



Ron Smyth Memorial Scholarship

Opportunity Scholarship – 2026 Announcement

Dear Students, Educators, and Community Partners,

The Committee of the Ronald P. Smyth Memorial Scholarship Fund is pleased to re-offer the Ronald P. Smyth Opportunity Scholarship, an exceptional annual award that provides up to \$25,000 over four years to support a deserving student in pursuing post-secondary education in Canada. This scholarship was created to honour Ron Smyth's enduring belief in the power of opportunity — the idea that with support, perseverance, and courage, every young person deserves the chance to build a meaningful future.

This year, the application process has changed. In previous years, each school was asked to nominate one candidate for the Opportunity Scholarship. ***Beginning this year, students may now apply directly.*** This change allows any eligible student who meets the criteria and wishes to share their story to apply on their own initiative. We believe this approach better reflects the scholarship's purpose — to create access and opportunity for those who have persevered through significant challenges and are ready to take the next step in their educational journey.

Eligibility and Application Process

The Opportunity Scholarship is intended for a student who has faced significant personal, financial, or social hardship and yet has continued to show extraordinary perseverance, determination, and character in pursuing their goals. We are seeking candidates whose stories reflect resilience in the face of real adversity — students who have overcome life challenges that might otherwise have prevented them from pursuing post-secondary education.

Applicants must be students currently attending a local area high school and planning to begin a post-secondary program in Canada in the upcoming academic year.

Each applicant must submit the following materials:

1. Personal Essay – A typewritten essay (maximum 1500 words) outlining their personal story, the hardships they have faced, how they have demonstrated perseverance and resilience, and how receiving this scholarship would impact their ability to pursue post-secondary education.
2. Letters of Support – Two letters of recommendation, with at least one from a school representative (principal, teacher, guidance counsellor, or coach). The second may come from a community leader, employer, or organization representative who can speak to the student's character, perseverance, and contribution.
3. Personal Introduction Video – A short video (maximum 2 minutes) in which the applicant introduces themselves and shares their story in their own words. This video should provide insight into who they are, their values, and what this opportunity would mean to them.
4. Academic Transcript – Grade 11 and current Grade 12 marks to date, demonstrating consistent effort, growth, and potential for success in post-secondary studies.

Selection Criteria

The Committee will review applications with attention to the following qualities:

- Evidence of significant hardship or adversity that has impacted the student's life
- Clear demonstration of perseverance, resilience, and courage in overcoming challenges
- Academic effort, curiosity, and potential for post-secondary success
- Strong personal character and community engagement
- Demonstrated financial need and limited access to other educational supports

Our Vision

The Ronald P. Smyth Opportunity Scholarship represents far more than financial assistance. It stands as a symbol of hope, perseverance, and belief in potential. Our goal is to remove barriers and open doors for a student who has faced extraordinary challenges — allowing them to pursue their education, their dreams, and their future with confidence.

Over time, we hope that recipients of this award will embody Ron Smyth's legacy of compassion, courage, and community spirit — and continue to inspire others through the strength of their journey.

Sincerely,

The Committee of the Ronald P. Smyth Memorial Scholarship Fund