

MINERVA FOUNDATION FOR B.C. WOMEN

Minerva Cares Education Award for Caregivers *Returning the Care*

Objective: To fund education awards for caregivers, resident in British Columbia, by providing an infrastructure for individuals who benefit from the support of caregivers to “return the care” by establishing an award or endowed fund for annual distribution.

Related Social and Political Context:

1. **Live-In Caregiver Program:** The Canadian government, through the Live-In Caregiver Program (Citizen and Immigration Canada), encourages immigration of workers, mostly women, to provide domestic caregiver services, which are currently in short supply in BC. After providing two years of live-in caregiver services, caregivers are free to apply for Permanent Residence and seek other employment. These women are entrusted with some of the most precious responsibilities families have: caring for loved ones who cannot care for themselves, most often children and seniors.
2. **Many caregivers live below the poverty line and have no opportunity to attain long-term economic security.** Virtually none of the live-in caregivers have supplemental benefits such as extended care and retirement programs to ensure their long-term economic security. Many caregivers support dependents in BC or abroad and, due to financial pressures, are not able to invest in upgrading their own skills. Many caregivers are immigrant women.
3. **Many caregivers have skills and training obtained from another country that are also in demand in BC, but cannot obtain jobs in related fields due to the need to upgrade skills to meet licensing requirements.** Even absent specific foreign credentials, such women have a logical skill base from which to launch further education in fields with shortages. The women who initially come to BC through the Live-In Caregiver program are a logical pool to grow our future licensed childcare providers; pediatric and geriatric nurses; early childcare educators; and doctors – all in short supply in British Columbia.
4. **Domestic caregivers are often employed by dual-income families or by financially secure seniors.** 42% of children under age 13 are cared for by others while their parents work. [From “Early Learning and Child Care in British Columbia” – a consultation paper, Ministries of Children and Family Development and Education] It is also the goal of families and government to allow seniors to maintain their independence and stay in their own homes as long as physically and financially possible. Many of these households can afford charitable donations and would like an opportunity to acknowledge their caregivers.



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AWARD DETAILS

Award Objective:

To provide educational awards to women at recognised British Columbia colleges, universities, post-secondary trade schools, or licensed organizations. As with all Minerva awards, the awards will be made available to residents of BC, who have worked for at least a year as a caregiver (e.g., eldercare, childcare) in Canada.

Preference will be given to a woman meeting at least one of the following criteria:

1. Assist immigrant women, Aboriginal women or women with a disability to overcome educational barriers.
2. Single mothers in advancing their education.
3. Re-train a mature woman returning to the workforce.
4. Advance women in non-traditional fields of study

The award will be granted on the basis of financial need and anticipated benefits from the award.

Number of awards annually: Determined by level of donations

Award type: Open, full or part-time

Eligibility requirements:

- Resident of British Columbia
- Candidate will be a woman meeting the above criteria.
- In the event that two or more candidates are equal in need base, preference will be given to the most compelling case for providing benefit from the award
- Academic performance will not be a criterion.
- Students may be enrolled in full or part-time studies, in college, university, trade schools or licensing agencies.
- Students who do not register or subsequently change to on-leave status will have their awards cancelled.
- The student must apply on the Minerva Foundation for B.C. Women Minerva Cares Education Award application form. It is the student's responsibility to meet application deadlines and supply all required documentation. Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Funds will be credited to the successful student's account with the post secondary institution. Outstanding debts to the institution will be deducted from the bursary funds before a cheque for the credit balance is issued.

or

A cheque will be issued directly to the student once the Minerva Foundation has received her official registration receipt.



- Bursaries are tenable only for the semester indicated on the notice and may not be deferred. Students who do not register in the semester for which the bursary is granted forfeit the award. To be considered for bursaries in future semesters of registration, students must reapply.

Criteria:

- Demonstrated financial need
- Anticipated benefits/impact of the award

Conditions:

- Student will be eligible to receive more than once depending on maintaining satisfactory academic performance, but must re-apply.

Effective date:

- Established in 2006, first award to be granted in 2006 and annually thereafter, subject to donor support

The Minerva Foundation for B.C. Women will:

- Provide a tax receipt for each gift.
- Accept applications annually from eligible applicants.
- Maintain an independent application review committee to review and select successful recipient(s).
- Solicit applicants through the Minerva Foundation for BC Women website and through a group of appropriate agencies and institutions.
(www.theminervafoundation.com)
- Whenever possible, register the Minerva Cares Education Award on the websites of British Columbia colleges, universities and trade schools.
- Advise appropriate agencies about the award to encourage applicants.
- Solicit additional donors and institutions to increase the level of awards to be offered under this program and to establish a self-sustaining endowment.