

Post-Secondary Education Program sees explosive growth in annual applications.

WE FUND EXEMPLARY STUDENTS, BUT WHERE IS THE MONEY COMING FROM?

Ahneen Boozhoo

It is that time of year, post-secondary application time. It's a time when Georgina Island people submit funding applications and lay hopeful plans for achievement and success. In the past 10 years the numbers have certainly changed. This year it was a little startling to run our numbers. Change has been rapid in the last five years for a few reasons, but it was seemingly explosive this year.

Last year at our community Cold Water Trust meeting, as the post-secondary education (PSE) coordinator, I came armed with a power point of statistics and post-secondary details, asking our community to please make post-secondary funding a priority. The program was awarded \$241,000.00 On behalf of our students, thank you very much!

I am most happy to report that since that community decision, the PSE program has witnessed the strongest year ever in terms of student performance. I mean very strong performance. We have multiple students eligible for honour roll status at year end, and further, a strong majority of students turned in outstanding grades. This year after collecting first semester grade reports, I sat at my desk feeling absolutely inspired. Our band, our people, are achievers and I feel so positive about our future when I look those reports over.

This year our applications have increased exponentially – also wonderful, but challenging. When I began as post-secondary coordinator, we looked at 20 -35 funding applications in a year. This year, there are a total of 59 requests for post-secondary funding, totaling over \$875,000.00 in financial request.

There are also a total of 7 requests for Anishinabemowin studies – the single most popular program in our application process this year. It is the first time a single PSE program has emerged as a program of choice in 10 years.

The majority of 2014 PSE applications were from students wanting to complete their current PSE program, our continuing students. Most of those began their program last year. They will not be done until next year or within 2 or three years. The remaining applicants are a mix of students coming fresh from high school, mature students wanting to attempt a program for the first time, and mature students who successfully or unsuccessfully completed programs previously.

At our next Cold Water Trust meeting I will be

Proposed PSE Revenue for the PSE 2014 fiscal year includes ANNDC \$293,000.00, Cold Water community contribution \$271,000.00 (241,000.00 + 30,000.00) for a total of \$564,000.00

requesting the community continue to support our PSE program and respectfully request a \$30,000.00 increase. This will increase will allow formal approval of all of our continuing students, all 8 of our recent high school graduate applications, as well as four mature student applications (two Anishinabemowin applicants, and two others based on total application strength)

Please attend our April 29th meeting, I will be there to show figures and answer questions about the PSE program. Please show your support for the proposed award to the PSE program, it's showing itself to be such an inspiring and solid investment in our future!

Greer Atkinson, Education Manager