

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Alberta Blue Cross® announces the Indigenous Scholarship program recipients

Alberta Blue Cross is pleased to announce the 9 exceptional recipients of the 2025 Indigenous Scholarship program.

"We've been privileged to support some incredibly deserving individuals in their education journeys through this program," says Brian Geislinger, senior vice-president of Corporate Relations and Community Engagement with Alberta Blue Cross. "This year we have received a record number of applications for our Indigenous scholarship program—and we're thrilled with the positive response to this program."

For more than 25 years, Indigenous students across Alberta have been able to reach their goals with the help of the Alberta Blue Cross scholarship program. These 9 scholarships of \$1,500 are awarded based on personal goals, financial need and community involvement. In 2025, the program received a total of 120 applications—47 more than the 73 applications submitted in 2024. Alberta Blue Cross will begin accepting applications for the 2026 program in September.

This year's recipients are as follows:

- **Katarina Tinquí:** Katarina is currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts for Criminal Justice at Mount Royal University. She moved from the Northwest Territories 5 years ago, making a difficult journey and adjustment to her new surroundings in her pursuit of becoming a member of the Calgary Police Service.
- **Jolene Gopher:** Jolene is attending Maskwacis Cultural College and is enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts in Cree Language program. She is active in her community and helps making skirts and traditional attire. Jolene is also a water keeper and wants to use her education to protect and reclaim her language and identity. Her goal is to develop workshops or language resources for her community.
- **Courtney Webber:** Courtney is in the Bachelor of Business Administration program at NAIT. She is a full-time student athlete and coached the team Alberta Beach Volleyball team in the North American Indigenous Games. She volunteers at Project Adult Literacy and wants to use her degree to host youth volleyball camps and build a volleyball program for Indigenous Youth to compete.
- **Leeander Young:** Leeander is studying to get his Indigenous Social Work diploma at Yellowhead Tribal College. He grew up in a care facility and has witnessed his family and community's struggles with addiction. He wants to help other youth and adults who are struggling with their mental health.
- **Roberta Disbrowe:** Roberta is working towards her Child and Youth Care Diploma at NorQuest College. She volunteers helping the unhoused with gathering and distributing warm items in the winter months along with water, bannock and biscuits in the warmer seasons. Her goal is to become a youth counsellor.

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- **Zoey Germain:** Zoey is attending the University of Alberta for her Aboriginal Teachers Education degree. She made a difficult relocation from the North, where she volunteered with the Yukon Women's Council Association with beading, rallies, traditional arts and crafts workshops. Zoey wants to use education to create inclusive classrooms that integrate Indigenous traditions, histories and perspectives into daily learning. She is looking to be a mentor and advocate for Indigenous youth.
- **Santana Manywounds:** Santana is attending the University of Calgary for her Social Work degree. She was taught traditional Blackfoot patterns from her grandmother who learned from her grandmother and incorporates these into her beadwork and moccasin-making. She took a year off to manage addictions and help her family as her mother had breast cancer. Santana wants to work in her community in either addictions or family planning and is also looking to complete a master's degree in social work.
- **Brandie Schnettler:** Brandie is a student in NAIT's Personal Fitness Trainer Diploma program. She is a single mom to a 3-year-old and has a social work background. Brandie is involved in her community (hosting round dances, ribbon skirt making, beading classes and powwow classes) and plans to use fitness training to help Indigenous communities.
- **Jayne Scout:** Jayne is working on her master's in Science in Management at the University of Lethbridge. She is the only Indigenous graduate student at the Dhillon School of Business and the second from Kainai nation to enter current program. She is an advocate for 2SLGBTQIA youth, has a transgender son and was asked to participate in the Blackfoot Gender Justice Collective. Jayne wants to use her education to affect change for Indigenous people, especially women and two-spirited people.

As Alberta's leading benefit provider, Alberta Blue Cross provides coverage to more than 1.8 million Albertans and has been ranked as one of Alberta's most loved brands. More information about the Indigenous Scholarship program can be found on the Alberta Blue Cross website at community.ab.bluecross.ca/programs/indigenous-scholarships.php.

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