



## Annual Charity Tribute

# Diversify

April 1, 2023–March 31, 2024



Northern Lights  
College Foundation

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## About this Tribute

The Northern Lights College Foundation has served our communities for 49 years and continues to support our students, work with our donors, and support our institution and staff. We are excited to share our activities and accomplishments from the past 2023/2024 year in our annual report.

## On the Cover

Bannister Ford Executive Manager Aaron Powell and General Manager Mark Heselwood are presenting the Tread for Trades donation to Dean of Trades Rod Cork, NLC Foundation Executive Director Lindsey Borek, faculty member Skylar Dayus, and NLC trades students. Read more about Bannister on Page 12, and Tread for Trades on Page 14.

 1-866-463-6652  [foundation@nlc.bc.ca](mailto:foundation@nlc.bc.ca)  [nlc.bc.ca/nlc-foundation](https://nlc.bc.ca/nlc-foundation)

## Table of Contents

Pillars / Mission Statement / Objectives	3
Members of our Board	4
Message from the Chair	5
Meet our Team	6-7
Message from the Executive Director	8
Reflecting on 2023/2024	9
Student Stories	10-11
Connecting with Donors: Bannister Automotive Group Bursary	12
Annual Highlights	13-14
Ways to Donate to the Foundation	15
Message From The Dean of Trades and Apprenticeships	15
Thank you to our Donors	16

# Pillars

In 2021, the NLC Foundation established the four pillars of our strategic plan. The pillars encompass the Foundation's intent to:



Expand financial support and access for students.



Ensure sustainable internal capacity and resources.



Broaden the scope of support for teaching and learning.



Cultivate and engage donors.

## Mission Statement

The Northern Lights College Foundation is an organization dedicated to helping our students embark on their lifelong journey of learning. We create and build relationships with our donors – which, in turn creates unique opportunities for our students, college, and community.

## Objectives

Formed in 1981, the Northern Lights College Foundation has four main objectives:

- To support community projects and the promotion of higher education.
- To foster community interest in promoting higher education and training.
- To act as a recipient of trust funds in the form of monies or other properties.
- To grant monies to Northern Lights College for the designated use of scholarships and bursaries to be awarded to students.





# Members of our Board



**Tony Zabinsky**  
Chair  
(Joined 04/2016)



**Lou Surerus**  
Vice-Chair  
(Joined 11/2009)



**Todd Bondaroff**  
NLC President and CEO,  
(Joined 01/2022)



**Kristen Ghostkeeper**  
Ex-Officio NLC  
Board Representative  
(Joined 03/2024)



**Kayla MacDonald**  
Board Member  
(Joined 09/2021)



**Chante  
Patterson-Elden**  
Board Member  
(Joined 09/2022)



**Shawna-Marie  
Phillips**  
Board Member  
(Joined 05/2015)



**Aaron Powell**  
Board Member  
(Joined 09/2022)



**Jody Schmidt**  
Board Member  
(Joined 05/2022)



**Dustin Stirling**  
Board Member  
(Joined 03/2024)



**Lisa Ward**  
Board Member  
(Joined 09/2020)



**Katelyn Vandersteen**  
Board Member  
(Joined 03/2024)

# Message from the Chair



It has been an honour and pleasure to chair this board again this year. Our board has grown and more importantly, the development of our board strategies are in line with our mission statement. Working with the Foundation staff, the board members continue to be creative and open minded in our approach to identifying long and short-term needs and opportunities for the students that are enrolled in Northern Lights College.

As I attend various events and meet with business around the area, I continue to advocate and promote the Northern Lights College Foundation. I must commend our staff and our board, as they continue to champion and promote our inclusivity to anyone and any company who would like to contribute to the Foundation.

We continue to work with Northern Light College to ensure the students' needs and requests are handled. We continue to ensure that our contributors see the value of the Foundation and that they are creating a legacy that continues to support our Northern Lights College students.

Our efforts continue to grow a legacy for Northern Lights College, as our local donors, partnerships and alumni continue to see the value of our college, students and the Foundation.

As always, I want to thank everyone who has contributed to the Foundation and look forward to meeting and talking to you throughout the year.



*Sincerely,* Tony Zabinsky, chair

# Meet our Team



## Lindsey Borek

Executive Director

As the Executive Director, I oversee the Northern Lights College Foundation's Board of Directors and our office team. My other areas of focus include stakeholder engagement, project management, strategic planning, as well as recruitment and retention of alumni and donors. I also collaborate with my team to ensure that we are meeting the College's expectations to streamline the student journey and create community connections.

This past year, the roles and responsibilities of the Foundation have truly transformed — allowing us to learn and grow while connecting with stakeholders and supporting our students through their educational journey.



## Billie-Jo Crandall

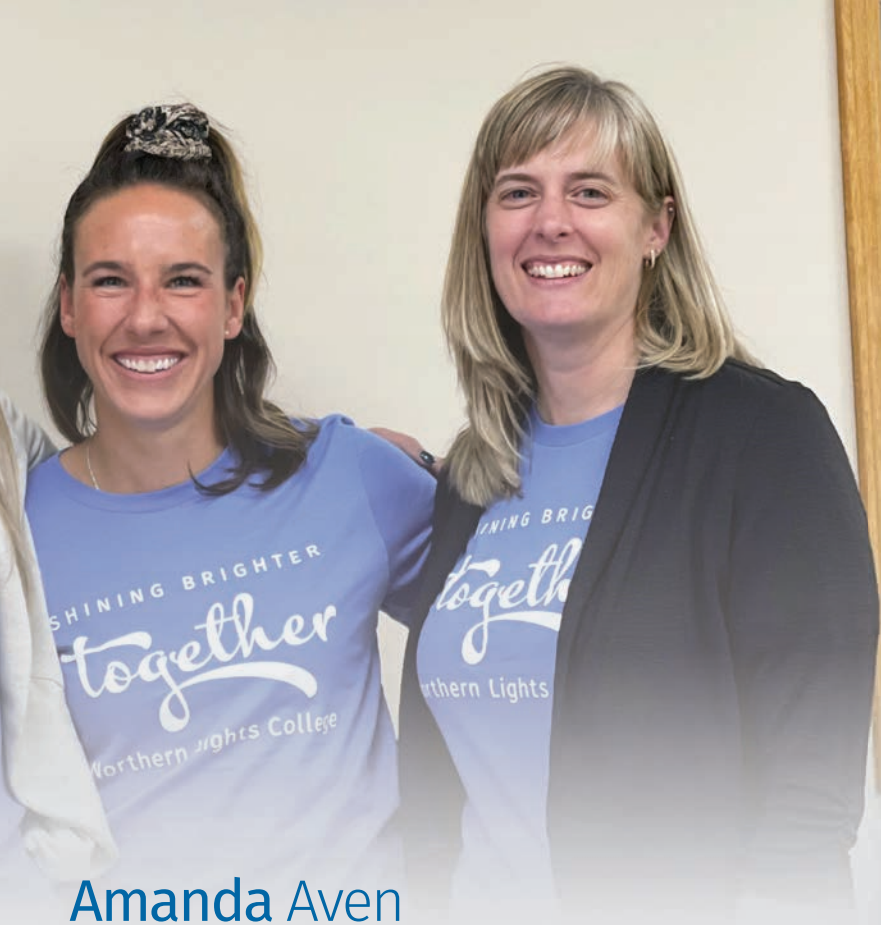
Donations Coordinator

As the Donations Coordinator, I am responsible for the receiving and processing of all donations and revenue generated for the Northern Lights College Foundation. Some of my duties include maintaining the NLC Foundation's donor database and award programs; preparing annual funding reports; managing our new award application platform, Astra; and working in partnership with our valued donors.

One of the most rewarding parts of my job is providing scholarships and bursaries to successful NLC award applicants, easing some of their financial responsibilities, and aiding them throughout their educational journey.







## Amanda Aven

Communication and Events Specialist

As the Communication and Events Specialist, I oversee the Foundation's communication and event logistics. The quarterly newsletter, features and story-telling pieces, donor and award recipient interviews, and presentation creation are part of my duties that help the Foundation succeed in achieving our goals and have a strong presence in the NLC communities!

I work closely with NLC's Marketing and Communications department, collaborating on media, design, and reporting projects. There are many new and exciting events occurring at the NLC Foundation all the time, and sharing the experiences of our students, donors, and staff connections is very fulfilling!

## Kayla Von Barga

Foundation Clerk

As the Foundation Clerk, I am typically the first point of contact for various inquiries from donors, students, and staff to the Northern Lights College Foundation. A large function of my role is to provide administrative support to the Executive Director. This role is transforming as the Northern Lights College Foundation grows, so each day offers an opportunity for learning and working with our team!

# Meet our Team



# Message from the Executive Director



As we reflect on the past year 2023/2024, I am filled with gratitude for the incredible support and dedication from our stakeholders, donors, students, board, and amazing staff. Your unwavering commitment has been instrumental in our success, and I am excited to share our achievements and future with you through this annual report.

The Foundation started to diversify in this past year, and we were able to adapt our structure and our function to become more efficient and effective.

This year has been nothing short of extraordinary. We were able to truly accomplish many things under our strategic pillars and continue to drive forward. To recap a few things we were able to achieve in 2023/2024:

## **Expand financial support and access for students**

- Continue to be a part of student orientations on all campuses to ensure students have the tools to succeed
- Created one-on-one opportunities with students, faculty, and staff on all campuses to educate them on awards and opportunities available and how to use ASTRA our award platform
- Work with our Indigenous Education department to create and develop funding opportunities to remove barriers for our students

## **Ensure sustainable internal capacity and resources**

- Built out our 50/50 platform and events for the Foundation
- Built a 5-year staffing model and plan
- Continued to build and implement policy

## **Broaden the scope of support for teaching and learning**

- Supported the NLC Fall Rodeo showcasing our NLC Rodeo Team and students
- Supported Fusion Face Off - an event showcasing our Culinary Arts program
- Created a partnership with Dawson Creek Exhibition Association and the City of Dawson Creek for our Carpentry students to build a barn at the Exhibition Grounds in 2024/2025

## **Cultivate and engage donors**

- Donor wall was installed in Dawson Creek with plans for Fort St. John, Chetwynd, and Fort Nelson underway
- Started planning Giving Day 2024
- Developing legacy giving within the Foundation including web content and brochure to support this

- Created a cultivation and stewardship plan for donors to better meet the need and share where we are at and what we are doing

This past year we were able to utilize the amazing talent within our team and continue to broaden the scope of what we do, while diversifying our processes as well as explore new platforms to help and give us the tools we need to truly be effective. Diversifying is something that is continuous but starting the process is what takes the most time and effort. With the right people, right tools, and right approach, we have been able to facilitate a positive change in the right direction that is achieving amazing results.

While we did face challenges, from adapting to new platforms, changing funding environments to meeting evolving community needs, and events, these experiences have only made us stronger and more innovative. Our team's resilience and creativity have been inspiring, and we have emerged from these challenges better equipped for the future.

Looking ahead to 2024/2025, we are eager to continue building on our successes and face more challenges. Our focus this coming year 2024/2025, will be on continuing to diversify the Foundation to increase potential for growth, create more organizational autonomy, and increase revenue and reduce risk, while expanding our outreach efforts, enhancing the impact of our programs, and exploring new collaborations to advance our mission, as well as increase our connections within communities, with our donors. We are excited about the opportunities the future holds and are committed to making an even greater impact in the communities we serve.

## **2024/2025 = Diversification and Connection**

I encourage you to stay involved in our mission. Whether through volunteering, donating, or sharing our story with others, your support is crucial to our continued success.

Thank you for being a vital part of our community. Together, we are making a meaningful difference, and I look forward to what we will accomplish together in the coming year.



*Sincerely,*

**Lindsey Borek**  
Executive Director





## Reflecting on 2023/2024






Each year, we look forward to celebrating our students' achievements with displays across our campuses. We are grateful for our donors, whose generosity continues to make a significant impact to our students. Congratulations to all award recipients in the 2023/2024 year!

### Number of New Awards Created

 New Endowments:	3
 New Annual Awards:	7
 New One-Time Projects:	7
 Total of New Awards Created:	17

### New Award Contribution Values

 Endowments:	\$58,800
 Annual Awards:	\$48,250
 One-Time Projects:	\$65,818
 Total Contribution Values of New Awards:	\$172,868

 Number of New Donors:	7
 Number of Students Assisted:	239
 Total Funds Distributed to Students:	\$299,730
 Emergency Funding Distributed:	\$15,175
 Capital Projects and Program Funding:	\$7,370

 Number of Applicants for Awards:	632
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 Increase in Number of Applicants From Prior Year:	28.19%
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# Student Stories



**Danika McPherson**

Recipient of NLC Foundation Entrance Award



## Testimonials

“It made it so I had less stress, gave me security in my own abilities and showed me that working hard does produce results. Winning these awards have given me the confidence to pursue bigger dreams.”

— Rachel Bolstad  
***Indigenous Student Academic Writing Award***

“It has impacted my interest to continue my education as I am a single mother and paying for college would have been impossible. With the award I am able to continue without impacting my family budget.”

— Emma Franks  
***Chetwynd Campus Staff Award***

**What three words describe your experience here at NLC?**

*Informative. Calm. Community.*

**What program did you take and why did you choose your program?**

*Hairstyle Foundation Certificate. I have a passion for working with people and I enjoy creating.*

**If you could go back to your first week of classes and give yourself advice, what would it be?**

*Relax, you will have a good time and learn more than you think.*

**You were the recipient for the NLC Foundation Entrance Award, how did that help you on your learning journey?**

*The grant was extremely helpful with the start of my schooling. Books and supplies can be quite expensive, so it was a massive help to have the ability to use the award to fund those parts of my education. Not having to worry about the extra costs on top of my tuition allowed me to just look forward to the class and focus on my studies.*

**What do you see yourself doing in the next year? Next five years?**

*Next five would be hopefully getting to my Red Seal. There's a lot of hairdressers here in Dawson Creek and a lot of them are only Level Two. There aren't a lot of Red Seal Hairdressers so I would love to get my Red Seal because then I can apprentice students coming out of college as well.*

**Do you have any words to share with current or future NLC students?**

*NLC is full of great people and experiences, and there are a ton of grants that everyone should apply for. The process via myApps and Astra was simple, which is great when you're busy with studies and classes. The experience of attending was positive and a lot of fun. My only regret is that I didn't jump on the chance to go on some of the trips and exchange programs, such as the journey to Japan, so definitely keep an eye out for those opportunities!*

# Student Stories

**What three words would you use to describe your experience here at NLC?**

*Shocking, supportive and very straightforward.*

**What would you tell another international student thinking of coming to NLC?**

*Just communicate and relax and assure them there's community here. Not just in the dorms or other students, but also in the community.*

**You were the recipient for a couple of awards this year, how did those help you on your learning journey?**

*Those awards were heaven sent. I have always wanted to maximize my college experience, so between studies, volunteering at school, being an officer at student council, and work; it takes a toll mentally and emotionally for me.*

*We were able to work full time that time, but hours were always cut at work, so these awards relieved some of the financial stress and allowed me to just focus on being a student.*

*One of the awards (the Paul Dampier Leadership Award), touched me a lot, because I did not apply for it. When I asked about it, it was awarded to me due to my leadership at school when all the while I thought I was failing at that miserably. To receive that award for me was one of the best thumbs up I have ever received in life.*

**Do you have any words to share with current or future NLC students?**

*In the words of Theresa Gladue "Ask for help. Ask The Creator for help because if you don't you struggle" (keynote speaker, Convocation, 2024). Check your Astra App, the app is The Creators way of sending help through the college; applying is you asking for help. It may feel like it's a lot of work to apply for those grants but there is a lot to be gained, just from the process of applying itself.*

*At the risk of sounding like a weird person, I will also say, put yourself out there and take space in life. When you will, trust me when I say that people see you, have taken notice and you will be surprised at the opportunities The Creator sends your way as thanks for being brave.*



## Jane Busa

Recipient of:  
Paul Dampier Student Leadership Award  
Eileen McKone Memorial Award  
NLC Student Association and Council Award



## Testimonials

"This award helped to contribute to my tuition, so that I can be one step closer in achieving my goals. It has motivated me to continue to pursue my goals and aspirations."

— Sandrea Anderson-Barnett  
**International Student Academic Writing Award**

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"Receiving awards and bursaries helped me tremendously to ease the financial burden during the school year. I felt quite honoured and still am deeply grateful for being able to receive such help in times of need. As well, receiving the awards encouraged me to work harder and keep pushing forward to reach my goals."

— Fatima Islamova  
**Dawson Creek Lions Club Award  
(Rod Roberts Memorial)**





## Connecting with Donors

### New award created with NLC Foundation – The Bannister Automotive Group Bursary

**This \$1,500 annual award is available for Dawson Creek students currently enrolled in the Automotive Service Technician Foundation program.**

For over 40 years, the Bannister family and its partners have been bringing quality automotive products and services to communities across Western Canada. With stores in the Okanagan Valley, Thompson-Nicola Region, Columbia-Shuswap, Peace Region, Yellowhead County, Edmonton Metropolitan Region, and the Fraser Valley, Bannister Automotive Group continues to lead our local communities in sales, customer services, and charitable initiatives. Our group has been a part of the Dawson Creek community since 2012.

Starting in 1979 with a single Pontiac Buick Dealership in Barrhead Alberta, Lyn Bannister, along with his wife and three children, have built a company that now employs over a thousand people in two provinces. They have a consistent message – we are a family business, with family values.

#### Why did you choose the NLC Foundation for your donation?

We chose to direct this donation to NLC because we believe in the transformative power of the education that this institution provides to students. Our hope is that this contribution will alleviate some of the financial burden that a student may face, allowing them to focus on their studies and excel in their trade. We are proud to be a part of the community of Dawson Creek and care deeply about this city and its people. We believe that a strong and skilled workforce in the automotive sector is vital for the community's well-being.

#### What do you hope the recipient gains from your award?

The automotive industry is a fast-paced, innovative, and rewarding sector. The recipient's career in this industry will be integral to keeping pace with advancements in technology and ensuring the efficiency and safety of vehicles. They will have a significant contribution to the advancement of this dynamic and evolving field. Our hope is that our recipient gains a thorough appreciation of the trade and continued success in their career.

#### Do you have any advice for our students?

Ask questions and get to know your fellow students. Do not wish time to go faster. Enjoy the moments.

**BANNISTER**  
DAWSON CREEK



# Annual Highlights

## Women's Under 18 National Championship

In November, the Foundation had the amazing opportunity to raise funds for NLC Athletics by hosting the 50/50 for the U18 Women's National Championship held at the Ovintiv Events Centre in Dawson Creek.

## Community Giving Fund

As a way to continue giving back to our community, the Northern Lights College Foundation has created a new fund.

The NLC Community Giving Fund allows your thoughtful contributions to make a tangible impact in our communities. This fund was developed to support various organizations within our service areas, ensuring donations are directed toward local charities and non-profits.

Within our college community, a dedicated effort was made to formulate a strategic plan that aligns with our values, and one of the key pillars identified in this plan is Community Connections. At NLC, we firmly believe in our role as a community hub, emphasizing our commitment to giving back to our community, particularly to those in need.

This year, thanks to the generous contributions from both staff and the wider community, the Foundation purchased \$750 in gift certificates from the NLC Salon and Spa to be donated to local organizations. The benefit is two-fold; our students will gain hands-on experience, while community members in need will receive considerate care gifts.

In January, the NLC Salon and Spa shifted into a fully operational business, offering appointments to community members. This not only allowed our students to showcase their skills but also provided them with insights into the business side of their trade.

The NLC Community Giving Fund donated \$250 in gift certificates each to Networks Ministries, Nawican Friendship Centre, and Mizpah Transition House. These organizations can distribute the certificates to individuals who can utilize them at the hair salon or spa, thereby receiving much-needed care during challenging times.





# Annual Highlights

## Tread for Trades

The snow may have been late, but Bannister Automotive in Dawson Creek was still able to donate \$7,370 to the Trades department, thanks to winter tire purchases and the Treads for Trades campaign.

Through November, Bannister Automotive collected \$5 from every tire purchased to support the trades programs at NLC. Aaron Powell, Executive Manager of Bannister, was grateful for this partnership.

“Being in the automotive industry, we are always looking to recruit and build and grow technicians, so we thought this was a good way we could give back to the program,” he said.

They presented the giant cheque to NLC trades students, staff, and leadership on January 24, 2024, in the Trades Training Centre. Mark Heselwood, Bannister’s General Manager, was impressed with the size of their donation.

“With the lack of snow, the amount of money we did raise was still astronomical. And we know we can build on it moving forward next year.” The donation will go towards equipment and other expenses for the NLC trades students, some of which are dual credit students from our local high schools.

Lindsey Borek, Executive Director for the NLC Foundation, came up with the idea. She knew the partnership made sense and was overjoyed with the success of this initiative.

“We know that hands-on learning is the foundation of our trades programs. With this donation we can ensure our students have the materials they need to get the most out of their trades education. We are eternally grateful to Bannister Automotive and look forward to working with them again.”

## 2nd Annual Intercollegiate Rodeo

On September 30 and October 1, 2023, NLC hosted the 2nd Annual Intercollegiate Rodeo In Dawson Creek. Thank you to our athletes, sponsors, and volunteers for making it a great success!





# Ways to Donate to the Foundation



The NLC Foundation values donations that promote the success of students and the College. We have many opportunities for donors in a variety of different donation types. Our donors can contribute by way of One-Time Awards, Annual Awards, Endowment Awards, Legacy Gifts, and Gifts-In-Kind.

## One-Time Award

(Minimum contribution of \$100) — A one-time donor's contribution would be awarded once.

## Annual Award

(Minimum contribution of \$100) — Annual donors make a contribution once a year in support of a specific interest at Northern Lights College.

## Endowment Award

(Minimum contribution of \$2,500) — Endowment donors make a gift of capital, which is held in trust, and the return rate (currently 4%\*) from the capital donation affords an annual award in perpetuity.

## Legacy Gift

You can make a difference for future generations of students with a gift in your will to Northern Lights College Foundation. Your legacy will have a powerful impact — increasing access to education, enhancing teaching and learning, and helping students succeed in our communities.

## Gifts-in-Kind

Donors contribute equipment, materials, and services to any program at Northern Lights College.

*\*Rate subject to change. Please contact the NLC Foundation to discuss current applicable rate of return on Endowment donations.*



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## Message from the Dean of Trades and Apprenticeships



The NLC Foundation has been extremely supportive of Trades programming and our students. In the past year, we've seen specific student awards, community service opportunities for our students, and new connections built with local businesses and organizations in several trade streams.

The NLC Foundation has the ability to approach and engage the communities we live in, in a way that brings individuals and businesses into the nuts and bolts of our programming. Those groups want to support our training, our students, and invest in the future of quality tradespeople.

This support comes through bursaries and awards, equipment donations, and projects within our community that our students and faculty can participate in and give back, as well as many other projects.

What the NLC Foundation also does is let our communities know who we are, what we're doing, and what we need to do it better. In my opinion, one of the greatest benefits is when the community joins in the fun and celebrates our students' achievements with us, knowing they had a part in it.

*Sincerely,*

Rod Cork  
Dean of Trades and Apprenticeships



## Thank you to our Donors

The Northern Lights College Foundation would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to our generous donors for their continuous support. Your contributions play a crucial role in enhancing educational opportunities and fostering student success at NLC. We look forward to continuing to work together to assist students on their lifelong journey of learning!

Annual report created in collaboration with the Northern Lights College Marketing and Communications Department.



Northern Lights  
College Foundation