

# Best in the West Student Awards Program

Creating transformational journeys for students from Canada's western provinces

Guided by Principal Suzanne Fortier's vision for a university that is open, connected and purposeful, McGill University is committed to attracting and welcoming an even richer range of students to its campuses by removing financial barriers to study.



Best in the West scholarship recipient **Morgan Sadler, BSc'18**, of South Surrey.

McGill's international student body, our global alumni community, and our place in a multilingual city committed to diversity are among our greatest strengths and points of distinctiveness.

After Quebec and Ontario, students from Western Canada form the largest population of Canadians enrolled at McGill. They continue a long history of deep and enduring ties to McGill, and are a source of pride to their alma mater.

Over the decades, McGill's connection to Western Canada has endured through its people - faculty and staff, students and alumni, from world-class geologist **Eric Mountjoy**, to Olympian **Jennifer Heil**; from Supreme Court Justice **Sheilah Martin**, to UBC Principal **Santa Ono**, to telecom entrepreneur **Darren Entwistle**.

The sheer number of Western Canadian students at McGill is a testimony to the enduring bond the University shares with Western Canada. In recent years, more than 2,000 undergraduate students annually come from the West, following in the footsteps of thousands of others who have come east to study at McGill. Many of them are here thanks to the **Best in the West Student Awards Program**.

## Best in the West Awards

In 2008, a transformative gift from McGill alumni and longtime supporters **Drs. Richard Walls, PhD'78, DSc'13**, and **Carolina J. Walls, BSc'85, DSc'13**, created and endowed the Best in the West Student Awards Program.

In creating the Best in the West Student Awards Program, the Walls had two goals. First, they wanted to help McGill attract and retain top students from Canada's western provinces - moving McGill closer to its ambition of enabling every academically qualified student to attend the University.



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They also wanted to encourage other Western Canadians to join them in supporting this initiative. And they have succeeded. Other donors have stepped forward to create additional scholarships and bursaries. Some of these awards are directed towards a specific faculty, while others remain open to students in any academic discipline. As well, more than 100 donors have contributed \$115,000 to the program through McGill's Annual Fund.

To date, 17 Best in the West Awards have been established by alumni across Western Canada, and 333 undergraduate students have benefitted from the Best in the West Student Awards program.



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*“I can say with certainty that were it not for the Best in the West scholarship, I would not be the person I am today.”*

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- Best in the West scholarship recipient Alex Mcintosh, BCom'16, of Regina

## Broadening support

“Best in the West Awards are a valuable form of recognition that endow young students with confidence as they enter one of the most exciting and transformative periods of their life,” says Duncan Reid, BA'00, BCL/LLB'03, of Vancouver, co-chair of McGill's Western Canada Regional Advisory Board alongside Robert Ritchie, BSc'67, of Calgary.

“McGill thanks all those who have enabled the Best in the West program to foster a dynamic Pan-Canadian exchange of ideas and cultures”, Ritchie says. “However, the need remains great, and philanthropic gifts from new donors will expand the number of opportunities for outstanding students from Western Canada.”

The achievements of our alumni have changed the world beyond our campuses, and their generosity has ensured that the generations that follow can achieve even more. As McGill celebrates its 200th anniversary, we are more committed than ever to providing our students with an education that prepares them to be both job-ready and future-ready, but we cannot do it alone.

Let's work together to align this giving opportunity with your personal interests and passions in order to expand the Best in the West program and tailor a new suite of awards. These will enable students from Western Canada to dream bigger, reach higher, and out-perform even the most ambitious expectations as they take on the challenges of this century and beyond.

## Philanthropic opportunities

Your support of the Best in the West Student Awards Program will enable even more talented young students achieve their full potential, across all levels of study, including but not limited to the following philanthropic opportunities:

### Undergraduate student support

- Entrance scholarships (prestige, major)
- Faculty in-course scholarships

### Graduate student support

- Fellowships (PhD, Master's, postdoctoral)
- Master's Leadership Award

### Need-based support

- Entrance bursaries
- In-course bursaries
- Memorial or honorary bursaries
- Loan funds

## Join us.

For more information, please contact:

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