

To be published on news.ubc.ca on Feb. 1, 2022

New scholarship program supports Black Canadian students at UBC

A new scholarship program is providing both financial and institutional support for Black Canadian students at the University of British Columbia.

The Beyond Tomorrow Scholars Program is a first-of-its-kind initiative in Canada that provides both scholarships and a range of integrated institutional supports to help provide a pathway to success for Black Canadian students at UBC. Through the program, UBC students can access a variety of one-time and renewable awards of up to \$80,000 as well as programming that aims to build community amongst Black students at the Vancouver and Okanagan campuses through events, panel sessions, and more.

The program welcomed its first cohort of 13 students at the start of the academic year in September 2021. Among the students is Nejat Alhussan, who says receiving a Beyond Tomorrow Scholars Award helped ease the financial burden of moving across the country from Ontario to pursue her studies at UBC Okanagan. Alhussan, who is studying science, says she hopes to pursue a career in medicine one day.

“The Beyond Tomorrow Scholars Program has alleviated the financial stress of post-secondary education so I can focus on my studies,” she says. “Thanks to the program, I have a support network and feel like I’m not on this journey alone. It feels like my dream of pursuing a career in medicine is possible.”

For UBC Sauder School of Business student Burrell Atkinson, becoming a Beyond Tomorrow Scholar is an opportunity to create meaningful relationships with his fellow scholars at UBC while also giving back to his community.

“I’m proud to be a Beyond Tomorrow Scholar, and I’m grateful for the opportunity to serve as a role model to the next generation of scholars,” he says.

Beyond Tomorrow Scholars have the opportunity to participate in dedicated programming with wrap-around cross-campus support that is shaped by five pillars of success: academic and career, leadership, community and belonging, financial, and health and wellbeing. Phase 1 of the program aims to support more than 100 students in the next four years, with the potential for further growth as funds are secured and the program develops.

The Beyond Tomorrow Scholars Program is supported by donors and partners, including Black Opportunity Fund, which set up two awards for Black students to attend UBC. Through the participation of the supporters of Black Opportunity Fund, students will have access to opportunities for collaboration, leadership, and the exchange of ideas, both within the program and as they transition into life after university.

For more information on the Beyond Tomorrow Scholars Program, click [here](#). To learn more about anti-racism initiatives at UBC, click [here](#).

Quotes

Prof. Santa J. Ono, UBC President and Vice-Chancellor —

“As an institution, UBC is committed to taking meaningful steps toward addressing the systemic barriers that prevent many Black students from accessing a university education. Through the Beyond Tomorrow Scholars Program, UBC is committed to fostering a sense of belonging, joy, and meaningful connection amongst Black students at UBC to help them reach their full potential.”

Dr. Lesley Cormack, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Principal of UBC’s Okanagan campus —

“The Beyond Tomorrow Scholars Program will play a critical role in holistically supporting emerging student leaders within the Black community, leaders who will help shape the future as we continue the essential work of creating a more inclusive UBC.”

Dr. Ainsley Carry, UBC Vice-President, Students —

“The Beyond Tomorrow Scholars Program is one example of the intentional efforts UBC is undertaking to recruit and retain students from underrepresented groups. I look forward to seeing this program continue to grow as we welcome more Beyond Tomorrow Scholars to UBC and support the next generation of Black leaders in Canada.”

Rohene Bouajram, Associate Director of Strategic IBPOC Initiatives at UBC —

“It is inspiring to witness the unwavering hard work, determination and talent of our Beyond Tomorrow Scholars. This program has the potential to create a long-term impact in addressing systemic inequity, access and injustice faced by Black students and communities across Canada. I look forward to supporting our students as they create remarkable futures for themselves and their communities.”

Craig Wellington, Executive Director of Black Opportunity Fund —

“In recognition and celebration of Black History Month, Black Opportunity Fund is thrilled to be supporting the Beyond Tomorrow Scholars Program at UBC. Programs like Beyond Tomorrow are critical to help combat the impact of systemic discrimination and anti-Black racism in Canada. We look forward to continuing to support this program and empowering Black students to achieve academic and professional success.”

Interview Language(s): English

Media Contact

Thandi Fletcher
UBC Media Relations
604-822-2234
thandi.fletcher@ubc.ca