



URBAN SPIRIT foundation

USF Mission Statement:

To provide opportunities for urban Aboriginal people on their journey to success through education and training, secondary and post-secondary scholarships and relief of poverty

Introduction

Urban Spirit Foundation is a registered charitable organization that exists to further the success and self-reliance of urban Aboriginal people in the Metro Vancouver region. In 2007, USF was created by Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society (ACCESS).

The Foundation's three core purposes include Education and Employment Training, Scholarship/Bursary Awards for secondary and post-secondary students and Short Term Assistance that provides grants to urban Aboriginal organizations for community-based projects that enable urban Aboriginal individuals and families to get back on track in times of need.

USF's Board of Directors is a diverse group of reputable individuals with strong connections and commitment to the urban Aboriginal community. The Board is represented by the following community leaders:



USF President
Susan Tatoosh
Vancouver Aboriginal
Friendship Centre Society



Vice-President
Jerry Adams
Circle of Eagles Lodge
Society



Secretary-Treasurer
Stewart Anderson
VanCity Savings Credit Union



Director
Lou Demerais
Vancouver Naive Health
Society



Director
George Chow
Community Member



Director
Ross Ramsey
Community Member



Director
Joe Mazza
Community Member



Director
Ken Clement
Canadian Aboriginal
Aids Network

Urban Spirit Foundation is overseen by Executive Director John Webster and staff. The office is located at 108 – 100 Park Royal, West Vancouver, BC.

Year in Review

Urban Spirit Foundation had a very busy and exciting year in 2016-17. The year began with scholarship presentations at the three school districts of Vancouver, Surrey and Burnaby, followed by short term assistance activities, the fourth charity golf tournament, a mini-Aboriginal Wellness event for National Aboriginal Day and finally, at the end of the year, the “Giving Tuesday” fundraiser with lunch and bake sales, raffles, and 50/50’s.

Fundraising Events



National Aboriginal Day Mini-Aboriginal Wellness Event at Trout Lake

ACCESS/USF Fourth Annual Charity Golf Tournament

The fourth annual charity golf tournament that ACCESS and USF organized for the benefit of USF was the most successful thus far. The golfers, staff, volunteers and some of the USF and ACCESS board members enjoyed the event at Country Meadows Golf Course in Richmond, BC on July 8, 2016 with contests and fundraisers, such as, the popular silent auction and the tooney toss. The 4th Annual Charity Golf Tournament was won by the Musqueam team of Wayne Sparrow, Clarke Sparrow, Gordon Grant and Jay Mearns.



JR LaRose, guest speaker was a former CFL with BC Lions



David Rabinovich, tournament's popular violinist

All guests were treated to a delicious evening buffet with relaxing background classical music by violinist David Rabinovich. ACCESS Trades success story, Steve Senyk, a 2nd level apprentice in metal fabrication, spoke about his background and his experience working with Seaspan in North Vancouver. JR LaRose, a former defensive back for BC Lions and a 2011 Grey Cup winner also spoke. He is from One Arrow First Nation in Alberta. He recounted his difficult years growing up and now inspires Aboriginal people with his personal tale of triumph.

A fifth annual tournament is planned for Friday, July 14, 2017 at Country Meadows. We anticipate even greater success at that tournament which is one of USF's largest fundraisers of the year.

Giving Tuesday Fundraiser – A Canada Wide Charity Fundraising Event

The Giving Tuesday fundraiser was held at all ACCESS offices. The competition was on between all ACCESS sites to see who could raise the most funds for Urban Spirit Foundation. The ACCESS Head Office won 1st prize trophy for raising the most funds for the Giving Tuesday Initiative on November 29, 2016 and took back the coveted trophy from the EAS Department.



Rob, Larry and Buddy from ACCESS Trades Department volunteering at Head Office Giving Tuesday event.

USF Core Programs

Scholarships Awards

Scholarships are provided to secondary and post-secondary Aboriginal students based on achievement. Urban Spirit Foundation disbursed scholarships to educational entities in 2016 with urban Aboriginal scholarships awarded throughout Metro Vancouver at Vancouver School District, Surrey School Board, Burnaby School District, Native Education College, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, and British Columbia Institute of Technology.

Vancouver School Board



Stewart Anderson, USF Board Member, poses with the two Vancouver School Board's USF scholarship winners, Amelia Johnson-Leo and Austin Charlie.

"I am writing to express my appreciation to you for making the Urban Spirit Foundation Scholarship possible. I am so honored to have been selected as one of the recipients for this scholarship. Your support will be beneficial for fulfilling my post-secondary dreams of becoming a Registered Nurse...Your generosity has inspired me to help others and give back to my community..."

- Destinee Harvey

Surrey School District

The two students awarded scholarships in 2016 were Destinee Harvey and James Sharma.



Burnaby School District

This was the first year that students from Burnaby School District were presented USF scholarships. The two recipients were Nick Dangeli and Destinee Morris.



Nick Dangeli and Destinee Morris were the first USF Burnaby School District Scholarship winners.

Native Education College

The three recipients of the USF Scholarship at Native Education College were Kevin Amestoy for male bursary, and the two single parent bursaries went to Jaryn Brazeau and Julia Stephens.

“Being a single parent of four wonderful children has its financial challenges but despite this bumpy road, the obstacles have given me the strength and motivation to continue to strive toward my goals.”

- Jaryn Brazeau

Nicola Valley Institute of Technology

This is the first year that USF has provided a scholarship to Nicola Valley Institute of Technology at the Burnaby Campus. The first recipients were Sarah Leggeat from Tsartlip/Tsimshian Nation and Isabelle Williams.



Sarah Leggeat, a Bachelor of Social Work student, and on the right, Isabelle Williams, a General Arts Associate student are the first recipients of USF's NVIT Scholarships.

“...Your bursary will assist me with the financial struggles that so many students experience...I am so grateful to be chosen this year...”

- Sarah Leggeat

British Columbia Institute of Technology

Two scholarships for carpentry foundation program were awarded in 2016 to Dustin Murphy and to Gwungai Brown.



BCIT Graduates of the Carpentry Foundation Program, Dustin Murphy and Gwungai Brown were the 2016 recipients of USF scholarships presented with Scholarship by USF Director George Chow.

Short Term Assistance

Back-to-School Backpack Program

Urban Spirit Foundation supports the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Children's Back-to-School Backpack Program. This initiative is geared toward providing school supplies for Aboriginal children in need in East Vancouver.



Children's Christmas Program

USF contributes towards gifting to the Children's Christmas Program that is held at the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre and provides Christmas food hampers and children's gifts to Aboriginal families in Vancouver. We would like to extend this program to include Aboriginal organizations in New Westminster and Surrey.

Employment & Training

USF supports ACCESS employment and training programs through fund-raising events and donations from foundations and corporations.

Contact

For further information on the Urban Spirit Foundation or to purchase Essential Skills DVDs and USF greeting cards and for on-line donations, please view our website at:

www.urbanspiritfoundation.com

or email us at:

info@urbanspiritfoundation.com

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