



BULLETIN

Daughter of HSA member wins NUPGE scholarship

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For the second year running, a student has won NUPGE's visible minorities scholarship through HSA's affiliation to the National Union.

Each year, the National Union of Public and General Employees offers four scholarships that reflect its pursuit of equal opportunity for all workers. These scholarships are open to the children of NUPGE's 320,000 members who are seeking a post-secondary education.

Lisa Aird's essay, chronicling her great-grandfather's experience in coming to Canada, won her this year's \$1000 Visible Minorities scholarship. Lisa is the daughter of Mee Yung Aird, a Medical Technologist at St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver.

The other awards NUPGE offers are the Tommy Douglas scholarship, the Terry Fox memorial scholarship, and the scholarship for aboriginal Canadians. Children of HSA members have won NUPGE scholarships for three of the last four years: Melina Mathew won the Visible Minorities scholarship last year, and Tasmien Behra won the Tommy Douglas scholarship in 1996.

Congratulations!

For more information on other scholarships available through HSA, please contact Maryann Abbs, HSA's Education Officer.

Excerpt from Lisa Aird's winning scholarship essay:

A cold gust of wind blew at fifteen year old Lai Hong On, ripping the warmth away from his body as he walked across the dock. It was 1919, and the boat from Hong Kong had finally met its destination: Canada.

The papers were in order, he had paid the huge sum of \$500 for the head tax, and yet anxiety was written on his face as he pondered the new life he was going to build in Canada. He recognized that his relatives were going to provide the only support from which he could draw.

Initially Hong On went to school for one year, in order to get a rudimentary knowledge of the English language, then he began to work ... first in his relatives' laundromat, then in the restaurant industry.

Years of hard work passed. Hong On went back to China briefly and was married by arrangement. In 1954, his wife ... Gin Oui ... and daughter joined him in The Pas, Manitoba.

In this cold North Canadian small town there were only four other Chinese families. Gin Oui went briefly to school to learn some English, but the classes did not last long. She was left with little knowledge of the English language, and therefore in relative isolation. As their little daughter grew up and went to school, Gin Oui began

to rely on her as an interpreter, and so the older generation was burdened with reliance, and the younger was burdened with responsibility.

In the present day, Canada is a haven for immigrants and refugees alike. The immigration process has become easier, and the amount of discrimination against visible minorities has dropped considerably. These improvements are due to the expansion and high quality of the public services, such as education, law enforcement, social work, recreation and fitness, and health care, offered to Canadians through the government. These services guarantee visible minorities with a relatively high basic standard of living, acceptance, respect for their culture, integration, equality, security and opportunities for growth. Furthermore, these services remove the burden of dependent immigrants from their relatives, and gives them independence. It is essential, therefore, that public services are administered to provide service of the highest quality, as the quality of life for visible minorities depends upon it.

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