

Dear Sponsor of the *Building Brighter Futures Bursary*,

My name is Maison Leitch and I am a grateful recipient of this award in the amount of \$50,000. Words cannot adequately express my gratitude for your generous support. I will begin by sharing a little bit about myself: I am a Métis first-year medical student at the University of Alberta set to graduate in 2023. So far, the experience has been incredibly fulfilling. I love learning medicine and have been able to maintain a high standard of academic performance. I am involved as a member of the *Indigenous Medical and Dental Student's Association*, and co-leader of the *Medical Student's Mountaineering Club*. Staying physically active is important to me, so I make time for intramural volleyball, curling, weightlifting and the occasional ice climbing trip.

In the years leading up to medical school, I completed a BSc in General Biology. After graduation, I decided to work in the human services for a few years. This career took me to Rocky Mountain House where I served as live-in Team Leader of Clearwater Lodge, a complex needs group-care program for indigenous youth. I eventually found myself managing the facility as Program Coordinator. During my time off, I volunteered with Rocky SAR (Mountain Rescue) and did a lot of recreational backpacking and alpine climbing.

A career in medicine was always a dream of mine so I was ecstatic to receive an acceptance letter last May. However, this good news did not come without its worries. I was able to work my way through the previous degree and come out debt-free. Due to the greater time-commitment of studying medicine, the outcome would involve incurring a great deal of student debt; otherwise, I would need to prioritize work over studies to stay in the black. The bursary which you sponsored has greatly reduced the financial burden; I am able to direct the bulk of my time and energies into learning medicine to a high standard. I am also hoping to participate in research this summer which is not financially favorable compared to conventional work and your contributions will help in this regard. After completing my MD in 2023, there will be several more years ahead in a residency program. I am particularly interested in Family Medicine, Emergency Medicine, and Pathology.

When I am a practicing physician and have the financial means, I intend to give back so that future students can similarly benefit. Thank you again for the generous support; I am forever grateful. Merci beaucoup!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maison Leitch". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "M".

Maison Leitch