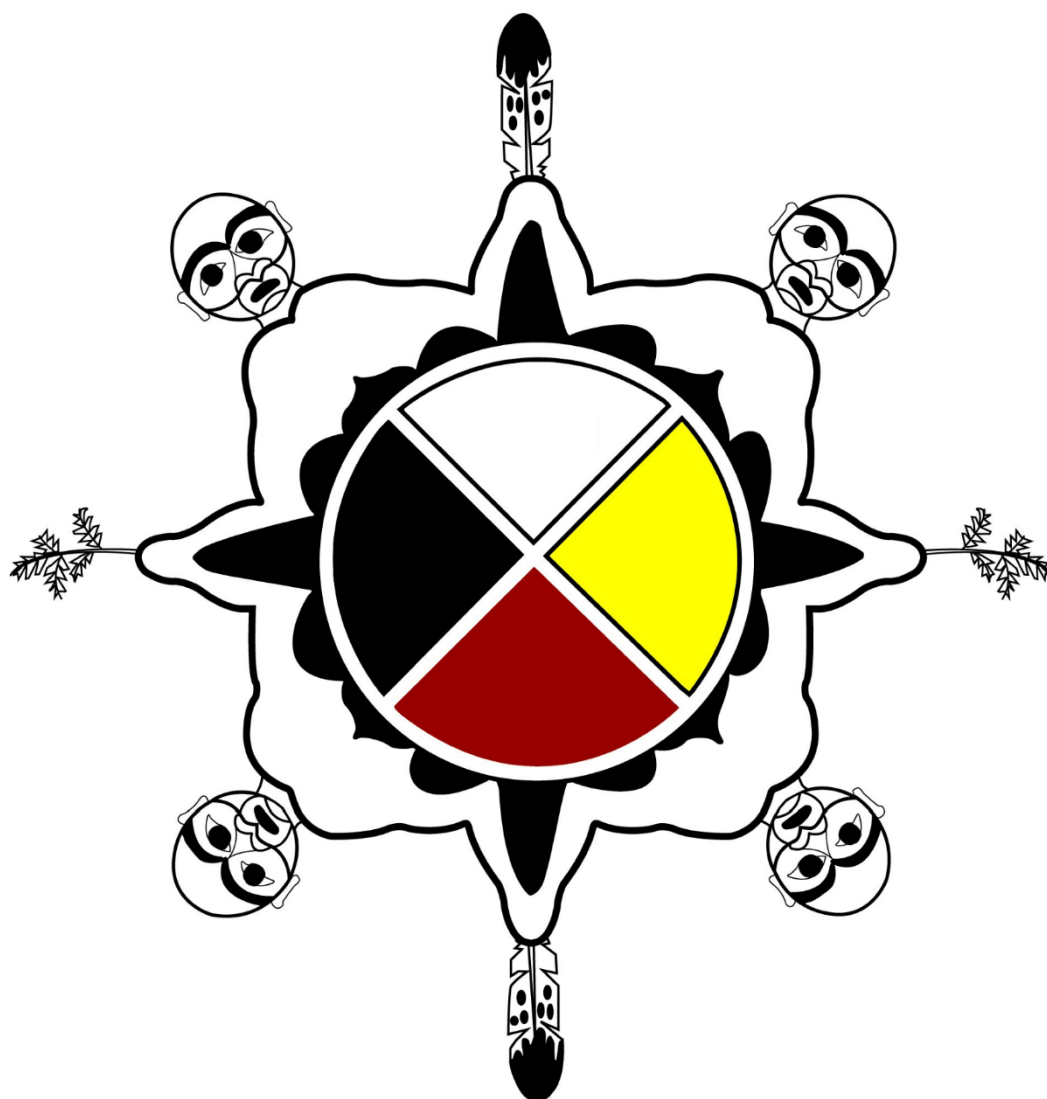


**Indigenous Education Department  
Greater Victoria School District No. 61**

# Graduation Profiles

## June 2022



**The Greater Victoria School District wishes to recognize and acknowledge the  
Esquimalt and Songhees Nations on whose traditional territories we live, we learn,  
and we do our work.**

## Acknowledgement of Retirement 2021

### Paola Bell



The Indigenous Education Department Raises Our Hands to honour Paola Bell, who retired in June 2021 after 12 years as our department's administrative assistant. Paola was a valuable member of the Indigenous Education Department family and was well-known in the district as the gatekeeper to the Indigenous Resource Library, the Cultural Integration Program, and anything to do with our department. Inside the Department she was a tireless support to leadership and staff alike. She kept us all on track and managed our budgets, newsletters, meetings, grad planning - you-name-it, she did it! We loved her laugh and kindness, she had an incredible work ethic, a ready sense of humour, and a huge heart. While we honoured her at our year end last June, we wanted to include an acknowledgment to her in this year's Grad Profile Booklet because this is the first year that she didn't create it! Hope you're enjoying your retirement, Paola, you certainly earned it! All the best from your IED Family!



# 2022

## Graduation Profiles

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#### **Indigenous Education Department**

*Greater Victoria School  
District  
556 Boleskine Road,  
Victoria, BC V8Z 1E8  
250-475-4124*

#### **Graduation Profile Booklet:**

*Layout & Design: Indigenous Education Department*

## **Thank you to the following Sponsors of the 2022 Indigenous Scholarships:**

- Autumn Maxwell, Cold Comfort Culinary & Trades Scholarships (\$8,000 total)
- Dr. Rose Lenser, First Nations into Science Scholarship (\$1,000)
- Hulitan Family & Community Services Society, Nella Nelson Legacy Academic Scholarship (\$1,000)
- Karrie Hill, Lifting Each Other Up Scholarship (\$1,000)
- Lucas Bell Graphic Design, The Creative Futures Scholarship (\$2,000)
- M'akola Development Services, Judy Bourne Memorial Scholarships (2 x \$1,600 each)
- Indigenous Education Department/GVSD61:
  - Freda Shaughnessy Sports/Academic Scholarship (\$1,000)
  - Lacuse Robert Warren Trades Scholarship (\$1,000)
  - Grade 8 & 10 Student Achievement Awards

**Total Scholarship Sponsorships: \$19,000**

### **Grade 8 Salmon Achievement Awards 2022 (2 x \$100 each)**

**Markelly Webster – Colquitz Middle School  
Shyla-Lynn Short – Glanford Middle School**

### **Grade 10 Salmon Achievement Awards 2022 (4 x \$150 each)**

**Jacob Mitchell – Spectrum Community School  
Elizabeth Rose – Victoria High School  
William Falconer – Mount Douglas Secondary  
Mattigan Waldron – Victoria High School**

### **2022 Indigenous Education Recognition Ceremony Grad Speakers**

**Keelin McNeil – Reynolds Secondary School  
Kyline Whitney – Spectrum Community School**



# 2022 Scholarship Recipients



## **Dr. Rose Lenser First Nations into Science Scholarship**

*Dr. Rose Lenser is a family physician currently practicing in Victoria, B.C. She was born and raised in Northwestern B.C. (Terrace) where she graduated from high school. She received a Bachelor of Science [Biology] degree at Concordia University in Montreal and her Doctor of Medicine degree from the University of British Columbia in 1999. Dr. Lenser is proud of her Wet'suwet'en heritage and is a member of the Squamish Nation. Her scholarship is offered to a student aiming for a degree in Science or Health Careers. The winner of this scholarship is:*

### **Kai Heaton**

Kai is graduating from Spectrum Community School and has ancestry from the Lytton First Nations. Kai plans to attend the University of Victoria working towards an undergraduate degree in Biology with and end goal of entering medical school to become a doctor. Kai is described as an outstanding and hard- working student. He has exceptional grades and carries Traditional Teachings with him, a wonderful combination! Congratulations, Kai and all the best in your future studies!

## **Judy Bourne Memorial Scholarships**



*The Judy Bourne Memorial Scholarships are awarded in recognition of Judy Bourne, an inspirational woman of Cree Ancestry. Judy was a devoted wife and mother of six children. She was well known for her athletic and coaching abilities, particularly as a nationally and internationally recognized volleyball coach. The Judy Bourne Memorial Scholarships recognize students who*

*demonstrate good scholastic ability, community involvement and leadership abilities and are sponsored by the M'akola Development Services. The winners of these scholarships are:*

### **Kai Heaton**

Kai is graduating from Spectrum Community School and has ancestry from the Lytton First Nations. Kai plans to attend the University of Victoria working towards an undergraduate degree in Biology with and end goal of entering medical school to become a doctor. Kai is described as an outstanding and hard-working student. He has exceptional grades and carries Traditional Teachings with him, a wonderful combination! Congratulations, Kai and all the best in your future studies!

### **Chelsea Blenkinsop**

Chelsea is graduating from Reynolds High School and has Cree and Métis Ancestry. She plans to attend Camosun College and has enrolled in the Dental Hygiene Program. She would like to eventually obtain a degree in Dentistry. Chelsea is described as bright, kind, quiet, mature and humble. Congratulations, Chelsea and all the best in your future plans

## **Cold Comfort Scholarships**

*On Canada's 150 birthday, a local business called Cold Comfort Ice Cream wanted to do more to acknowledge that First Peoples have been connected to the land we know call Canada since time immemorial. To raise attention they displayed a sign on their business that said "Cold Comfort would like to acknowledge that we have been working on the traditional Lekwungen territory of the Esquimalt and Songhees people for the last seven years. INDIGENOUS PEOPLE HAVE BEEN STEWARDS OF "OUR" HOME ON NATIVE LAND SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL. Moving forward, in the spirit of reconciliation, all proceeds from sales of scooped ice cream at Cold Comfort on July 1<sup>st</sup> will go towards creating a culinary bursary for an Indigenous high school student in our community." It was immediately obvious hundreds of people felt similarly and wanted to help. So on top of ALL sales on that day many from the Victoria community donated towards the Cold Comfort Culinary Arts & Trades Scholarships. The winners of these scholarships are:*

### **Keelan Williams**

Keelan is graduating from Spectrum Community School and has ancestry from the Tsawout Nation from Wsánéc Nation. Keelan is planning to attend Camosun College in the fall and enter the Culinary Arts Program to obtain a Red Seal Chef distinction. Keelan is described as a dedicated, hard-working person with exemplary work standards. We look forward to eating at your restaurant one day! Congratulations, Keelan and all the best in your post-secondary studies!

### **Robin George**

Robin is a graduating from Esquimalt High School and is a member of the Songhees Nation. Robin plans to attend Camosun College in the Culinary Arts Program to become a professional chef. She is described as a "person with passion, love, commitment and a truly grounded sense of who she is as a person walking in two worlds". Congratulations, Robin and all the best in your future plans!

### **Kylina Whitney**

Kylina is graduating from Spectrum Community School and has Métis Ancestry. Kylina plans to attend Camosun College to pursue a Bachelor of Science Degree in Kinesiology. She has an interest in physical well-being and is a strong student. Congratulations, Kylina and all the best in your future studies!

### **Chelsea Blenkinsop**

Chelsea is graduating from Reynolds High School and has Cree and Métis Ancestry. She plans to attend Camosun College and has enrolled in the Dental Hygiene Program. She would like to eventually obtain a degree in Dentistry. Chelsea is described as bright, kind, quiet, mature and humble. Congratulations, Chelsea and all the best in your future plans!

### **Gordon Spencer**

Gordon is graduating from Lambrick Park Secondary School. He has Cree ancestry and is planning to attend Camosun College in the field of Arts. He has a particular interest in media arts and film. One reference describes him as having "the potential to go far in film, and I honestly couldn't think of a more deserving student". Congratulations, Gordon!

## Cold Comfort continued...

### Atticus Gilchrist

Atticus will be attending post-secondary at Simon Fraser University in the fall. He will enter the School of Contemporary Arts and pursue a Bachelor of Fine Arts with a Major in Music. "I strongly believe in music's ability to be medicine"! Very wise words! He would like to thank his family and friends for their support and encouragement through the years. Congratulations, Atticus, and all the best in your future endeavors!

### **Lifting Each Other Up Culinary Arts & Trades Scholarship**

*On Canada's 150 birthday, two local businesses; Deadbeetz Food Truck and the Hot and Cold Café, wanted to do more to acknowledge that First Peoples have been connected to the land we know call Canada since time immemorial. As an act of reconciliation, on Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> birthday Deadbeetz displayed a sign on their business that said "Deadbeetz would like to acknowledge that we have been working on the traditional Lekwungen territory of the Esquimalt and Songhees people. WE RECOGNIZE THAT INDIGENOUS PEOPLE HAVE BEEN HERE SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL. Moving forward, in the spirit of reconciliation, a portion of our profits from this event will create a culinary bursary for an Indigenous high school student in our community." The Hot and Cold Café also felt strongly about this, and the two businesses came together to create the "Lifting Each Other Up" Culinary Arts and Trades Scholarship. This Scholarship is for an Aboriginal woman or two-spirited person entering a culinary/trades/ or business careerfield. The winner of this scholarship is:*

### Robin George

Robin is a graduating from Esquimalt High School and is a member of the Songhees Nation. Robin plans to attend Camosun College in the Culinary Arts Program to become a professional chef. She is described as a "person with passion, love, commitment and a truly grounded sense of who she is as a person walking in two worlds". Congratulations, Robin and all the best in your future plans!



## **Freda Shaughnessy Sports/Academic Scholarship**

*Freda was from the Kwicksutaineuk Nation and a champion of the Kwakwaka language. She was originally hired by the Victoria school district in 1979 to teach the language at S.J. Willis Junior High. Since that time she continued to volunteer her time to sit on our district Education Advisory Councils putting in over 25 years to work on making a difference in the Aboriginal Education world. She was always concerned about her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren being supported at the schools. Freda also shared the voices and perspectives of the many youth she worked with at the Youth Custody Center and as a volunteer for street youth downtown. She exemplified dedication, commitment and honor and she role modeled what it means to be of service to the community. Freda was known as the T-Bird momma as she supported the T-Bird Soccer Clubs for 40 years. The winner of this scholarship is:*

### **Donovan Asp**

Donovan is graduating from Oak Bay Secondary School and has Cree ancestry from the Tahltan First Nation. Donovan will be attending the University of Victoria in Social Sciences with a focus on Biology and Psychology. Donovan was the team captain for Oak Bay High's Ultimate Frisbee team. Congratulations, Donovan, and all the best in your future endeavors!

## **Lacuse Robert Warren Trades Scholarship**

*Lacuse Robert Warren was a member of the Songhees First Nation and part of the Albany family clan. He attended Esquimalt High School and at the age of 17, enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force. Robert dedicated his life to both non-status and status First Nations. Robert negotiated with the Greater Victoria School District for two years regarding the Victoria Native Indian Education Commission and Victoria Native Education Council. In 1980, his negotiations lead to the development of the Native Indian Education Division, now known as Aboriginal Nations Education Division. Robert facilitated the 1980 inaugural First Nations Graduation Ceremony at Pearson United World College. The winner of this scholarship is:*

### **Alexander Isaac**

Alexander is graduating from Victoria High School and is a member of the Lytton First Nations. Alexander is described as a hardworking and helpful student and he will continue his education at Camosun College in the trades programs. Congratulations, Alexander and all the best to you in your future studies!



## **Nella Nelson Legacy Academic Scholarship**

*This scholarship is sponsored by Hulitan Family & Community Services Society. It is in recognition of Nella Nelson, Klaapalasugwela/Maxwagila. Nella is a Kwakwaka'wakw teacher, leader, mentor, advocate, mother, grandmother and great grandmother. She is born within the 'Namgis Nation of Alert Bay, B.C. and a member of the Tsawataineuk Nation at Kingcome Inlet. In 1972, Nella moved to Victoria to study at Camosun College and soon transferred to UVIC to pursue studies in Anthropology and then Education. Upon graduation, Nella began a lifelong career as a teacher with the Greater Victoria School District working as a high school history teacher and counsellor for ten years at S.J. Willis Junior High, Central Junior High and Victoria High School then becoming the District Administrator for the Aboriginal Nations Education Division in 1988. In June 2018 Nella retired after over forty years of ground-breaking and thriving educational leadership within Victoria and throughout the province. The winner of this scholarship is:*

### **Keelin McNeil**

Keelin is graduating from Reynolds High School and has ancestry from the Tahlitan Tlingit Nation. She is described as “a person who exemplifies hard work, compassion, perseverance and grace”. Keelin is planning to attend Camosun College in the Arts and Science Studies program with an end goal of becoming a nurse! Congratulations, Keelin and all the best in your post-secondary studies!

## **The Creative Futures Scholarship**

*Lucas Bell is a local self-employed graphic designer and artist who graduated from Mt. Douglas High School in 2010. He attended the University of Victoria and obtained his Bachelors of Fine Arts with Distinction Degree in 2015. Lucas wanted to share his success by giving back to the community and to support a student who is pursuing a post-secondary degree in any creative field, including visual art, graphic design, music, theatre, writing, poetry, media arts or computer programming. The winner of this scholarship is:*

### **Gordon Spencer**

Gordon is graduating from Lambrick Park Secondary School. He has Cree ancestry and is planning to attend Camosun College in the field of Arts. He has a particular interest in media arts and film. One reference describes him as having “the potential to go far in film, and I honestly couldn't think of a more deserving student”. Congratulations, Gordon and all the best to you in your future endeavors!

### **Donovan Asp**

Donovan is graduating from Oak Bay Secondary School and has Cree ancestry from the Tahlitan First Nation. Donovan will be attending the University of Victoria in Social Sciences with a focus on Biology and Psychology. Donovan was the team captain for Oak Bay High's Ultimate Frisbee team. Congratulations, Donovan, and all the best in your future endeavors!

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE WINNERS!**



# The Graduates of 2022



## *Esquimalt High School*



### **Lakota Abbott** **Esquimalt Nation**

Lakota enjoys being with family and her children. She plans to travel one day but for now is focused on raising her children. She would like to thank Rachel Trebilco, Aly Waddle and Jr. for their support and encouragement with her school work. She is inspired by her sister, Nora because she's always there to help, and knew how to make her feel better. Her advice to other students, *"Don't do bad things, just focus on what's important to you. You don't need phones but you need an education!"* Congratulations on your graduation and all the best in your future!



### **Marcus Atleo-George** **Songhees and Ahousaht Nations**

Marcus plans to work and do some schooling in the area of automotive. He enjoys being with family and playing lacrosse and working out. He would like to thank his family, his aunty Mina, Rachel, Char and Brian for their support and encouragement with his schooling. He looks up to his older cousins who have graduated and sees them as role models. His advice to other students: "Show up to school a lot because it really affects your grades and your future. Showing up will make your graduation easier". Congratulations, Marcus!



**Caroline Dick-Wells**  
**Songhees and Lil'wat Nations**

Caroline plans to become a kindergarten teacher! She loves spending time with her family, especially her mom. She would like to thank her family, and many staff at Esquimalt High for the support and encouragement in school. Her advice to other students: "Don't skip class and listen to your teachers. Ask for help if you need it and don't let other people bother you and prevent you from going to your classes". Wise words! Congratulations, Caroline!



**Robin George**  
**Songhees Nation**

Robin plans to attend Camosun College in the Culinary Arts Program. She would like to thank Rachel, Brian Williams and Paola Madrigal for their support and encouragement with school. Her advice to other students is: "Education is really important so try to go to class and do your best at school". All the best, Robin, and Congratulations!



**Rosaleen George**  
**Songhees Nation**

Rosa plans to work at the Malahat Skywalk and one day return to school to become a teacher. She would like to thank Rachel, Paola and Brian at Esquimalt for their support and encouragement. She would like to thank Brian Williams in particular for inspiring her to want to help kids! Her advice to other students: "Go to Class!" Good advice! Congratulations, Rosa and all the best in your future endeavors!



**Caleb Knoll**  
**T'Souke First Nations**

Caleb Plans to join the Canadian Army and enroll in the Royal Military College in Kingston, Ontario. He enjoys cooking and has been part of the culinary arts program at Esquimalt. He would like to thank his mom and dad, his brother and Chef Aris for their support and encouragement. He especially acknowledges his mom for her commitment and support to help him succeed in life. His advice to other students: "Keep going. Work hard and always be yourself". Congratulations!



**Alexandra Louie**  
**Ahousaht Nation**

Alexandra hopes to travel after school is finished. She has enjoyed the culinary arts program at Esquimalt. She would like to thank her mom, aunties and uncles, and school staff for their support and encouragement. Her role model has been her mom "or Johnny Depp because they know how to handle things"! Her advice to other students: "No matter what, please find ways to express yourself"! Congratulations, Alexandra and all the best in your future endeavors.



**Diamond Marsdon**  
**Coast Salish, Stz'umiuus, T'sawout**

Diamond loves music, visual and performing arts, and archery. She plans to work, save money, travel, take classes and just enjoy life for a while. She would like to thank her family, and school staff for all their support and encouragement through the school years. She appreciates that they've helped her to be a role model to herself and others. Her advice to other students: "School and life isn't about perfection, it's about joy and improvements". Congratulations, and all the best!





**Daniel Page**  
**Cowichan Tribes**

Daniel plans to work after graduation. He volunteers his time to do community clean up and dedicates his Sunday mornings to doing this! He would like to thank Ashley, Ms. Hermanson, Ms. Pierik, Chris Courchene and Brian for their support and encouragement. He acknowledges Amber and Taryn as people who care for him. His advice to other students: "Don't give up and keep trying"! All the best in your future plans! Congratulations, Daniel.



**Chris Peters**  
**Pacheedaht**

Chris would like to travel to Japan after graduation. He will be continuing with his adult support program next year and enjoys playing video games and watching YouTube. He would like to thank Mr. Rak and David for their support and encouragement at school. His advice to others: "keep going"! Congratulations, Chris!



**Nicholas Sam**  
**T'Sartlip Nation**

Nick plans to work after graduation and eventually earn a trade. His role model has been his late grandfather, Jim. He helped push me to finish school and he was a hard worker who always pushed himself to do his best. His advice to other students: "Take part in culture when you can and help others in need". Congratulations on your graduation, and all the best in your future!



**Emily Shilling**  
**Mohawk**

Emily plans to work after graduation and eventually go to post-secondary to become a support worker. She would like to thank Nina for her support and encouragement whenever needed. Her role models have been her parents who inspire and support her. Her advice to others: Always try your best no matter what"! Congratulations, Emily!



**Katerra Webster-Modeste**  
**Esquimalt**

Caterra would like to travel after high school graduation. She loves to play soccer, bake, and take photographs. Her favorite teachers at school were Rachel Trebilco, Ally Hoffman and Sue Brousseau and she would like to thank her mom for all her support and encouragement throughout the years. Her advice to others: "Stay in school, and do your best"! Congratulations, Caterra!



**Angus Alexander**  
**N'Quatqua (St'at'imc or Lillooet)**

Angus plans to take a year off to travel and work before considering his post-secondary path. His favorite teacher was Mr. Prevost because he was a fun person to be around! Angus would like to thank his whole family for their encouragement and support throughout his school years. His role model is his grandpa Glenn "he's always been there for me and gives great advice and loves to tell stories". His advice for other students: "Make sure to stay ahead of your work and ask for help if needed". Congratulations, Angus and all the best in your future endeavors.





**Lillian Hubert**  
**Ehatteshaht - NTC**

Lillian plans to explore a career in the Canadian Armed Forces after high school graduation. She would like to thank Laurel, Rachel, Paul, Ange and Tim for their support, encouragement and friendship at school. Her role model is her mother who is a residential school survivor and models strength and perseverance and encouraged me to graduate. Her advice to other students: "Just show up!" Congratulations, Lillian and all the best in your future endeavors.



**Darryl Lauder**  
**Opetchesaht - NTC**

Darryl plans to work after graduation and is interested in the automotive area as a mechanic. Darryl is athletic and particularly likes soccer, basketball and Frisbee. He would like to thank his Grandfather, Patrick who is his role model and "always taught me to push through things and to do my best". His advice to other students: "Try your best"! Congratulation on your graduation, and all the best in your future plans!



**Jacob Williams**  
**Métis**

Jacob is planning to work after graduation in the area of real estate. His interests are basketball and photography. He would like to thank Mr. Witkzke and Ms. Hoffman for their support and encouragement through the years. His role model is his dad because "he works super hard and gave everything to make sure I can be the best". His advice to other students: "Don't care what other people think and enjoy your time while you are here"! Congratulations, Jacob!



**Xavier Morehouse**

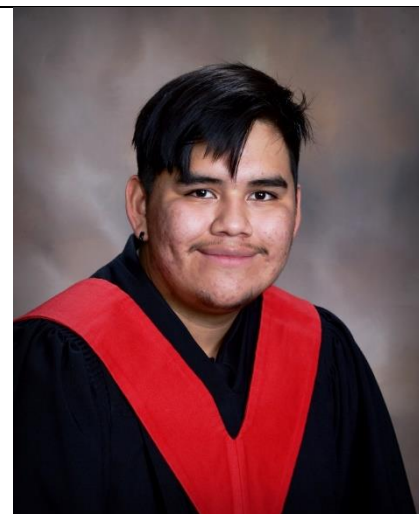
**Métis**

Xavier plans to attend Camosun College while working in the Reserves and then attend Royal Military College. His favorite teacher has been Jamie Burren because his very relaxed composure makes him a fun teacher. He would like to thank his parents, grandparents and friends for their support and encouragement through the years. He has been inspired by his uncle who “wasn’t afraid to show his interests”. His advice to other students: “Find friends you can trust and stick with them”. All the best and congratulations!



**Natalie Charlie-Sylvester  
Cowichan**

Natalie enjoys spending time with her family. She is unsure about her plans after graduation but would like to continue to grow and explore career options. She is grateful for all the support and encouragement from everyone around her. Congratulations on your graduation, Natalie and all the best in your future plans!



**Roy Joseph  
Tlowitsis-Mumtagila First Nation (Kwakwaka'wakw)**

Roy plans to continue working and saving money after graduation. He loves spending time with his partner, family and friends. He will work for a while before deciding on a career path. He would like to thank his family and friends for all their support and encouragement through the years. Congratulations on your graduation and all the best in your future!



# ***Lambrick Park Secondary School***



**Katie Brown**  
**Métis**

Katie plans to pursue post-secondary studies in the fall. She is a bright and engaged student and plans to enter Camosun college in the fall to begin studies towards an occupational therapy degree. Congratulations, Katie and all the best in your future plans!



**Emily Lane**  
**Métis**

Emily completed high school requirements in the first semester and has moved on to the work world. She is unsure of her plans for post-secondary at this time. Congratulations, Emily and all the best in your future plans!



### **Billy Mack**

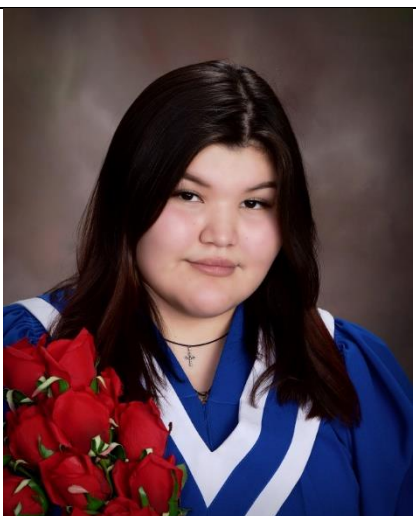
Billy has no future plans after graduation at this time. He will work and figure out what career path he will take. He would like to thank his father, grandparents and aunties for their support and encouragement to finish school. His advice to other students: "Be kind to one another and treat others how you would like to be treated". Good advice, Billy! Congratulations on your graduation!



### **Aaron Peltier**

#### **Métis**

Aaron is going to train for work in heavy duty mechanics. He would like to thank Mr. Weston and Mr. Croucher for their support and encouragement through his school years. Aaron enjoys skateboarding and working on cars and engines. His advice to other students: "Make a few good friends rather than having a lot and always be yourself"! Congratulations, Aaron and all the best in your future!



### **Nikita Perron**

#### **Decho Dene**

Nikita plans to attend college and become a nurse. She loves sketching, painting, writing and reading. She would like to thank her parents, grandparents, and aunts Amy and Samantha, Mrs. Andrews and all the people who supported her throughout her school years. Her role model is her mother because she's always inspired her to take chances, be open minded and to be proud of myself. Her advice to other students: "You are stronger than you believe; stick it out even though it's hard. You can do it!" Congratulations, Nikita!





# ***Mt. Douglas Secondary School***



## **Marino Dujela Inuit (Nunatukavut)**

Marino plans to continue in post-secondary and play football at the college level. His favorite teacher was Mr. McMillan because he always let him join in PE classes. He would like to thank his parents and brother for all their support and encouragement throughout the years. His advice to other students: "Be yourself and don't stress about stuff you can't change"! Good advice! Congratulations and all the best in your future endeavors!



## **Audrey Ignacz Algonquin (Kischesipirini)**

Audrey plans to take a gap year after high school to save money for acting school. She loves to sing, dance, model and perform as well as hanging out with friends. She would like to thank her parents for always being there whenever she needed them. Her role models are all the women out in the world who prove their worth and show that we can make millions just like men! Her advice to other students: "Never give up on your dreams and what you believe in. Keep pushing for your rights to become the person you want to be"! Congratulations, Audrey!



# ***Oak Bay High School***



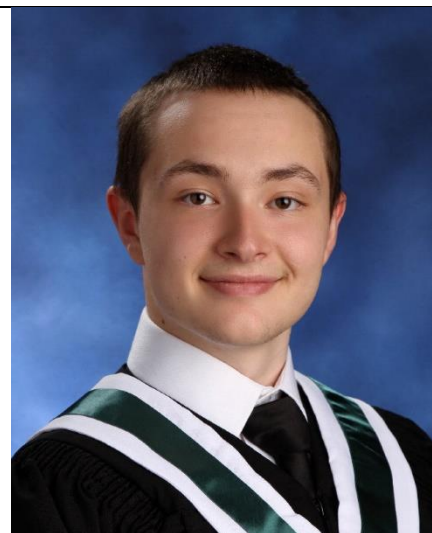
## **Donovan Asp Tahltan**

Donovan will be attending the University of Victoria in the fall. He will enter the Faculty of Social Sciences exploring as many interests as possible. He will eventually major in Biology and Psychology with an interest in neuroscience. His favourite teacher is Principal Aerts because “he beat me in Connect-Four and he’s earned my respect”. He would like to thank his family and his girlfriend, Oriana for all their support and encouragement throughout his educational journey. His advice to fellow students: “Join clubs and get involved in your community. Senior year was my favourite because I started joining clubs and going to events”. Congratulations, Donovan!



## **Beckett Della Siega Métis**

Beckett will be attending the University of British Columbia in September in the Faculty of Engineering. He is an athletic person and his key sport is rowing. He will be on the UBC varsity team. He would like to thank his family and friends for the support and encouragement through the years. His advice to other students: “Find your passion and do your best”! All the best to you, Beckett and congratulations on your graduation!



## **Caley Downing**

### **Métis**

Caley has been accepted into Bio-Resource Engineering at McGill University and some day plans to help run his mother's business Two World's Consulting. His favourite teacher was Mr. Ross who taught socials and was the only indigenous teacher he ever met. He was a mentor and a friend. He would like to thank his family, friends and girlfriend for the support and encouragement through high school. His role model is first and foremost his father who is "who I aspire to be like. He is hard working, kind and a great father". His advice to other students: "Work hard in school. It might not be enjoyable at times, but the opportunities available at the end are worth the effort ten times over"! All the best, Caley!



## **Atticus Gilchrist**

### **Cree – Slave Lake**

Atticus will be attending post-secondary at Simon Fraser University in the fall. He will enter the School of Contemporary Arts. He would like to thank his family and friends for their support and encouragement through the years. His advice to other students: "Start where you are, it will lead you to where you need to go"! Great advice, Atticus, and all the best in your future endeavors!



## **Ethan Moen**

### **Métis**

Ethan is a bright and friendly student who plans to pursue post-secondary studies in the fall. Congratulations, Ethan and all the best to you with your future plans!





**Finn Nakayama**  
**Potawatomi Nation**

Finn plans on taking a year off to work and save money before studying for a political science degree at Concordia. His favourite teacher was his drama teacher, Tim Bradshaw whose energy kept him signing up for his classes! He would like to thank his mother for always being readily available and for never ending sources of wisdom when he needed it! His role model is his mother who always remains strong and resilient in spite of harrowing or overwhelming circumstances. His advice to other students: “When you’re on your deathbed thinking of your regrets, nothing from high school will come to mind”! Congratulations, Finn and all the best to you!



# ***Reynolds Secondary School***



**Aurora Abbott**  
**Métis**

Aurora is a bright and friendly student who enjoyed high school. She plans to attend post-secondary in her future. Congratulations, Aurora and all the best to you with your future plans!



**Chelsea Blenkinsop**  
**Cree Métis**

Chelsea will be attending Camosun College training to become a dental hygienist. She is an athletic and artistic student who strives to do well in all areas of her life. She would like to thank Brad Cunningham, her older sister Mercedes, all teachers and especially her family for all their support and encouragement throughout the years. Her advice to other students: "Continue to believe in yourself and surround yourself with people who love you". Congratulations, Chelsea!



**Keelin McNeil**

**Tahltan Tlingit/Nisga'a**

Keelin plans to attend Camosun and UVic to pursue a degree in nursing. She would like to thank James Davis; Katy Kerr; Nora King and John Gray for their support to "take opportunities no matter what the outcome". She would like to thank her grade 8 teacher, Darlene Ross, for encouraging her to explore her culture. Also, thanks to everyone who helped me learn more about life. Her advice to other students: "Your friends will leave and that's ok. You'll carry on with new lessons and knowledge, even though you don't know it"! Congratulations, Keelin!



**Alonzo France-Rodriquez**

**Ai-Yun-Wiwa (Cherokee)**

Alonzo plans to pursue a career in theatre. He will work in this field until he decides on a post-secondary path. He is interested in film making and his video submission for a Mental Health project won a 2 thousand dollar award. He was active on the school year book committee. Congratulations on your graduation and all the best in your future plans!



**Morena France-Rodriquez**

**Ai-Yun-Wiwa (Cherokee)**

Morena will be entering the University of Victoria in the fall. She enjoyed being on the yearbook committee at her school and looks forward to going to post-secondary. Congratulations, Morena and all the best to you with your future plans!



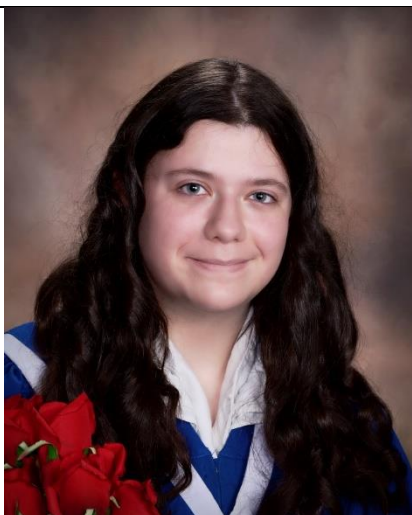
**Xochitl France-Rodriquez**  
**Ai-Yun-Wiwa (Cherokee)**

Xochitl will be attending the University of Victoria in the fall. She has enjoyed being on the school yearbook committee and has been involved in competitive cheering and gymnastics. She looks forward to starting at post-secondary in the fall. Congratulations, Xochitl, and all the best to you with your future plans!



**Pearl Gayleard**  
**Blackfoot Métis**

Pearl will be attending Camosun College to study in Mental Health and Addictions. She would like to thank Taily Wills; Brad Cunningham; Danielle Anderson; Sarah Worrall; Grace Leigh and John Gray who have "all helped me grow into the person I am today". She would also like to acknowledge her parents, sister and grandmother for their support and encouragement through the years. Her advice to other students: "Fight for what you believe in and not to let corrupt authorities stop you"! Congratulations on your graduation!



**Grace Parkes**  
**Mi'kmaq**

Grace plans to take a gap year before pursuing a career in the film industry. He favorite teacher has been "Brad Cunningham for helping me to see the world in a different light, and Danielle Anderson, for helping me to capture it". She would like to thank her mother and friends for all their support and encouragement with special acknowledgement to her mom who is "a kind and strong individual who has gotten us through many hardships". Her advice to other students: "High school is not going to be the biggest part of your life forever. It may be now, but you will persevere". Congratulations, Grace and all the best in your future endeavors.



## **Quinton Shaughnessy**

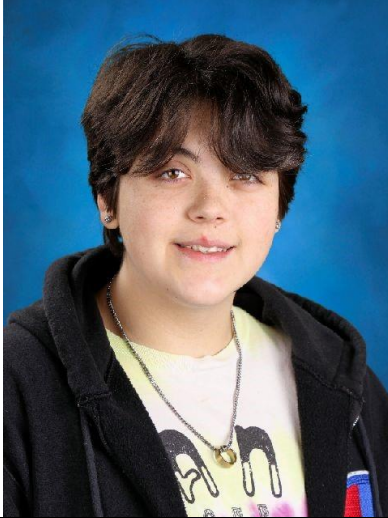
### **Kwakwaka'wakw**

Quinton plans to work in landscaping and carpentry after graduation. He would like to thank Maylyn Elliott and Lisa Higgins for their kindness and support and for giving me space in their classrooms. He would like to also thank Jacqui and Tony Cecchetti for their support and encouragement. His advice to other students: "Stay focused and do the task at hand". Congratulations, Quinton and all the best in your future plans!





## ***SJ Burnside Education Centre***



### **Elizabeth Nute**

#### **Metis**

Fizz plans to work towards furthering their education after graduation and “find a way to live a content and comfortable life”. They would like to thank Gwenyth, Lisa, Becki and Myles for their support and encouragement at school. They would like to thank their parents, friends and teachers for their support and encouragement throughout the years. Their role model has been their parents “I admire their ability to overcome obstacles and they inspire me to embrace change and take risks”. Their advice to other students: “Be kind to people, the world needs more kindness”. Good words, Fizz! Congratulations!



### **Victoria Sheena**

#### **Mowatchaht/ Upper Nicola**

Victoria plans to continue her education in the field of music, and eventually play in an orchestra. She would like to thank all the staff at school, her schoolmates, friends, family and boyfriend for their support and encouragement throughout the years! Her role models are Michael Jackson and Ru Paul for their positivity, heart and work ethics. Her advice to other students: “ Every small step is better than standing still. Celebrate your small victories”. Congratulations, Victoria!



# ***Spectrum Community School***



## **Cayden Brune**

### **Cree**

Cayden plans to attend post-secondary after graduation to earn a degree in Civil Engineering and then obtain a commercial pilot's license. He would like to thank Mr. Goode and Chris Courchene for their support and encouragement at school and he would like to thank his parents for being great role models and for inspiring him, as well as their support and encouragement. His advice to other students: "Just go to class and get your work done, it will pay off"! Congratulations, Cayden!



## **Kai Heaton**

### **Haida Gwaii and Lytton**

Kai plans to pursue a career in medicine and will study to earn a medical degree. His favorite teacher was Ms. Dyke who was a fun and very understanding teacher. He would like to thank his family and parents for their support and encouragement throughout the years. His role model has been his uncle Todd who he describes as successful, smart, compassionate and understanding. His advice to other students: "Work hard towards what you want, take full control of what you can and don't beat yourself up about what you can't"! Congratulations, Kai and all the best in your future plans!





**Paige Jack**  
**Pauquachin**

Paige plans to attend Camosun College in the college prep program to become an education assistant. She would like to thank her family and friends for their support and encouragement throughout the years and for being there for her. Her advice to other students: "Don't sweat the small stuff and have fun"! Congratulations, Paige and good luck in college!



**Brayden Jones**  
**Pacheedaht**

Brayden plans to work after graduation and possibly start his own business. He would like to thank his parents for all their support and encouragement through the years. He admires success in business and will work in business to learn the skills necessary to use in his own business one day. His advice to other students: "Do what you want, not what others want you to do". Congratulations, Brayden and all the best with your future plans.



**Aailyah Joseph**  
**Songhees/Navajo/Cree**

Aailyah plans to work after graduation until she is inspired to enter post-secondary studies. Her favorite teacher was Mrs. Spahan because "she was a very friendly, supportive and loving teacher who kept in touch since kindergarten". She would like to thank her family, friends and especially her mom for all the support and encouragement through the years. Her advice to other students: "Always do your best"! Congratulations, Aailyah!



**Devin Kimak**  
**Mi'kmaq**

Devin plans to work after graduation. He likes working outdoors and also helping people with fitness. He would especially like to thank his grandpa who is his role model and teacher. His grandfather "has a great attitude and is a determined person. He has a positive outlook on the world and has a calm, cool and collected nature". Devin's advice to other students: "Don't give up because life will always get better". Congratulations, Devin.



**Ella Kimak**  
**Mi'kmaq**

Ella plans to study at post-secondary after graduation in the field of psychology. Her favorite teacher was Mr. Marchi because he was super supportive and understanding. She would like to thank her family and friends for their support and encouragement through the years and especially her mom because she is hardworking and kind. Her advice to other students: "Balance school and your social life". All the best in your future endeavors, and congratulations!



**Danika McAllister**  
**Cree**

Danika plans to work after graduation and would like to study business one day. Their favorite teachers were Mr. Good who made math fun and Ms. Clancy who made me love English. They would like to thank Ms. Milliken, Ms. Hasler, Mr. Rove and Ms. Clancy, Mr. Goode and Carrie for all their support and encouragement at school. Their advice to other students: "Be yourself". All the best to you and congratulations!



**Kyle McAusland**  
**Cree**

Kyle plans to work after graduation and just enjoy life for a while. He would like to thank his family, friends and teachers for all the support and encouragement through the years. His role models have been his aunt and uncle. His advice to other students: "Don't stress over school, take your time, you got this"! Good advice, Kyle. All the best in your future plans and congratulations!



**Roy Nunn**  
**Tahltan**

Roy plans to work after graduation and learn carving from his grandpa, Dempsey Bob. Roy would like to acknowledge Mr. Jolliffe and Mr. Gordon as favorite teachers. He would like to thank his mother, grandmother, family, teachers and friends for all their support and encouragement throughout the years. His role model is his mother for her patience and support. His advice to other students: "Do the work and do it well but don't burn yourself out"! Good advice, Roy, and congratulations!



**Alex Ossevorth**  
**Métis/Plains Cree**

Alex plans to attend Camosun College in the field of Mental Health and Addictions and eventually getting a degree in social work or counseling. His favorite teachers were Ms. Raynor for her kindness, flexibility and consideration; and, Ms. Crisp for her jokes and fun class environment. He would like to thank all the people who supported him in the last year "I give my thanks and will forever hold you in my heart". His role model is Georgia for her strength and wisdom and Karen for her love and kindness. His advice to other students: "Although you may go through rough spots in life, there is always a way out, you just need to give yourself permission to take it"! Congratulations on your graduation, Alex and all the best!





### **Keelan Williams**

#### **Tsawout**

Keelan plans to attend Camosun College in the Culinary Arts Program to become a chef. His favorite teachers were Paul, Emma and Chef at Spectrum. He would like to thank Emma Milliken for her support and encouragement through the years. His role models have been his grandma and grandpa. His advice to other students: "follow your dreams and do your best". Congratulations, Keelan!



### **Kylina Whitney**

#### **Métis**

Kylina plans to take a gap year after graduation and then return to school to study in the health care profession. Her favorite teacher is Lia Shannon, her dance teacher because she is caring and always has time for support. She would like to thank her mom for her support and encouragement through the years. Her mom is also her role model "She is the hardest working woman I know. She is loyal, smart and works so hard and always manages to keep a smile on her face". Her advice to other students: "Keep your dreams alive. Never think something is too hard because everything is possible if you work for it. It may take time but never for the bare minimum". Congratulations, Kylina!



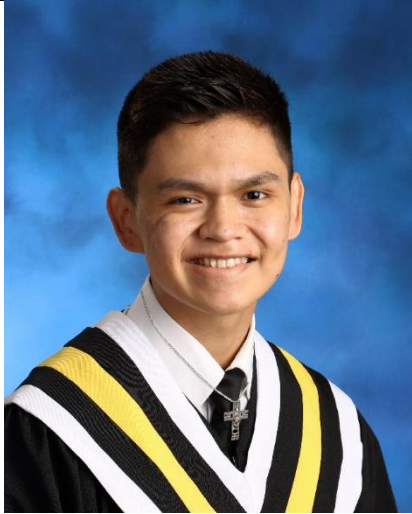
### **Trey Wilson**

#### **Métis**

Trey would like to work after graduation and looks forward to being a father. His favorite teachers were Ms. Milliken and Chef Sharon who have been helpful and kind. Chef Sharon especially supported him to push on even when he didn't feel like it. His role model is Amanda St. Pierre who taught him to value hard work and to believe in himself. His advice to others: "Don't be afraid of toasters"! Congratulations, Trey!



# Victoria High School



## **Kobe Galligos**

### **Tla'amin and Ahousaht Nation**

Kobe plans to go to his home community to work after graduation. His favorite teacher is Ms. Picard because her class was engaging from start to finish and she's one of the funniest and most welcoming people he knows. He would like to thank his siblings for helping him with homework and "for lying to mom to keep me out of trouble"! His role model is his grandfather who is "one of the hardest working people I know and he's someone who leads by example: if he told me to run laps, he'd be right there running next to me"! His advice to other students: "Don't be too hard on yourself. Now is not the time your need to have everything figured out"! Wise words, Kobe. All the best and congratulations on your graduation.



## **Kai Hatt**

### **Métis**

Kai plans on attending Langara College for one year then transferring to UBC to study for a bachelor's degree in commerce. His favorite teachers have been Ms. McKay who made learning another language fun and Mr. Poy for entrepreneurship skill development and for his unique perspectives. He would like to thank his parents and family for supporting his aspirations and especially sees his dad as a role model and sees him as "an example of who I want to be". His advice to other students: "Push yourself and work hard. You don't know what day will be your last so leave nothing in the tank". Congratulations, Kai!



**Alexander Isaac**  
**Lytton First Nations**

Alex plans to work for a while after graduation and eventually return to a trades program. His favorite teacher is Mr. Conibear because he is very easy going. Alex would like to thank his mom, dad and grandparents for their support and encouragement through the years. His advice to other students: "Only you can decide whether you are graduating or not, so make it happen"! Congratulations, Alex, all the best in your future plans!



**Brayden Johnnie**  
**Cowichan**

Brayden plans to work after graduation. His favorite teacher is Mr. Conibear because he is kind with a great sense of humour. Brayden's hobbies include drawing and playing video games. He would like to thank his mom for all her support and encouragement through the years. His advice to other students: "Don't have any advice! Efficiency is just a clever laziness"! Congratulations, Brayden!



**Shay Svean**  
**Fort Nelson First Nations**

Shay plans to work after graduation. She likes photography and lying in the sun! She would like to thank her family for their support and encouragement through the years. Her role model is her mother who has "shown me strength, perseverance, unconditional love and raised me to be who I am today". Her advice to other students: "It is very cheesy but do not give up. One day things will change for the better. Keep pushing forward because life does get better"! Congratulations, Shay!





**Jessie-Mai Villeneuve**  
**Cree/Ojibway**

Jessie plans to work after graduation and thinks it might be on an oil rigger out in the ocean, or in the Navy, possibly underwater welding. Jessie-Mai would like to thank the Vic High Staff for “putting up with my absences and Gen who put up with me since grade 9”. She would especially like to thank her mom for her support and encouragement through the years. Her advice to other students: “GO TO SCHOOL! The less you show up, the harder it gets to show up! And, ask for help”! Congratulations, Jessie-Mai!



**Cian Waldron**  
**Algonquin/Cree**

Cian plans to attend Camosun College and enter the nursing program. His favorite teachers are “Kerry, for everything; Kim, for helping me grow; and Frank for helping me to find my identity; and Adrian for encouraging me to learn”. He would like to thank his family, his mom and dad, and partner for all the support and encouragement through the years. His role models are his “mom, for showing me how to be strong, and my dad who looks at life like no one else I know and for helping me so much”. His advice to other students: Take a breath. It’s a long life”! Congratulations, Cian!



**Alexa Washington**  
**Tla’amin/Klahoose/Laxkw’alaams**

Alexa is undecided about post-secondary at this time but will work after graduation. Her favorite teacher is Mr. Conibear because he really cares about teaching and he’s very kind and generous. She would like to thank her family and Vic High teachers for all the support and encouragement she’s received over the years. Her advice to others: “It goes really fast after grade 8”! Congratulations, Alexa and all the best in your future plans.



**Rylee Watson****Algonquin**

Rylee is uncertain about plans after graduation but will work until she decides on a post-secondary path. Her favorite teachers are Mr. Conibear because he has fun ways of teaching and Mr. Young because he makes biology class engaging and fun. She would like to thank Mr. Conibear and Gen for all the support and encouragement through the years. Her advice to other students: “Better late than never”! Congratulations on your graduation, Rylee!

**Magdalena Whetung-Bermeo****Michi Saagiig nishnaabeg (Anishinaabe)**

Magdalena will attend Camosun College in the Indigenous Studies program and eventually attend UVic in the Language Revitalization Program. Her favorite teacher is Frank Conibear because he creates a really good space to exist in as an indigenous student. She would like to thank “my family for continuing to support and encourage me even when I felt it wouldn’t help. It did”. Her role models are her “aunties who work hard to preserve culture and language and who I aspire to be”! Her advice to other students: “Ask for help when you need it! It’s important. Congratulations, Magdalena!

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***Congratulations to all the  
Graduates of 2022!***



# Special Recognition of Retirement

## Pah'yu h'uts stun (Clifford) Paul Thomas

At the end of this school year, a longtime member of the Greater Victoria School District will retire. Paul Thomas began working for the school district in October of 1977 as an Indigenous student counselor, but before that, he worked at the Victoria Native Friendship Centre as an Indigenous student school liaison for five years. This gives Paul a career in supporting Indigenous students and championing Indigenous education for 50 years! An incredible lifetime of service and advocacy. He has been an incredibly valuable resource to the district, the department and to the community.

When Paul started, our department was called the Native Indian Education Department! He's been through a few name changes since then – The First Nations Education Division, The Aboriginal Nations Education Division and now the Indigenous Education Department! He started with black hair but leaves at the same weight! How is that fair?! He has an impeccable work ethic, is IED's dapper dresser dude, and has a ready smile and generous spirit. As the longest serving member of our department, we know that our historian, colleague and friend will be missed and we also recognize that he has more than earned the right to hand in his work keys.

Paul holds the history of our department and has seen thousands of students come into the system, graduate and then send their own children into our school system. He knows everyone! He has deep roots in supporting Indigenous Education for Indigenous students. He will often remind us about the original call for "Indian Control of Indian Education" and has always been passionate about bringing Indigenous worldview into the system and classrooms for the ultimate good of Indigenous people and worldviews.

We Hold Up Our Hands to Paul and say Hay'sxw'qa Siem for a long, dedicated and valuable career in public education. We wish him all the best in the next chapter of his journey and a well-deserved retirement.

## Congratulations, Paul!

