

Irving K. Barber B.C. Scholarship announcement

Advanced Education Minister Murray Coell
Vernon
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Check against delivery

It is an honour to be here today with such a distinguished group representing our public post-secondary system. I want to thank everyone who has come out to hear about this opportunity for students in British Columbia. And I want to thank Ike Barber, whose drive and vision have supported this opportunity from the beginning.

Students, post-secondary institutions, the provincial government, residents of our province – we all have good cause to be grateful to Ike Barber. I know I speak for the Premier and all of government when I say thank you for your ongoing commitment to British Columbia – and particularly to the students of this province. It is your generosity that is allowing UBCO to build a school of arts and science, and a learning centre interface with UBC Vancouver.

In fact, it is your generosity that created the UBC learning centre in the first place! And it is your generosity behind the diabetes research endowment fund at UBC Vancouver, and the human islet transplant lab at Vancouver Hospital, and the enhanced forestry lab at the University of Northern B.C.

But there is more driving Ike Barber than his amazing generosity. He has a desire to give back to the province where he started as a log sorter and grader, then took a chance on buying two sawmills, and built his fortune from there. He also has vision. And that vision has helped shape the scholarship we're celebrating today.

Ike Barber wanted students to be inspired to take advantage of the many and varied learning opportunities this province has to offer. He wanted exceptional students to be rewarded for their commitment to their school and their community for years to come. And he wanted to capitalize on B.C.'s transfer system, the best in North America – and some say one of the best in the world.

On average, 4,000 students transfer **from** B.C. colleges, university colleges, and institutes to our province's world-class universities each year. But they also transfer **to** colleges, university colleges, and institutes to take their degrees.

Choosing which of our institutions to attend is a tough decision for many students to make – not to mention which program they should take. It is also one of the most exciting times in a person's life. Post-secondary education is so much more than picking courses and acquiring credits. It's also a chance to gather some valuable life experience.

Some of you will remember struggling with registration and admission procedures – and finally navigating them successfully. Or getting lost trying to find a class your first week on campus. But eventually you figured out all the systems – how to get accommodations, how the library works, where to get your student card, how to handle your new freedom and still get your assignments done on time.

The very act of working through these new challenges prepares students to handle the things they'll do after they graduate – like paying taxes, getting a mortgage, or travelling abroad.

Students acquire these life skills no matter which post-secondary institution they decide to attend. What makes B.C. a great place to get an education is the variety of institutions to choose from, and the wonderful communities they are in.

That's why I am so pleased about this scholarship. It provides an incentive for students to use the transfer system, learn about their options, make choices, and gain that vital life experience. And \$5,000 is a good start in any new community, on any new campus!

This scholarship also combines academic achievement with a student's contribution to the institution and community. Students develop the values and skills of citizenship through participation. With this scholarship, they are rewarded for dedicating their time to their institution and local community.

Wherever students decide to start their education, they are making the right decision by pursuing higher learning. This scholarship will open even more doors to students who are transferring to another institution to complete their degrees. I am looking forward to August, when we'll hear about the first students to win the Irving K. Barber B.C. Scholarship.

Thank you.