



Coastal Community awards \$20,000 in scholarships to local students

Vancouver Island, B.C. – August 26, 2026: Coastal Community Credit Union is celebrating eight local high school seniors with creative ideas for strengthening their communities. Each student received a \$2,000 scholarship toward a program at an undergraduate college or university, trade school or special interest school.

Since 2005, Coastal Community's scholarship program has supported local high school seniors as they take their next steps after graduation. To apply, students submit a project plan to improve their community. Based on these plans, eight students are chosen for a \$2,000 scholarship, with two selected as overall winners. Connor Hocking of Royal Bay Secondary School and Laci Zimmermann of North Island Secondary School earned this year's top honours. They will each receive up to \$1,000 to implement their projects, as well as an additional \$1,000 scholarship.

Connor has seen first-hand how sports can help kids build confidence, make friends, and learn leadership skills. His project was to host a Free Try Lacrosse afternoon in Langford so youngsters could try the sport in a fun, welcoming environment. His plan also included organizing a community gear drive and swap to help more families get involved.

Laci saw that families, often including Elders, did not have a comfortable place to sit and eat during tournaments at Port McNeill's high school/community track and soccer field. Her project was to build and install a picnic table so families from neighbouring communities have somewhere to gather and eat between games.

"What stood out to us was how much care all of these students put into their ideas," said Allyson Prescesky, AVP, Community Impact & Corporate Communications at Coastal Community. "They looked at what was happening around them and came up with thoughtful ways to improve their communities. We're excited to see what these young leaders do next!"

Congratulations to this year's Coastal Community scholarship recipients:

Amy O'Brien	Ballenas Secondary School, Parksville
Ava Gauthier	Nanaimo District Secondary School, Nanaimo
Clarisse Kennedy	Mount Douglas Secondary School, Victoria
Connor Hocking	Royal Bay Secondary School, Colwood
Laci Zimmermann	North Island Secondary School, Port McNeill
Madison Ponsford	Kwalikum Secondary School, Qualicum Beach
Richa Wahl Gauvin	Kwalikum Secondary School, Qualicum Beach
Riley Pardell	Ecole Royal Bay Secondary School, Colwood



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Coastal Community Credit Union and our Integris division respectfully acknowledge that we operate on the Traditional Territories of the Coast Salish, Nuuchahnulth, Kwakwaka'wakw, Dakelh and Secwépemc Peoples. We offer our respect to past, present, and future generations of the Indigenous Peoples of these Lands and commit to building relationships grounded in listening, learning, and action.

About Coastal Community

Coastal Community Credit Union, including Integris, a division of Coastal Community Credit Union, is a member-owned financial cooperative committed to helping people and communities thrive. With a focus on personalized service, trusted advice, and local impact, Coastal Community provides personal and business financial services members and clients across the communities we serve.