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Award Established by Students, for Students

The North Island Student's Union (NISU) recently donated \$10,000 to the North Island College Foundation to establish a new endowment which will support three student awards annually.

With education costs rising and recent cuts to student aid in B.C., North Island College students have made it known that financial support for post secondary education is their top priority, where more than 50% of students rely on some form of financial assistance despite North Island College having the lowest tuition rates on Vancouver Island. NIC students voted overwhelmingly in favour of NISU creating the new endowment in a referendum last fall, spurring NISU to take the unprecedented step of funding the new awards for its own students.



Shaunna Downey, NIC student and NISU Chairperson, signing the North Island Student's Union endowment agreement.

"Our students work collectively to put pressure on government to make education open and accessible to all citizens, regardless of their family incomes," said Shaunna Downey, NIC Student and NISU Chairperson. "Because we know universally affordable education is not yet a priority of government we are making this endowment available to help those being priced out of attending school."

The NISU Endowment will assist continuing students in any full or part-time program and the interest earned on the capital investment will be split equally between three students. Preference will be given to students who have been involved in volunteer activities or community service.

Students can begin applying for the awards in 2011. In the meantime, NISU hopes the gesture will also help highlight to the community the need for more affordable education.

"We hope that current and past Foundation donors will join us by adding their voices to those of students who are advocating to increase government funding for North Island College," says Toni Gore, NISU Executive member.

Established in 1991, NISU is North Island College's student organization and represents 4,000 students throughout the north island region. NISU is a member of Canadian Federation of Students, an alliance of over 85 college and university associations from across Canada.

The North Island College Foundation was able to provide more than \$180,000 to NIC students this year. With over 100 existing endowments and more than 110 annual bursaries and scholarships available to be awarded, the Foundation's key objective continues to be fundraising in support of students, which is why they are delighted to be receiving this tremendous gift.

"This substantial endowment from the North Island Student's Union is not only a valuable investment in NIC students, it is an important legacy for NISU," says Susan Auchterlonie, Executive Director of the North Island College Foundation. "This award is the first of its kind created by students, for students and it will continue supporting students in their educational aspirations at NIC for years to come."

The NIC Foundation is a non-profit organization that actively seeks donations to provide student scholarships, bursaries, operating equipment and educational resources. Through the continued support of individuals, local businesses, and organizations these efforts are realized.

For more information about the North Island College Foundation please call 250-334-5000 ext. 4267, email foundation@nic.bc.ca or visit our website at www.nic.bc.ca.

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