

“Former NDU and DTUC Students Create Legacy Fund to Benefit Arts Students”

The former students of Nelson’s Notre Dame University, David Thompson University Centre and David Thompson Cultural Society have created a lasting legacy that will benefit West Kootenay students pursuing university studies in the Fine Arts.

On April 13, 2010, representatives of the former NDU Student Union, the David Thompson Cultural Society (DTCS), signed an agreement to establish a new fund with the Osprey Community Foundation. The Notre Dame David Thompson Student Arts Awards Fund has been created from the money left by former students of Nelson’s degree-granting universities. Earnings from this new permanent fund will provide scholarships and bursaries to local-area students pursuing degrees in Fine Arts – theatre, creative writing, music, performing, dance and film – at post-secondary British Columbia degree-granting institutions. Students enrolled at institutions in the interior may be given preference.

The Osprey Community Foundation is still working on the application process, but starting in 2011, students will be able to apply for these bursaries or scholarships through the registrar of their local high school, Selkirk College, the Kootenay School of Art, or the university they are attending. Check the Foundation’s website for details.

From the 1950s until the 1980s, Nelson was home to thousands of students from around the world who came to study at Notre Dame University and its successor, the David Thompson University Centre. At one time, the NDU and DTUC student societies were the only university student organizations in Canada to own their own land and buildings. When the university was shut down in the mid 1980s, the land and buildings remained in the possession of the student societies. They eventually sold the land and buildings and became the David Thompson Cultural Society.

Over the years, the Society has explored several options to make use of this legacy for benefit of local artists and students. In 2008, several former NDU and DTUC student society leaders challenged the DTCS to preserve what remained of the funds for the benefit of area students pursuing university degrees in the arts. The student society leaders and the Osprey Community Foundation have now signed an agreement that will honour the DTCS commitment to promoting and culturing artists in the West Kootenays.

The current endowment will generate a few thousand dollars each year for bursaries and scholarships. It is hoped the fund will grow through donations from former NDU and DTUC students and teachers, as well as former members of the DTCS. To get the ball rolling building the fund, members of the last DTCS board are challenging anyone who attended university in Nelson, or attended any of the many events and programs financed by the DTCS, to contribute \$100 to the fund. Whether they attended classes at NDU or DTUC, attended one of many pub nights at the old Sub Pub, read at a poetry reading, or joined in a workshop facilitated by DTCS or its predecessors, the \$100 challenge is a means to show their appreciation, and to encourage the ongoing legacy. Former student leaders are also hoping local businesses, who for years were kept busy by students, will also consider making

donations to the fund.

Persons wishing to make tax-deductible financial contributions to this exciting and permanent endowment may do so through the Osprey Community Foundation (www.ospreycommunityfoundation.ca, 250-352-3643).

For interviews or further information, please contact:

Alan Brandoli: last DTSS President, former Chair Fine Arts Thompson Rivers: 250.542.0499

Doug Findlater: Founding President NDUSU Building Committee, current Mayor West Kelowna 250.801.3814

Terrence Peterson: Last NDUSU President, Stock Broker, Montana 406.890.2188

Will Webster: Former SAC Coordinator NDUSU, DTCS Board Member, contract negotiator 250.353.2310.