new realities, one truth remains: education is the surest path to stability and belonging. For former youth in care, that path is only possible when the community walks alongside them. Your continued support ensures that when they reach for opportunity, the ground beneath them is steady. Together, we can ensure that no young person's future is determined by their past.

Scan the QR code to see how we're supporting brighter futures.



**United Way**  
British Columbia

[uwbc.ca](http://uwbc.ca)