

2025

**Community Sponsored Awards**

RECOGNIZING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Recipients Guide



EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# 2025

## Community Sponsored Awards

RECOGNIZING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Edmonton Public Schools recognizes that the pathways to student success do not occur in isolation. The responsibility to support more than 120,000 students on their K–12 educational journey shared between the Division and the broader community. We work closely with community partners to best leverage the community's interest and investment in the success and well-being of our students and their families.

We are grateful for the generous support provided by the community in sponsoring awards and scholarships that celebrate the learning and achievements of Division students. Each community sponsored award and scholarship has its own criteria and application requirements. Every year, adjudication teams review applications submitted by the students to determine the recipients who best exemplify the award or scholarship criteria.

Congratulations to the 2025 recipients of the community sponsored awards and scholarships on your well-deserved success!



EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# Ben Sauv  Artstrek Bursary

This bursary allows young people who require financial support to experience the joy of learning while in the Theatre Alberta Artstrek program. Ben was a Grade 12 student who attended the Artstrek program and was passionate about the arts. This bursary was created by Ben’s loved ones in his memory, after he was tragically killed in a traffic accident in 1987.

## Recipient



### **Hunter Lafleur**

*M.E. LaZerte High School*

Within our school community, Hunter emerged as a true leader, particularly through his work with the improvisation team. Under his guidance, the team consistently competed in prestigious events like the Northern Alberta Improv League, Nosebowl, and the Canadian Improv Games, showcasing his remarkable ability to inspire and lead his peers in the fast-paced, demanding art of improvisation. Hunter invested deeply in his high school community while also branching out into other areas, demonstrating a strong work ethic across multiple platforms. His dedication and diverse experiences not only enriched him artistically but also continually informed and refined his craft. Hunter’s commitment to honing his skills extended beyond the school environment—he actively sought opportunities to perform in community shows and engaged with local professional artists, reflecting his initiative and genuine passion for drama. He approached every rehearsal and performance with curiosity, professionalism and an eagerness to learn. Dedicated to remaining in the arts and arts education, Hunter gave back through his theatre work and plans to pursue a career as a theatre educator. Through his artistic journey, he discovered his own story and maintained a deep passion for helping others grow. Hunter consistently embraced every opportunity to develop as a theatre artist, demonstrating unwavering dedication and great promise for the future.

# Betty Finch Scholarship

The purpose of this scholarship is to assist a student who is completing high school while receiving specialized support to accommodate a learning disability, and who also requires financial support to attend a post-secondary program. Betty worked at Edmonton Public Schools for three decades, mainly as a specialist who focused on students with learning disabilities. This scholarship was established to recognize her commitment to education.

## Recipient



### **Cole Mitchell**

*M.E. LaZerte High School*

Cole demonstrated exceptional perseverance in pursuing his goals, turning the challenges of living with a learning disability into a unique strength. He deserves high praise for consistently embracing challenging work that pushed him beyond his comfort zone and fostered his growth. He did an amazing job dedicating his time and energy, impressively accomplishing a great deal while maintaining focus on his goals. With a long-standing passion for engineering, Cole expressed how meaningful this award would be as he took the next step in his education. He demonstrated remarkable perseverance and determination, successfully graduating from M.E. LaZerte High School after completing the rigorous International Baccalaureate (IB) program. Cole was a hard worker, a strong advocate, and was deeply committed to his school community. He volunteered as a peer tutor, served on the IB Leadership Council, contributed to the Winter Carnival and supported the athletics department, all while balancing the demands of being a student-athlete. This well-rounded dedication made him a standout learner and community member.

## Betty Finch Scholarship *(continued)*

### Recipient



### **Rayden Ostashower**

*Dr. Anne Anderson High School*

Rayden approached his personal growth with humility and determination, identifying areas for development and working diligently to turn them into assets. His dedication to helping others—particularly the unhoused and underprivileged—was both admirable and deeply impactful. As a leader in both the school and broader community, Rayden consistently looked beyond himself, seeking ways to contribute meaningfully. He was an active member of the school basketball team and the Ignite Christian Club, where he inspired his peers to lead with kindness and respect. Whether in the halls, classrooms or extracurricular spaces, Rayden led by example—showing compassion, building inclusive friendships and always making an effort to be an ally to those in need. His outreach work and volunteerism reflected a deep commitment to creating a better, more just world, and his journey stands as a testament to the power of resilience, empathy and purpose-driven leadership.

# Catherine and Robert Povaschuk Scholarship

This scholarship recognizes Grade 12 students who has honours in academic courses, demonstrates commitment to extracurricular and community involvement, and will attend the University of Alberta. Catherine and Robert Povaschuk wish to assist scholarship recipients with expenses related to continuing with their studies.

## Recipient



### Ria Joshi

*Old Scona Academic*

Alongside her academic dedication, Ria was deeply involved in both school and community initiatives. Driven by a strong sense of equity, she worked to open doors for others, consistently supporting those facing challenges and empowering those around her. As a Student Page at the Edmonton Public Library, Ria helped create a welcoming, organized space by assisting patrons and shelving materials. Her efforts ensured visitors—from children discovering their first picture book to newcomers learning English—could easily access resources in a space that fostered learning, inclusion and discovery. A natural helper, Ria was invited to join Old Scona Academic's Alberta Health Services Community Helpers Program, supporting fellow students as a peer mentor. As Vice President of Future Medical Girls, a community-led virtual organization she co-led, she aimed to empower underprivileged teenage girls with an interest in healthcare through mentorship programs, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) workshops, and guest speaker panels. As a Teen Ambassador for the Canadian Association for Girls in Science (CAGIS), she helped with virtual sessions, assisted with planning interactive events and facilitated meetings as needed. Her involvement in this community-led activity helped ensure programs were enjoyable and reflective, particularly for girls who might otherwise not imagine themselves in science. Ria plans to attend the University of Alberta in the Fall to study nursing. Her service in the community, her dedication to future endeavours, and her commitment to creating positive change continue to inspire others.

## Catherine and Robert Povaschuk Scholarship *(continued)*

### Recipient



### Edison Li

*Lillian Osborne High School*

Edison consistently demonstrated unwavering optimism in his ability to make a meaningful difference across communities. He approached every challenge with a strong commitment, shown through his exemplary academic performance and desire to positively impact others. A firm believer in mentorship, he actively sought to connect experienced mentors with emerging leaders. Within his school, Edison immersed himself in extracurricular and community initiatives aimed at building others up. At Lillian Osborne, he founded the Christian Club, which grew to serve over 120 students weekly. What began as a simple lunch gathering became a powerful space where students supported one another mentally, emotionally and spiritually—an example of how a nurtured idea could transform school culture. Seeing a broader need, he also founded AwakenYouth, a mentorship program that connected graduating student leaders from various Edmonton schools with younger peers. This initiative offered vital opportunities for leadership development and meaningful mentorship. Beyond school, Edison extended his impact through AideLink, a nonprofit he co-founded to connect newcomer families of children with special needs to culturally informed aides. He also spent summers volunteering at overnight camps where he cooked for over 150 children weekly, maintained facilities and offered hands-on support. Additionally, he tutored English to new Canadian students, many of whom simply needed someone to practice speaking with. Edison consistently embodied strong character, curiosity and compassion. His leadership in the Christian Students Association created a space of belonging and reflection for his peers. His determination, empathy and moral integrity make him an exceptional candidate for recognition. Edison's ultimate goal has always been to create environments where others feel seen, supported and empowered. He plans to attend the University of Alberta in the Fall, pursuing a degree in the Faculty of Education.

## Catherine and Robert Povaschuk Scholarship *(continued)*

### Recipient



### **Isabelle Virani**

*Queen Elizabeth High School*

Isabelle demonstrated an exceptional commitment to her studies and consistently achieved academic excellence. Beyond her academic pursuits, she was deeply committed to supporting young people through mentorship and by actively seeking ways to uplift those around her and build their confidence within her community. Child literacy held a particularly sentimental place in Isabelle's heart, stemming from frequent childhood visits to the library with her mother. Consequently, she actively volunteered with organizations such as the Learning Buddies' Network and Edmonton Public Library's Reading Buddies, fostering a love for reading within youth and providing invaluable one-on-one support to enhance their reading skills. Isabelle was also an active member of her graduation council, diligently promoting fundraising efforts to mitigate high costs for students and meticulously managing the grad email account to ensure accurate information and effective organization. Additionally, Isabelle was a dedicated member of her school's tutoring club, where she supported student success through personalized coaching and confidence-building, fulfilling her desire to uplift others. She served as a role model at the Women in Scholarship, Engineering, Science and Technology (WISEST) Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) Conference, where she presented her research to young women and later empowered other women by sharing her experiences and encouraging them to apply to the program. Isabelle possessed a strong intellectual curiosity and was recognized as an incredibly hard-working student and leader within her school, perpetually seeking opportunities to contribute to her community. Always open to new experiences, she embraced opportunities to learn, explore and give back. Isabelle will continue to explore her passion for chemistry at the University of Alberta in the fall, within the Faculty of Science.



# Esther and Peter Cunliffe Scholarship

This scholarship recognizes a Grade 12 student who demonstrates excellent academic performance, outstanding personal and leadership qualities and who requires financial support to attend one of the following post-secondary institutions: University of Alberta, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology or MacEwan University. In the spring of 2000, Esther and Peter Cunliffe pledged a portion of their estate to fund scholarships for students graduating from Edmonton Public Schools.

## Recipient



### Grace Zhang

*Dr. Anne Anderson High School*

Grace was a socially conscious and thoughtful young woman, deeply committed to social education and meaningful action. Throughout high school, she demonstrated academic excellence, empathy, and a genuine desire to uplift others. As a dedicated member of the school's Leadership A-Team and Peer Tutoring program, her reliability and support left a lasting impression. This year, she founded and led the French Club and served as co-lead of the Building Cultures of Belonging group, where her compassion and commitment to inclusion stood out. Her teacher advisor shared that they witnessed Grace's dedication to creating a welcoming school environment and her desire to grow as a leader while supporting peers. Grace also participated in the school's Model United Nations team, reflecting her curiosity and engagement with global issues. She brought perseverance and kindness to everything she did, remaining focused on her goals even through challenges, and often creating opportunities where none existed. Her leadership was empathetic and action-driven, inspiring others and helping foster a more inclusive school culture. Grace's dedication to service, open heart and quiet strength made a lasting impact. The school commends her for her tireless efforts and congratulates her on the meaningful and lasting impact she made during her time at school.

# French Bilingual Awards

The purpose of the French Bilingual Award is to recognize one Grade 6 and one Grade 9 French Immersion student, and one Grade 12 student enrolled in French programming. These students demonstrate overall performance in French and have positive attitudes towards learning French. This award was made possible by the Edmonton French Bilingual Education Society (EFBES).

## Grade 6 Recipient



### **Reid Sanderman**

*Lendrum School*

Reid was a motivated language student who took the initiative to use his French language skills within the school community and abroad. He was passionate in his pursuit to enrich the learning environment for both his classmates and teachers. Reid was actively engaged in all French learning activities and consistently sought opportunities to improve his language abilities. He readily applied what was taught in class to his oral and written work. His dedication to the French language extended beyond the classroom. Reid promoted French within his school by writing for the school newspaper and speaking during morning announcements. He also served as a mentor to younger students, helping them become stronger readers in French. Reid took pride in using his French skills while travelling with his family, using these opportunities to engage in authentic interactions with French speakers and fully immerse himself in the culture and language. Reid's journey in mastering French was truly an exciting one, and he is eager to continue in the French Immersion program in junior high.

## French Bilingual Awards *(continued)*

### Grade 9 Recipient



**Aura Delahaye**  
*McKernan School*

Aura took pride in using her French language skills and embraced her Francophone identity. She consistently strived for excellence in her academic studies. At school, she assisted her peers in the Late French Immersion program and enjoyed reading with Grade 1 students in French. She also actively participated in and helped plan Francophone events at her school each year. Through these experiences, Aura was eager to learn more about Francophone cultures and customs from around the world. She continued to build connections with French-speaking communities, using her French oral skills with her coach during swimming practice. While studying in Quebec, she engaged with community members and supported other students in their French language learning. Aura leveraged her linguistic abilities to communicate with her French-speaking family and to assist relatives with limited French proficiency. She regularly held conversations with extended family from France and supported her immediate family when travelling abroad. Aura's commitment to and passion for advancing her language skills and cultural understanding undoubtedly prepared her well for future endeavours.

## French Bilingual Awards *(continued)*

### Grade 12 Recipient



### **Ashlyn Marple**

*Harry Ainlay High School*

Ashlyn's remarkable passion for French shone through her academic excellence and community involvement. She approached every class with enthusiasm, intellectual curiosity, and a positive spirit that elevated the learning environment for everyone around her. Her passion for learning French extended beyond just the language itself; she also demonstrated a deep interest in Francophone cultures and perspectives. Her commitment to French was evident in her extracurricular involvement. She volunteered for a French-language social studies event, helping younger students engage with the language, and assisted in a foods course using her French skills. Her summer job also provided opportunities to communicate daily in French. She plans to pursue a Bachelor of Biological Sciences and Secondary Education at Campus Saint-Jean, hoping to empower future generations in Alberta with the gift of bilingualism. Ashlyn's dedication to the French language and community made her truly deserving of this award.

# Garth Worthington Memorial Scholarship

The Garth Worthington Memorial Scholarship recognizes a high school student with outstanding talent and skill in vocal or choral music, who is also actively pursuing vocal or choral music studies. Garth spent three decades teaching music at Edmonton Public Schools, conducting thousands of students in school bands and choirs. He was also a talented musician and singer. The Garth Worthington Memorial Scholarship fund was established to keep his passion for music alive.

## Recipient



### **Daylen Anderson**

*McNally High School*

Daylen understands the profound importance of music in one's life—not just as an art form, but as a source of connection, expression and personal grounding. For him, music is more than a passion; it is a lifeline. Singing in ensemble settings allowed him to feel a deep sense of belonging, and he consistently showed a remarkable commitment to choral music, developing his own unique style and voice along the way. What truly distinguished Daylen was his courage to be vulnerable—embracing the challenge of expressing himself through song with both authenticity and quiet confidence. Daylen brought warmth, leadership and a strong sense of camaraderie to every group he was part of. He was a team player, lifting up his fellow musicians and advocating for others by encouraging friends and family to attend performances. His leadership extended beyond his voice. As a skilled percussionist and a vital member of the school band, he arranged pieces for both percussion and vocal ensembles, mentored younger musicians, and served as a reliable and inspiring section leader in the choir. Through music, Daylen came out of his shell and found his place. He identified not only where he fit, but where he hoped to go next—showing clarity of purpose and vision. His journey underscored how music, especially shared in community, can offer lifelong social and emotional support. His presence in the ensemble world was felt deeply, and his contributions will continue to resonate with those fortunate enough to have performed alongside him.

# James P. Jones Scholarship

The purpose of this scholarship is to recognize a Grade 12 student who completes 30-level French courses, has a positive attitude toward learning French, a sincere interest in continuing French language studies beyond high school and who demonstrates excellent academic performance and citizenship. James (Jim) P. Jones worked at Edmonton Public Schools for nearly three decades, mainly as a supervisor of second languages. Jim's friends and family, along with language teachers in the Division, established this scholarship to acknowledge his tremendous work and dedication.

## Recipient



### **Daryna Kostyuk**

*Old Scona Academic*

Daryna consistently demonstrated dedication, curiosity, and a profound passion for the French language. As a first-generation Canadian with Ukrainian roots, she deeply understood the importance of bilingualism and actively sought every opportunity to strengthen her French skills. She elevated her abilities through rigorous study and immersive experiences. She participated in the prestigious Explore Program at Campus Saint-Jean and served as a summer camp leader in Longueuil, Québec, through the YMCA French Summer Work Student Exchange program. As president of her school's French club, Daryna fostered a vibrant Francophone community, notably helping to organize a successful annual Journée de la Francophonie. Looking ahead, Daryna will pursue a Bachelor of Commerce in International Business at the University of Alberta, continuing her French studies to achieve her goal of working in international law.

# Kinsey Verbeek Memorial Award

This award recognizes Grade 11 students who have had a positive effect on others in spite of facing personal challenges. Kinsey Verbeek was a Grade 11 student enrolled at Ross Sheppard High School who passed away at the age of 15. Despite the personal challenges Kinsey faced, her loved ones remember her as a friend, an ally and an inspiration for positive change in the world. The Kinsey Verbeek Memorial Award was created by her family to recognize other young people who help make the world a better place despite the barriers they face.

## Recipient



### **Medoria Stabblér**

*McNally High School*

Medoria exemplified perseverance and resilience, navigating significant personal challenges throughout her education. Her steady care for others and deep commitment to uplifting those around her reflected profound empathy and quiet strength. She found joy in supporting others, embodying a giving spirit aligned with the values celebrated by this award. Compassion and community is central to who she is. Organized, hardworking and humble, Medoria led with quiet initiative, finding practical ways to remove barriers to student success. She played a key role in gathering donations for CASA Mental Health through the bike-a-thon and supported vulnerable families through the Holiday Hamper initiative. Her work around food security—including planning, community collaboration and grant writing—secured funding for McNally's community garden. As a school ambassador, Medoria engaged deeply with her community, responding with maturity, insight and care. Her leadership was thoughtful and inclusive. She led the winter clothing drive, helped fundraise for the pancake breakfast and bike-a-thon in support of the Edmonton Food Bank and CASA Mental Health, and co-founded McNally's first environmental club, EcoNally. Her role in establishing the courtyard garden—through research and grant writing—showcased her vision and determination. As a Student Senator, she meaningfully advocated for student voice at the division level, contributing with clarity and grace. Medoria's journey is defined by quiet strength, unwavering service and deep commitment. She remains a powerful example of resilience, generosity and leadership rooted in compassion.

## Kinsey Verbeek Memorial Award *(continued)*

### Recipient



### **Linh Bao Nguyen Le (Lily)**

*Ross Sheppard High School*

Lily's journey was marked by genuine kindness, thoughtful leadership and a deep commitment to supporting others. She demonstrated a quiet strength and the inspiring ability to turn challenges into meaningful opportunities, consistently uplifting those around her. Her empathy and desire to make a difference were evident in all she did, as she generously gave her time and energy to help others overcome barriers. Lily carried a strong sense of social responsibility and was deeply connected to her community. Her forward-thinking mindset and leadership at Ross Sheppard were remarkable and widely admired. We are grateful for the strength, compassion, and dedication she brought to every space she was part of. Despite the difficult circumstances of her transition to Canada—including quarantine and homeschooling—she navigated it with adaptability, grace and optimism. Her collaborative spirit shone through as she empowered those around her. Lily played a key role in organizing Ross Sheppard's multicultural day and led the highly successful bike-a-thon, which raised \$95,000 for WINGS of Providence. She was a driving force on several committees, consistently demonstrating exceptional organizational and motivational skills. Her positive influence shaped a respectful, inclusive environment for peers, staff and the wider community. Her involvement in the Givology Project—providing free clothing to those in need—further reflected her deep commitment to service. Whether leading large initiatives or offering quiet acts of kindness, Lily made Ross Sheppard a more welcoming and supportive place. She truly embodied the spirit of a change-maker. Her selflessness, perseverance, and strong academic foundation continue to inspire as she moves forward with purpose and joy.



# LeRoy Warden and Associates Scholarship

This scholarship is awarded to a Grade 12 student in need of financial assistance, with clear career goals, who will attend one of the following post-secondary institutions: University of Alberta, MacEwan University, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology or University of Alberta Campus Saint-Jean. When LeRoy Warden is asked what motivated him to establish the scholarship, he replies, “I simply want to help because it resonates with my soul, and lending a helping hand may make the world of difference for one person.”

## Recipient



### Isabelle Virani

*Queen Elizabeth High School*

Isabelle's deep passion for the sciences—particularly chemistry—extended well beyond the classroom, shaping both her academic pursuits and community contributions. Her profound dedication and enthusiasm for scientific exploration were beautifully recognized through her selection for the highly competitive WISEST research opportunity, a true testament to her capability and promise. Isabelle consistently demonstrated exemplary academic performance, balancing intellectual curiosity with a disciplined work ethic that set her apart. She often posed thoughtful, insightful questions that reflected a level of critical thinking well beyond her years. Her commitment to both personal growth and meaningful impact was evident in her role as a library page, her active participation on the school's grad council and her ongoing contributions as a volunteer tutor—where she eagerly shared her knowledge to support others. Mentorship held a special place in Isabelle's heart, and she naturally sought opportunities to guide and uplift those around her with generosity and care. Filled with purpose and anticipation, Isabelle looks forward to attending the University of Alberta to pursue a Bachelor of Science Honours degree, majoring in chemistry with a minor in pharmacology. Her goal to one day work and lead in a research laboratory reflects not only her academic talent but also her vision to make a lasting contribution to the scientific community.

# Margaret T. Stevenson

## Talented Young Writer Award

The purpose of this award is to recognize a Grade 8 student who exhibits a sincere dedication to the literary arts and demonstrates personal growth as a writer. Dr. Margaret T. Stevenson served as a Language Arts supervisor at Edmonton Public Schools for 10 years. In recognition of her work, colleagues, friends and family established this award in 1994 and continue to donate to the fund.

### Recipient



### Ziqing Xiao

*Grandview Heights School*

Writing was a natural and powerful outlet for Ziqing—one that reflected months of imagination, curiosity and careful thought. Her dedication to the literary arts was evident in every piece she produced. Whether crafting a poem, writing from the perspective of a tree, or reflecting on her process, Ziqing approached each project with authenticity and care. Her ability to connect deeply with her content and evoke emotion through her words spoke to her creativity and command of language. What truly set Ziqing apart was her commitment to growth. She welcomed new challenges, experimented with different literary forms, and approached feedback as an opportunity to refine her skills. Her writing portfolio revealed not only a talented and disciplined writer, but also someone eager to evolve—both stylistically and personally. Her thoughtful reflections and imaginative perspectives were a testament to the passion she brought to every piece, and her curiosity and attention to detail brought her characters and ideas vividly to life. Ziqing's presence enriched her writing community. She led by example, encouraging others through her dedication and inspiring those around her with her creativity and warmth. As she continues to grow, there's no doubt that Ziqing will leave a lasting impact through her storytelling.

# Maxwell Li Memorial Award

This award recognizes Grade 11 and 12 students who demonstrate a passion for leadership and a steadfast commitment to helping others and society, giving back to their school and community through volunteer and leadership opportunities. Maxwell Li was a Grade 11 student at Lillian Osborne High School who passed away at the age of 16. He volunteered thousands of hours and was known for his passion, humour, knowledge and admirable character, bringing happiness and love to his family, school and community. The Maxwell Li Memorial Award was created by his family to honour young individuals who inspire others by bringing people together to create positive change.

## Recipient



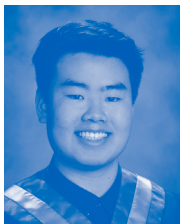
### **Brielle Huang**

*Lillian Osborne High School*

Brielle was an exceptional student and quiet leader whose intellect, compassion and unwavering dedication to service set her apart. Her passion for helping others and creating meaningful change was deeply inspiring. She led not for recognition, but from a genuine desire to uplift—and her actions consistently inspired hope for the future. She founded the Lillian Osborne Crochet Club, which donated over 300 handmade hats for premature babies, raised funds for the Stollery Children's Hospital, and crocheted chemotherapy caps for cancer patients—clear examples of her ability to turn compassion into tangible impact. Her leadership extended into the arts and advocacy, organizing monthly music performances for seniors, contributing as a writer for the school newspaper, and serving as an executive member of the Student Solidarity Committee. Despite personal challenges, Brielle met each one with resilience, purpose and steadfast commitment, all while excelling as a full International Baccalaureate (IB) student. She conducted research through Youreka Canada and helped lead her school's Reach for the Top trivia team to a first-place finish in Edmonton. Brielle's work moved those around her, a reminder that true leadership places others at its heart. Her journey showed that the most powerful leadership begins with leading oneself—with empathy, perseverance and integrity. Her voice, actions and compassionate spirit left a lasting impact on her school community, and there is no doubt she will continue to shape the world in extraordinary ways.

## Maxwell Li Memorial Award *(continued)*

### Recipient



### Edison Li

*Lillian Osborne High School*

Driven by a deep love for community and an unwavering passion for helping others, Edison consistently demonstrated a remarkable commitment to service and inclusion. Inspired by his goal of becoming a special education teacher, he engaged in work that was not only impressive but truly inspiring—instilling hope for the future. He played a key leadership role in the Christian Student Association, helping it grow into a weekly gathering of over 120 students through his mentorship and organization. He also co-founded AideLink, a nonprofit dedicated to connecting aides with children from newcomer families who require additional learning or developmental support. In addition, he provided respite care throughout Edmonton—often on a pay-as-you-feel basis—reflecting his deep compassion and selflessness. Edison’s dedication extended to volunteering in schools and leading cultural events, such as Chinese New Year programming for younger students, where he poured his energy into fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment. Academically, he was a capable and self-motivated learner who continually sought opportunities to grow and give back. Every part of his life reflects a heart for people and a deep sense of purpose.

## Maxwell Li Memorial Award *(continued)*

### Recipient



### **Bisola Akintunde**

*Strathcona High School*

Bisola was a remarkable student whose love for community engagement and helping others shone through every initiative she led. A powerful storyteller, she once shared an impactful moment when a fellow student asked her about leadership—an exchange that exemplified the grace and confidence with which she carried her role as a leader. As a Grade 11 student carrying a full and rigorous Academic Placement (AP) course load, she consistently achieved Honours with Distinction, demonstrating not only academic excellence but also extraordinary drive and intellectual curiosity. However, her accomplishments extended well beyond the classroom. Bisola was the visionary founder of Future Generation (FGEN) an organization that empower youth and raises awareness around neuroscience and mental health—issues close to her heart. Her dedication to advocacy and education was evident in her self-published book *Your Brain is Way More Amazing Than You Actually Think*, and in the creative musical videos she produced to engage her peers. Through these efforts, she built community, sparked curiosity, and inspired others to care deeply about brain health. Her leadership was marked by innovation, empathy, and integrity. As an executive member of the Strathcona Student's Union, she played a key role in organizing school-wide events, always bringing a positive energy that uplifted those around her. Whether connecting with peers, leading a project, or tackling academic challenges, Bisola gave her full effort and remained committed to making a lasting difference. Her work was not only inspiring—it offered a glimpse of a future shaped by thoughtful, compassionate leaders like her.

# Opportunity Through Education

## Sandra B. Woitas Scholarship

This scholarship assists a Grade 12 student who has attended Edmonton Public Schools for at least four years, demonstrates a commitment to volunteering, has a positive attitude toward school and their studies, and requires financial support to attend a post-secondary institution in Edmonton. Sandra B. Woitas served as Director of the Edmonton Public Schools Foundation from 2009 to 2014. This scholarship was established by Sandra's colleagues, friends and family in recognition of her hard work and many contributions.

### Recipient



### **Brielle Huang**

*Lillian Osborne High School*

Brielle was an exceptional young person whose presence left a lasting impact on the Lillian Osborne school community. Her ability to create meaningful change in the lives of others is both humbling and inspiring. Guided by compassion, resilience and a genuine desire to serve, she walks a remarkable path—and her future shines with promise. She met every challenge with quiet strength and grace, always grounded in connection to others and unwavering perseverance. Her commitment to service and volunteerism became part of the fabric of the school. As a peer tutor, she generously gave her time, empowering others through kindness and encouragement. She founded the Lillian Osborne Crochet Club, where members created chemotherapy caps for cancer patients and raised funds for local causes. Her passion for helping others extended to her work at the University of Alberta's Colborne Lab, contributing to stroke treatment research. She also brought joy to seniors by regularly performing music in care homes, offering moments of connection and comfort. Her drive to serve continued through her roles as a high school researcher and academic writer for Youreka Canada, and as a volunteer with the Institute for Stuttering Treatment and Research (ISTAR), where she supported speech therapists and clients in building real-world communication skills. Brielle's contributions were impactful and deeply compassionate. Her legacy at Lillian Osborne is one of quiet leadership and service—and with her empathy, intellect and determination, she is certain to continue making a difference.

