

Helping youth succeed a focus for Peel CAS

Peel CAS has made helping youth leaving care to achieve success a priority and created a strategy which focuses on education and employment. Youth are encouraged to stay in school and can apply for bursaries to pursue post-secondary education.

Thanks to the generosity of donors to the Peel Children's Aid Foundation, in 2017/2018, youth received bursaries totaling \$230,000. Three youth involved with Peel CAS are sharing their experiences and how this generosity is helping them to achieve their educational dreams.



Drué My two sisters and I came into care when I was six years old. My aunt and uncle agreed to take care of us and I lived with them until I was 18. I'm now attending Brock University and studying Psychology. I just love learning about people and how they think and act.

I'm going into my fourth year and then will pursue my Masters in Social Work. I know that I want to help others. Whether that ends up being at risk youth or the elderly I'm not sure yet, but my goal is to support people who need it the most.

My sister received a bursary before I did. I went to the agency and foundation bursary dinner with her and met a lot of people but didn't really understand the process or all the work that went into it. Then I had an opportunity to spend time working with Peel Children's Aid Foundation. There are a lot of people working in the foundation and at the agency who do everything they can to ensure youth like me can get a bursary. And then of course there are the donors. This experience has inspired me to be able to give back when I can. I hope to one day be a donor instead of recipient so I can also impact lives in such a positive way.



Kazeem I have been involved with children's aid since about grade 10 and now I'm a crown ward. After high school I was originally taking business but I wasn't really happy. As a child I dreamed of becoming a doctor or working in medicine but thought it would be too difficult. My worker at Peel CAS inspired me to pursue a career that would make me happy.

I have always wanted to help people and make them smile and so I made the decision to go into nursing. It is really hard but I am not giving up. I get help when I need it and will be taking some extra courses before my next semester starts.

Participating in the Village, a group for black youth in care where I got to connect with staff mentors and other youth, helped me to develop skills I am using in my field. I used to be really shy and now I am more social.

Receiving a bursary has had such a positive impact on me academically. It allows me to focus on my studies and reduce financial stress. I am really grateful for the donors who are giving us the chance to improve our lives. When we get older we will remember this and because of our success will be able to pay it back and become donors too.



Raven I was 14 when I first became involved with CAS. When I was 16 I moved onto Independent Living which meant that I lived on my own, and worked, while I was still in high school. It wasn't easy but I had really great support from my high school. I formed a great connection with one of my teachers. She believed in me and I still visit her and consider her family.

I'm attending Lakehead University in Orillia where I'm doing an Honours Bachelor of Commerce and Business so I can pursue a career in accounting. Receiving a bursary has helped to relieve so much pressure. University is expensive and housing is expensive so the financial support means I have been able to spend more time focusing on my education instead of work.

It is hard to express the gratitude I feel. Just knowing that people are out there that see the importance of education and are willing to invest in the future of others is amazing. I do what I can to spread the word that help is out there for those who need it. Education is empowerment, so in the future I would love to give back in the same way.



For more information, contact Peel CAS at 905.363.6131 or visit

www.peelcas.org

EVENTS FOR YOUTH

MAY

4

OSAP LAB for CICs who are graduating high school and pursuing post-secondary education

8

JOB FAIR hosted in partnership with Peel CAS, VPI Networks and YMCA for youth in care ages 15 – 18

14-12

Youth will be representing Peel CAS at the provincial Civics Day hosted by the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies and the Ontario Child Advocate

17

Peel CAS and Peel CAS Foundation Joint Recognition Dinner where youth will receive educational bursaries totaling \$230,000

JUNE

7

Crown Ward Educational Championship Team Youth Advisory Council and Peel CAS Youth Council will be hosting a luncheon dubbed 'Think Big, Dream Big, Be Big' for youth ages 14 – 24 to meet and network with potential mentors, employers and professionals from various industries.