



News Release | February 25, 2011

More High School Grads Face Escalating Financial Need

More grads than ever are looking for financial help to continue their education, and in the Central Okanagan, their financial need is escalating.

The Central Okanagan Bursary & Scholarship Society (COBSS) provides financial assistance to Grade 12 graduates of the Central Okanagan in order to support their pursuit of post-secondary educational goals, and this year's applications reveal a disturbing trend.

"Although the number of students applying for COBSS awards has increased steadily over the last few years, this year we have seen a huge increase in the number of students with considerable financial need," says Sandy Corrado, student counselor at Kelowna Secondary School.

"We really appreciate our donors," says COBSS President, Janet Klufftinger, "Because of their generosity, we are able to annually distribute over \$300-thousand to graduating high school students pursuing post-secondary education. We are now processing an unprecedented 681 student applications and, with the increased overall financial need, we are concerned that many deserving students will not be successful in their application for financial support this year. Unfortunately, many of these young people will be unable to achieve a post-secondary education without this assistance and we are currently inviting the community to help show our students that we are proud to invest in them."

Businesses or individuals who would like to find out more about giving through COBSS are invited to visit www.cobss.ca, email cobss@shawbiz.ca, or contact our office at 250-861-4980.

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(COBSS background information attached)

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COBSS Background Information

The Central Okanagan Bursary and Scholarship Society (COBSS) is a non-profit organization consisting of dedicated community volunteers and counselors from public and private schools within the boundaries of School District #23.

COBSS is committed to providing financial assistance to Grade 12 graduates of the Central Okanagan in order to support their pursuit of post-secondary educational goals.

In 2010, COBSS allocated 445 awards, totaling just over \$312,000. In the past ten years, COBSS has distributed more than \$3,150,000 to deserving students in our community.

This organization is quite unique, in that a student can be considered for numerous local bursaries, scholarships and awards by submitting one single application during their Grade 12 year. COBSS also provides an administrative and allocation hub for local donors, so they do not need to take on the annual job of managing the paperwork and distribution of each award. Recognition for the donor business, individual or organization is attached to the award, and donors are welcome to be involved in the choice of recipient and the presentation of the award certificate.

Only students attending an accredited post-secondary educational institution are eligible to receive a bursary, scholarship, or award. Eligible graduating students from the class of 2011 have now completed their COBSS applications and these are now being processed for award allocation in the spring.

Although the number of students applying for awards has increased steadily over the last few years, this year we have seen a huge increase in the number of students with considerable financial need.

Unfortunately, with the current challenging economic situation, many of our regular donors are struggling to meet their award commitment for this allocation cycle.

Coupled with the increased need of our local students, we are concerned that this situation will leave many deserving students unsuccessful in their application for support to pursue their post secondary education.

The cost of post-secondary education in North America has risen consistently over the last decades, and tuition, student fees, and books may total in excess of \$7000 per year for an undergraduate University degree. This amount does not include residence fees or additional living expenses.

The generosity of donors who recognize the achievements of the outstanding young people in our community, and who believe in the value of their continued education, would be greatly appreciated at this time.

If you would like to donate to this worthy cause, we encourage you to call 250-861-4980 and leave a message, e-mail us at cobss@shawbiz.ca, or visit our website at www.cobss.ca to download a donor contract or gain further information.