

GORDON WIEBE POST-SECONDARY SCHOLARSHIPS: RECIPIENTS – 2017



Make It A Reality Scholarship (1):

Bailey Neufeld (2017) Born and raised in Winkler, Bailey graduated from Garden Valley Collegiate and is attending the University of Winnipeg to study psychology. His outstanding work seems to come almost naturally for him. Of his strong commitment to supporting local causes, Bailey shares, “I like feeling like I have accomplished something. Even if I am scared and not totally sure about what something will involve, I would still rather do it and develop that interest. I don’t like not being involved.” A main focus of his work has been the establishment of a student group called Peer Helpers. Through his role on Student Council he noticed that there were many areas of student life that are overlooked when a group is focused on meeting the requirements of their duties. These oversights included the mental health and social needs of students. To address these needs, he and his friends have committed to the motto of “supporting the wellness of others.” Their actions include greeting students in the mornings, offering granola bars to the hungry, programming restorative yoga and generally trying to “make people’s day without expectation of anything in return.”

Ongoing Education Support Scholarship (11):

Alina Fischer has volunteered with youth programming and elderly care since 2009. She has been involved with organizations throughout Manitoba including Boundary Trails Health Centre, Steeprock Bay Bible Camp, and West Broadway Youth Outreach. She views this work as an exercise in democracy through daily actions that build community. She reflects upon the legacy that this creates: *“I had the opportunity to build relationships, mentor, encourage, and have an impact in children’s lives greater than I ever imagined. This... aided my decision to become a teacher and spend my life having a positive impact not only on the children that I will teach but on generations to come...When I volunteer, [I do it to] invest time and effort into other people and creating a joyful, encouraging, and hopeful environment.”* Alina studies education at the University of Manitoba.

Cameron Wiens has volunteered with youth programming since 2012. He has run programs through Pembina Valley Bible Camp, Emmanuel Mennonite Church, mission trips, and Northlands Parkway Collegiate. In his words, *“this has helped me [to] realize the importance of connection, but also the significance of giving people time and showing them their value. People need to see the value they hold within themselves. This is done through giving them your time and attention without expecting anything in return.”* Cameron is entering his second year of Business Administration at Brandon University.

Hailey Penner has volunteered at the Pembina Valley Humane Society, Winkler Harvest Festival and with data collection & mapping of local biology. Answering the essay question asking what she would do if she won a million dollars, her attention turned back to the community. She imagines a pathway between Winkler and Morden that can be shared by people from both communities for commuting, exercising, recreation, pet-walking and socializing. She envisions prioritizing safety accessibility and connecting Boundary Trails Health Centre to this loop. Returning to her passion for the environment, she adds, *“I would also use a portion of the money to put towards education and signage along the trail to share information about the Manitoba environment, its wildlife and how to protect it.”* Hailey will be studying psychology through Queen’s University.

Janelle Ewert has volunteered as a coach for numerous teams, Sunday school teacher, and member of student council. These contributions began at Emerado Centennial School in 2010 and have continued through Northlands Parkway Collegiate, Winkler Christmas Cheer Board, Winkler Aquatic Centre, Winkler Minor Softball and Winkler Curling Club. She is passionate about mentorship and its benefits for youth and community. *“When I coach, I want my athletes to be successful and win; but more importantly like my coaches showed me, I want them to show sportsmanship, respect and positivity to their teammates and competition. This past December the team that I was coaching... were awarded with the Fair Play Award. This was an award that all the teams at the bonspiel voted on and it meant a lot to me that my team was recognized for what I as a coach was trying to teach them.”* Janelle is entering her program in communication and media at Providence University College.

Jayna Janzen has volunteered with youth programming since 2009. She has worked with Special Olympics, Pembina Valley Bible Camp, Emmanuel Mennonite Church, mission trips, and Northlands Parkway Collegiate. She is motivated by the benefits of building positive relationships with young women to impact their self-esteem. *“Ultimately [this] allowed me to become more aware of, and more empathic towards, the journey others may be on.... There is something unexplainably gratifying about serving others.”* Jayna is studying at Brandon University to become a nurse.

Jen Derksen has volunteered as a coach, Sunday school teacher, youth leader and more since 2007. Her volunteerism has taken shape through minor hockey and soccer, Winkler Cheer Board, Vocational Bible School and Special Olympics. More recently, her summer employment has connected her with the non-profit Winkler Horticulture Society and this has inspired her to grow in new ways. *“I have had the privilege of working alongside the Horticulture Society, who amaze me how many hours they dedicate out of their summers to give back to the community and beautify Winkler’s landscapes. I strive to mirror the quality of devotion to volunteering that [they display].”* Jen studies education at the University of Winnipeg.

Jessica Froese has volunteered to address youth mental health, poverty and spiritual development. She has participated with Peer Helpers, Student Council at Garden Valley Collegiate, a missions trip, AWANA and sporting events. This work has shaped her priorities and her focus is on alleviating suffering through awareness-raising of mental health and abuse. *“[T]here’s a stigma that depression, anxiety and many other mental illnesses should be kept a secret. This isn’t right. We should be speaking out about our experiences because people will never receive the help that they need by keeping everything to themselves.... [E]veryone deserves to be heard.”* Jessica is entering her second year of Business Administration at Red River College.

Katrina Epp has volunteered in a number of capacities including literacy and sports programming, grounds maintenance, retail and acting since 2007. She has been involved with organizations including Flatlands Theatre Company, South Central Regional Library, Camps with Meaning, Mennonite Central Committee, Pembina Threshermen’s Museum and more. Inspired by the philanthropic leadership of elders in her family, she testifies, *“Volunteering is about making an investment....I have realized in my short life that there is one guarantee when volunteering; my community grows, and I grow.... When a group of people working towards something that they are passionate about forms, they have a monumental effect.”* Katrina is entering her second year of Library Sciences at Red River College.



Noah Olfert has volunteered with youth programming since 2012. He has contributed to Navigate, Student Council (Northway Parklands Collegiate), and Winkler Minor Ball. Through a transformative missions trip in 2015, he learned that the most important reason to volunteer is not because we “should” but to meet essential needs in the community. He describes, *“One of the greatest gifts that I have received in life is the opportunity to work with children... It changed my perspective on privilege and outreach.... [T]he space would just fill up with smiles and laughter. I did it because all those kids really just needed a little love and attention. That’s what made it all worth it.”* Noah is entering his second year of studies in International Development at the University of Guelph.

Steph Derksen has volunteered with youth programming, fundraising, technical production and community development initiatives in Winkler since 2009, and in Winnipeg since relocating for school in 2014. Her places of voluntarism include the Golden Key Honour Society, The Meeting Place, Garden Valley Collegiate and Emmanuel Mennonite Church. Her motivation is to learn from others and to offer her skills to groups that match her interests. She tells us, *“[V]olunteering, within a community not only develops belonging but also creates a sense of responsibility to the community, under which it can flourish.... Working with people I would not normally meet has allowed me to develop relationships with people of many different ages, races, orientations, and socio-economic classes. These relationships have enabled me to appreciate the diversity within my community.”* Steph is entering the fourth year of her degree in education at the University of Winnipeg.

Tegan Penner has volunteered with youth since grade seven. She has participated in delivering programming with Navigate, Run Jump and Play, and Special Olympics. For her, this work is about building belonging. She shares, *“The feeling you get from talking, laughing and exercising with the athletes is a feeling that can never be beat. It’s like it is extra sunny within these four walls, everyone’s smiling twice as big... To see our community come together for such an amazing program is such a fulfilling feeling. It makes me feel proud to be part of a community that values and accepts everyone despite our differences.”* Tegan is entering her second year of sciences at the University of Manitoba.