

## Hugh Sutherland School student - Jules Owen-Pole - wins \$100,000 scholarship

Hugh Sutherland School Grade 12 student, Jules Owen-Pole, is the recipient of a coveted [Schulich Leader Scholarship](#), worth \$100,000. The scholarship will help Owen-Pole in her studies at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, starting in the fall of 2024.

Owen-Pole says it was pretty exciting to learn, recently, that she was selected to receive the scholarship. Owen-Pole recalls sitting in calculus class, when she received a call from a number with no caller ID, which she didn't answer. Shortly after that, she could see the number was from Dalhousie University, so she excused herself from class and called the number back.

***"It was the Dean of Sciences that answered," Owen-Pole said. "He introduced himself, welcomed me to Dalhousie University and told me the University was happy to offer me a Schulich Leader Scholarship. That's when the tears started."***

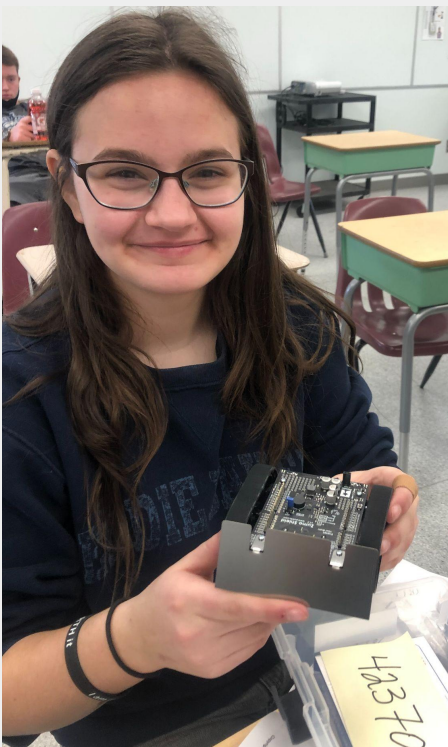


Owen-Pole said she first went to her math teacher, Alex Gardner, to share the news. ***"I was crying, so he probably thought someone was hurt or something. I told him - 'Mr. G - I won the Schulich Leadership Scholarship!' and he said, 'Congratulations! That's amazing!'"***

Owen-Pole then went to Social Studies teacher Sherry Pike's room. Pike was the teacher behind the school's nomination of Owen-Pole. ***"She just screamed," said Owen-Pole. "She was so excited for me."***

***"I didn't even have the words," said Sherry Pike. "They couldn't have chosen a better kid to give this to. Jules is absolutely incredible. After she told me, I went home and had a little cry because I am just so happy for her. She deserves this."***

Owen-Pole then called her Dad, who is a spare bus driver for Chinook's Edge and who was in Banff, on a field trip with Chinook's Edge students. ***"I was still crying," she said. "It took me a while to get it out."***







Darren Owen said that moment makes him smile now. ***“The first 30 seconds of the call was almost identical to the first 30 seconds of another call where she told me she had run into a deer. There was a world of emotions - crying, screaming, lots of background noise, but what a different outcome!”***

Schulich Leader Scholarships are focused on students who will take STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) studies in an undergraduate program in Canada. Each high school can only nominate one student for the award. There are 1,500 nominees each year in Canada and that is narrowed to 100 scholarships given out to students who will each attend one of 20 partner universities. The criteria for the award includes academic excellence, leadership ability, and financial need.

Once nominated by her school, Owen-Pole completed a number of writing assignments as a part of the nomination process. She applied to attend the University of Calgary, the University of Alberta, Memorial University in Newfoundland, and Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Owen-Pole received one of 6 Schulich Scholarships given to an incoming Dalhousie student. She plans to complete a double major in computer science and math, and then potentially pursue a masters degree in software engineering.

***“My interest in computer science started with my Dad,”*** said Owen-Pole, who recalls her Dad teaching her about computers and coding, and how much she enjoyed that.

Her Dad - a spare bus driver in Chinook’s Edge - is also a management consultant specializing in organizational change and workplace psychology - which he said involves technology change, math, metrics and statistics - combined with working with people. Owen said his daughter also would have observed him working early in the morning and late at night to earn a masters degree recently. ***“She saw the hard work, sweat and tears and a thoroughly enjoyable experience for me,”*** he said.

Since her introduction to the computer science field, Owen-Pole has persistently pursued the interest. She took a dual credit course offered through Chinook’s Edge and Olds College of Agriculture & Technology. ***“I really enjoyed learning about technology and solving problems with it,”*** said Owen-Pole. ***“I especially liked messing around with the Arduino robots. That’s when I really knew this is what I wanted to do.”***

That dual credit experience opened the doors for a summer internship with Delphi Technology, where Owen-Pole explored how virtual reality can help to train airplane pilots. ***“I’ve spent many years in the Air Cadet program so it was great to combine my love of airplanes and flying with computer science.”***





Owen-Pole also gained experience through the science fair opportunities offered in Chinook's Edge. This year, her project earned her an invitation to the national science fair. Her project involved her pet mouse, Quixote, and using her observations of the mouse's movements in a maze to develop computer algorithms.

It is that deep interest in science and math that was a significant reason why Sherry Pike, a teacher at Hugh Sutherland School, thought to put forward Owen-Pole's name as a possible nomination for the scholarship.

***"When I think of all the amazing things Jules has done and has contributed to our school, it's quite something," said Pike.***

According to Pike, Owen-Pole tutors other students extensively, she is the only female on the school football team, and she is in the jazz band and concert band. Outside of school she is highly involved in the cadet program, said Pike.

***"She is just a great person too; she is kind to everyone and very humble about everything she does. On top of that, her interest in extending her own learning in computer science has helped her excel," said Pike.***

***"Jules is a wonderful example of what can happen when a student puts in their best effort," said Dean Nielsen, Principal, Hugh Sutherland School.***

***"Jules is naturally a smart student, but it is her work ethic that takes it to the next level. Jules is the opposite of passive; she is an active learner and citizen in our school. As a result, many look to her as a leader and a mentor. Jules epitomizes what it means to be a Kodiak, and so we are thrilled for her to have received this scholarship," said Nielsen.***

***"I am incredibly proud of Jules and everything she has achieved so far," said Owen, adding his daughter has been self motivated throughout her schooling. "She has worked so hard over the years, both in and out of school to get to where she is today, and this is the start of an amazing next chapter of her life."***

***"It also should be said that Jules would not be where she is right now without the teachers and staff of the schools, and the dedication, passion and love for teaching they have shown," said Owen.***

***"Carstairs Elementary School and Hugh Sutherland School have an amazing group of teachers and staff. Education and quality of life were two of the main reasons we emigrated to Canada from the United Kingdom, and neither has disappointed. The education Jules has received here is nothing short of amazing, so the award is absolutely a reflection on the amazing people she interacts with at these two schools each day," said Owen.***

***"I am very grateful for my teachers and my family," said Owen-Pole, "and I'm grateful to have this opportunity. I can't even put into words how excited I am to pursue what I love, to make connections with people, and to grow and learn. I won't take this opportunity to learn more for granted."***





# Penhold Waskasoo Middle School's sod turning event digs up excitement for new school



Future Penhold Waskasoo Middle School students, their principal and vice principal, Chinook's Edge administration and school board trustees, as well as Town of Penhold staff, mayor and councilors were joined by Alberta Minister Devin Dreesen for a sod turning

School leaders, division staff, school board trustees, Town of Penhold staff, the mayor and councilors, Alberta's Minister of Transportation and Economic Corridors and local MLA Devin Dreesen, and a handful of excited future students gathered Friday for a sod-turning ceremony at the site of the new Penhold Waskasoo Middle School.

***“Penhold Waskasoo Middle School is greatly anticipated in the growing community of Penhold and we are so happy Alberta Education and the province approved this project” said Sherry Cooper, Vice-Chair of Chinook's Edge School Board, and Penhold's representative on the Board. “I think the facility itself, and the way it has been designed with today's learners in mind, is going to really benefit students' experience,” said Cooper.***

Board Chair Holly Bilton echoed Cooper's comments saying the Board is pleased with the design and the location. ***“We are really excited that our students get to have a new facility on a campus with all of the things that the Penhold Multiplex has to offer,” said Holly Bilton, Board Chair.*** And Cooper emphasized that the proximity to other facilities including Penhold Crossing School allows the division to make the most of the project's budget.

Cooper, in her remarks to the gathering, thanked Minister Devin Dreesen for his ongoing support and also acknowledged former Education Minister Adriana LaGrange for her role and support in getting the project approved.

Other speakers at the event were Minister Dreesen and Penhold Mayor Mike Yargeau who both acknowledged the growing community and need for the school, as well as excitement to see the project underway.

Construction of the new facility began in March. The sod-turning was set for May so that all the intended guests would be available for the event.

It is anticipated the new school will open in the fall of 2025.





# Chinook's Edge bus drivers claim top 3 spots at Central Alberta Bus Roadeo



Congratulations to three Chinook's Edge bus drivers who claimed top spots at the Central Alberta Bus Roadeo on May 25, 2024, held in Red Deer!

Kelly Frere, who is the division's Lead Trainer for Chinook's Edge, placed first. Second place went to Melissa Brodeur who is also a trainer for the division, and drives a bus route in Carstairs. Third place went to Samantha Smith, also a trainer and bus driver in Cremona.

***"We're proud of our top finishers and all of our bus drivers who participated," said Corinne Varga, Transportation Director, Chinook's Edge School Division. "This event is fun and challenges each driver to refine skills that contribute to safe driving. Thanks to each driver's commitment to getting our students to school safely."***

There were 11 participants from Chinook's Edge driving in the event, a competition with approximately 30 bus drivers from three Central Alberta school divisions and a contractor, who provides service to school divisions in the area.

Chinook's Edge also provided four judges for the event: Corinne Varga, Transportation Director, Paula Spiller, Transportation Coordinator, and Linda Anderson, who is a bus driver in Olds.

The top three finishers will compete at the provincial Bus Roadeo in Nisku on June 8.

Top: Transportation Corinne Varga with Kelly Frere, who placed first.

Middle right: Melissa Brodeur who placed second (with Varga).

Bottom right: Samantha Smith, who placed third (with Varga).



Back row (L to R): Melissa Savage, Jeanne Mork, Tom Arts, Karen Dallman, Paula Spiller, Linda Anderson & Linda Drover.

Middle: Brooklynn Banchard, & Samantha Smith.

Bottom: Corinne Varga, Mesa Brodeur & Laurie Scott

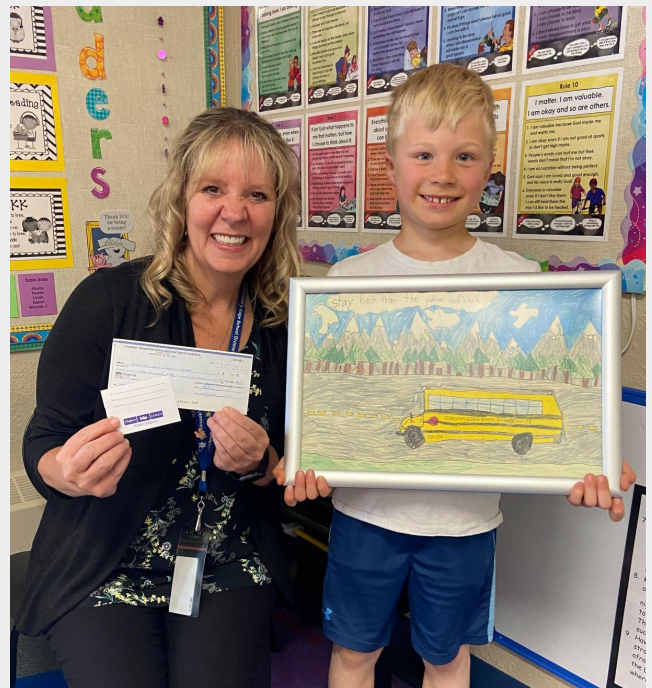
Missing: Kelly Frere, Brenda Stacey and Kevin Spiller.





# Five Chinook's Edge students earn top marks in provincial bus safety poster competition

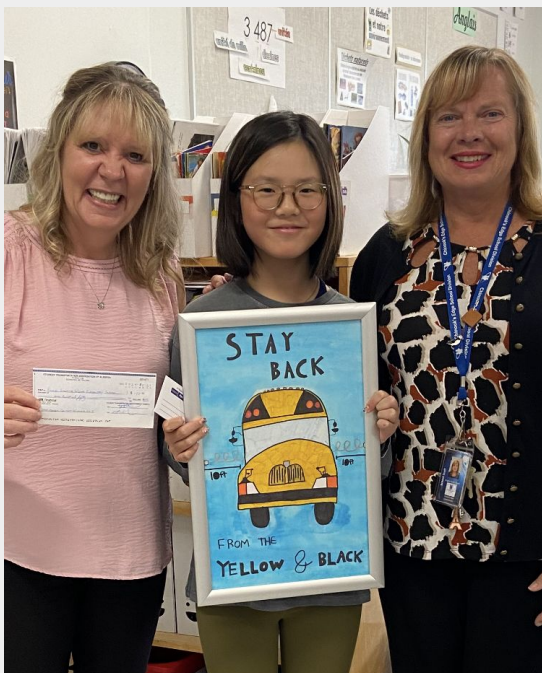
Five Chinook's Edge students claimed top honours in a provincial bus safety poster competition. The competition is held annually by the Student Transportation Association of Alberta. There were 18 entries selected as winners from across the province. This year's theme was "Stay Back from the Yellow and Black."



Above: Weston Black - Olds Koinonia School - placed 2nd in the Grade 2 category

Far left: Art by Peter Hofer, Rainbow Colony School, who placed 1st in the Grade 3 category

Middle left: Art by Isaiah Hofer, Rainbow Colony School, who placed 2nd in the Grade 3 category



Ain Lee - Ecole Steffie Woima Elementary School - placed 1st in the Grade 4 category



Jace McFarland - Ecole Olds Elementary School - placed 2nd in the Grade 1 category





# Chinook's Edge administrators tour Sheldon Kennedy Centre of Excellence



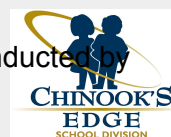
Chinook's Edge leaders gathered last week at the Sheldon Kennedy Centre of Excellence in Red Deer, for a tour and to learn more about the services and programs that will be available to children and youth who need support, including students from Chinook's Edge. The facility held its grand opening May 16 and will soon start serving clients, as soon as partners become settled in the building.

The Central Alberta Child Advocacy Centre (CACAC) is based in the facility. Its mission is to “work in an integrated, trauma informed environment to treat abused children, youth, and their families, support their recovery and seek to stop the cycle of abuse.” Its partners in the Centre include Alberta Health Services, RCMP, the Central Alberta Sexual Assault Support Centre, The City of Red Deer, and Red Deer Polytechnic.

The intent of the facility and its partners is to change the way organizations respond to child abuse. [According to its website](#), the centre “works collectively with various partners... and through collaboration [the centre] is able to better support” children and youth. It gives children and youth who need support, and their caregivers, a clear path to supports.

On their tour, Chinook's Edge administrators saw the multi-bed treatment area that will support the Alberta Health Services Step-Up-Step-Down program, a live-in rehabilitation program for adolescents with wrap-around supports.

Administrators saw the AHS Lindsey More Youth Mental Health & Addiction Hub, the Central Alberta Sexual Assault Centre, family oriented spaces for interviews and investigations conducted by RCMP, and a health promotion space run







by the Move-Your-Mood program to support active living, healthy eating and mindfulness of youth and visitors to the space.

Karyn Barber, Associate Superintendent, Chinook's Edge School Division said the division's purpose in having its leaders tour the centre was to ensure they were aware of what supports are available to children and youth who need them, including those in the Chinook's Edge area.

***"It is a really impressive space, and even more impressive to consider the wrap-around, collaborative approach of a number of key partners working to help children and youth," said Karyn Barber, Associate Superintendent, Chinook's Edge School Division. "We are grateful to understand more about the work that is underway here, and to know we have a partner in CACAC to help us support students."***





# Innisfail High School students find strength, skills, and friendship in “Coping with change, loss, and grief” course

Students attending a special course at Innisfail High School are learning new and helpful coping skills to face the challenges of life, and they say they appreciate the friendships they are forming too.



The course: “Coping with change, loss, and grief,” is offered to any student who wants to participate, and is run by a community member - Ley-Anne Mountain and her company Naturally Nurtured along with Principal Chris Adamson.

The course extends through 12 weeks, and happens during the student’s flex time on Wednesdays. Students who participate gain credit the first time they participate. The 2023-2024 school year was the third year the school offered the course, funded partially through a grant from Innisfail Family and Community Support Services (FCSS). A total of 55 students have taken the course. This year, 15 are enrolled, including some who have taken it before.

***“I’ve been through the class twice,” said En Vezina, a Grade 10 student. “I originally signed up because I was interested in the content. I took it again because even though I haven’t lost someone in my family for a long time, I wanted the skills and ability to cope so that I am not stranded in open water if that happens.”***

***“I wanted to learn more about grief and loss,” said Pryderi Makinaw-McKellar, a Grade 11 student. “I have lost someone before and didn’t know how to deal with it. I now understand how grief moves in stages and it’s okay even to grieve small things. This course also helps me help other people in my life and understand them.”***

***“I like the breathing techniques we’ve learned,” said William Bona, a Grade 12 student. “It helps me with test taking - so I get ready to focus my mind on the knowledge I have. I tried it out in various situations and these techniques helped me.”***

***Bona said, “I think the skills we learn in the class are helpful for living life.” Bona also talked about the benefit of finding friends in the course. “It’s nice to have people in the course with you. You can find similarities and connections.”***

***Mackinaw-McKellar said, “Finding connection definitely makes a difference.”***

***“We all know that high school can be challenging,” said Ley-Anne Mountain, the course instructor. “Students are nearing graduation and are facing big decisions about what to do next, and coming into adulthood. There are natural challenges with growing up and with new relationships that start and some relationships that end. Combine this with circumstances students might see at home, and some students face the loss of a loved one or friend.”***





***“The goal of the course is to provide students with the tools they need to navigate a range of emotional challenges they might face,” said Mountain.***

In the course, students learn different breathing techniques, and the importance of asking for help. They use art to express emotions. Students learn QiGong movements. QiGong provides gentle movement that is believed to help people move through feelings. Also, the instructor brings rabbits with her.

***“A rabbit is a prey animal, it needs to feel safe,” said Mountain. “It is our responsibility to provide safety for them in the classroom. That makes us accountable for our behavior. Animals give us honest feedback because they are quick to react to their environment. As students become attuned to what the rabbits are doing, and make adjustments, they become more attuned to themselves, and other people too.”***

***Vezina said, “It’s nice to have animals in the room. When we talk about heavy things, they help me destress.”***

***Mackinaw-McKellar said, “Animals help me with emotion.”***

***“Ley-Anne understands the unique challenges faced by students who are coping with change, loss, and grief and she is able to provide them with the support they need to navigate in a healthy and constructive manner,” said Chris Adamson, Principal, Innisfail High School.***

***“Students who have participated in the course have learned important skills and are now better equipped to face the next obstacles in their lives,” said Adamson.***



***“I love working with students in this course,” said Mountain. “These students are capable, resilient and brilliant.”***

***“They have hard conversations and, together, have created a safe space for each other. They each show up, whole heartedly. They work and find their way through hard things. That’s pure courage, honesty and bravery,” said Mountain.***

