

Recipient Profile

The Indigenous Leadership Award

On June 29, 2017, the Indigenous Leadership Award was presented for the first time to a deserving student in St. James-Assiniboia School Division (SJASD).

The St. James Scholarship Foundation developed the award in the 2016-17 school year to help support a self-identified Indigenous graduate in pursuing post-secondary education. The successful candidate demonstrates strength of character and fortitude and is involved in extra-curricular activities at school or in the community. A student's need for financial support may be considered. Any self-identified Indigenous student graduating from a high school in SJASD can apply for the scholarship. In 2017, the scholarship foundation was honoured to present the Indigenous Leadership Award to Charly Hinton from Collège Sturgeon Heights Collegiate.

"We had a number of amazing students apply, which really demonstrates the need for funds, and it was a difficult choice," said Indigenous Education Teacher and member of the selection committee Mrs. Waters. "Charly really stood out to us though."

Hinton has long prioritized her academics, along with her educational goals. As a student, she was part of the International Baccalaureate program up until Grade 11. At that time, the heavy course load intrinsic with the IB program began to interfere with her ability to maintain a part time job. This didn't keep Charly from actively pursuing her favourite subject. During Grade 11 and 12, Charly took a number of English courses and reached out to the English Department at Collège Sturgeon Heights Collegiate to help strengthen her skills in preparation for her future career.

"I want to be a high school teacher and my goal is to teach English and Indigenous studies," said Hinton.

Hinton is Sioux, Ojibway, Cree and French. Both of her parents are Métis and her mom's side of the family is from Crane River. At school, Hinton joined the Indigenous Culture Club, made up of approximately 15 students.

"Indigenous students and some non-Indigenous would get together during lunch every Friday and we would talk about stuff in the Indigenous community," said Hinton. "We went on field trips to sweat lodges too."

While Hinton was involved in her school community and worked hard to maintain her grades, she also overcame big challenges throughout her life that further illuminated her strong sense of self.

"My parents got divorced when I was really little and my dad moved to a different country," said Hinton. "My mom was a single mom for a very long time and supported me financially by working three jobs herself."



When Hinton found out she was selected to receive this scholarship award, she cried with excitement and hugged Mrs. Waters for all the help she provided throughout the process.

"It meant I could finally get all my books and I wouldn't have to worry about not being able to afford them," said Hinton.

The \$1,000 scholarship funded Hinton's first year of books, with room to spare, as she earned direct entry into the Faculty of Education at the University of Winnipeg. After her first year of university, she is currently sitting at approximately a 3.5 GPA, balancing her part time job and just completed a service learning course at Gordon Bell High School. She had the opportunity to assist refugee students with their studies, particularly in English, and developed close relationships with many of the students she taught.

Hinton said she would encourage any graduating student to apply for a scholarship if they are thinking about it because "you just never know." She did not expect to receive this award but is very thankful she was selected as it meant a great deal to both her and her family.

Best of luck to Hinton in her future endeavours!

Written by Information Officer, Jen Cameron