



THE IRVING K. BARBER

British Columbia Scholarship Society

ADMINISTERED BY THE VICTORIA FOUNDATION

## News Release

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### Expanded Support for Women/Indigenous Women in Technology Scholarships with Increased Funding

VICTORIA – A \$600,000 investment by the Province of BC creates 60 more scholarships over the next six years to support women and Indigenous women pursuing their studies in technology, mathematics, engineering and computer science-based programs.

The Irving K Barber BC Scholarship Society will now grant a total of 20 Women in Technology Scholarships (\$10,000 each) annually which is a significant increase from the 10 scholarships provided for the program's first three years. The new provincial funding also supports the Society in adapting application criteria to recognize COVID-19 impacts with a 2021 specific program. Designated scholarships for Indigenous women will increase at the same level.

*"When we invest in and support women to enter high demand fields like these, what we see is greater diversity in approaches to problem-solving in the classrooms of B.C.'s colleges and universities and, in turn, in workplaces,"* said Anne Kang, Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training. *"This is just one example of supports we're providing women so they can enter fields that provide fulfilling, well-paying careers and go on to contribute to novel innovations and critical advancements in society."*

Female students are currently under-represented in the study of computer science, engineering, and mathematics in BC and across the country. The Women in Technology and Indigenous Women in Technology Scholarship (WITS) Program was created in 2018 to encourage women to pursue education in these fields to expand diversity in these mathematics, computer science and engineering sectors. Since its inception, the WITS program has awarded \$300,000 to women studying at public post-secondary institutions across the province. The scholarships are offered to applicants based on their unique narratives, imagined future contributions and demonstrated academic excellence.

*"We search for women who are not only excelling in their fields but, who can become leaders and demonstrate the value of a diverse and inclusive workplace. These cohorts of bright and dedicated women will share and leverage their expertise and passion into the future."* explained Society Chair, Shirley Kamerling Roberts.

Recent WITS recipient Annie Hung currently studying civil engineering at the University of British Columbia explained why this scholarship program is so critical to addressing underrepresentation of women in these fields. *"I have been inspired to pursue a career focused on municipal engineering to meet specific needs of communities and improve our quality of life. This scholarship not only recognized my hard work, it has inspired my continuous motivation to be a role model as a woman in engineering, give back to my community and make a positive impact on future generations"*.

The programs of the Irving K. Barber BC Scholarship Society are administered by the Victoria Foundation. The Society delivers a series of scholarship and award programs that support B.C. post-

secondary students to achieve their educational goals. Programs include awards for students transferring between B.C. public post-secondary institutions, Indigenous students, and students undertaking study or work opportunities abroad. Since its inception, the Society has awarded more than \$23 million to over 7,000 students in B.C.

**Learn More:**

- Eligibility criteria and application information for 2021 Women in Technology Scholarships and Indigenous Women in Technology Scholarships are available at:  
<http://www.ikbbc.ca/womenintech>
- More stories and videos <https://www.facebook.com/IKBBC.Scholarship.Society>  
<https://www.instagram.com/ikbscholarships/>

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