

Gratitude

report

2025-2026



The Hall family with OC President Dr. Neil Fassina and students at the Hall School of Business and Entrepreneurship announcement

Growing Impact, *Together*



Planting the seeds for students, for industry, and for a stronger Okanagan.

OC OKANAGAN COLLEGE
FOUNDATION



Okanagan College's Youth Exhibition Powwow September, 2024, featured members from the Syilx Okanagan and Secwépemc Nations

Okanagan College respectfully acknowledges that the Penticton, Kelowna and Vernon campuses are located on the lands of the Syilx Okanagan People and the Salmon Arm campus is located on the lands of the Secwépemc People. We honour our relations and hold up their knowledge, welcoming all to our house of learning.



The Ripple Effect

This was a record year for Okanagan College Foundation.

Thanks to your generosity, we recorded nearly \$10 million in revenue, the highest annual total in the Foundation's history.

A defining milestone was the transformational commitment of \$10 million over the next ten years from the Hall Family Foundation. As the largest gift ever to Okanagan College, it established the Hall School of Business and Entrepreneurship.

Our donor community also helped students access life-changing awards and bursaries, advanced major projects like the Don Folk and Family Recreation and Wellness Centre and the Centre for Food, Wine and Tourism, and created new opportunities for students to learn, connect, and thrive.

The stories in this report reflect the many ways philanthropy is shaping lives across our region. They celebrate students pursuing their goals, donors investing in education, and community partners working alongside Okanagan College to build a stronger future.

Thank you for making this extraordinary year possible.

Together, we are planting seeds of possibility that will benefit not only students, but our entire region for generations to come.



Ginny Manning
Board Chair
(2026 – Present)



Helen Jackman
Executive Director



Katie Newman
Board Chair
(2023 – 2026)

Year in Review

Income



Total revenue

\$9,996,754



Student support

\$1,772,235



Program support

\$2,780,483



Capital projects

\$2,554,953



Investment and other income

\$2,889,083

Expenses



Total expenses

\$6,263,330



Student support

\$1,663,707



Program support

\$255,779



Capital projects

\$3,739,146



Fundraising and other expenses

\$604,698

Net revenue \$3,733,424

Full financial statements are available at okanagancollegefoundation.ca

A Community Behind Every Student

Imagine raising two young daughters and working overnight shifts between classes and assignments, while trying to build a better future for your family. This is Adam's story.

"I wanted to build something that would give them the best possible life. That's when I decided to come back to school," he shared.

Like many adult learners, Adam faced a difficult question: how to return to school while supporting a family. Thanks to a combination of hard work, flexible learning options, and a generous community, he found a way forward.

While completing his Bachelor of Business Administration at Okanagan College, Adam received a number of awards: the Bruce DeHart Memorial Bursary, the Kiwanis Club of Penticton Business Award, and the Spence Family Business Award. That support made a huge difference.

Adam's story is unique. The impact is not. Across the region, many students are pursuing their dreams, thanks to the support of donors who help them overcome challenges and realize their goals.

In 2025-26, OC Foundation distributed \$1.6 million through 1,040 awards to 654 students – our largest ever disbursement.

"The awards helped me financially, of course. But they also gave me confidence. Knowing that someone you've never met believes in your potential is incredibly motivating."

– Adam Giffin

Behind every award is a student with a dream. Some are entering the trades. Others are pursuing careers in health care, technology, or the arts. But what they all have in common is the determination to grow and contribute to their communities.

"From the bottom of my heart, thank you for believing in us, for investing in our futures, and for making all of this possible."

Your support is nurturing growth and success, fostering a prosperous future for our students.



Igniting the Spark

A single generous act can change so many lives.

This year, the Hall Family Foundation made a transformational \$10 million investment in Okanagan College. The largest gift in the college's history and the biggest ever to a college in British Columbia, it established the **Hall School of Business and Entrepreneurship** at Okanagan College.

The Hall family knows what it takes to build something successful. As accomplished entrepreneurs themselves, they've turned ideas into thriving businesses. Now they want to help others do the same – by giving people the practical skills, support, and finance needed to develop strong, scalable ventures that benefit the whole community.

"It is our goal to light that spark in many more young people today so that they too may enjoy the fruits of their entrepreneurial and business endeavours. As an entrepreneur, mentor and investor, I know firsthand the difference this support will make."

– **Fraser Hall**, co-founder of Recon Instruments Ltd, Article Furniture, Rhino Ventures Inc. and Director of the Hall Family Foundation

This spirit feels right at home in the Okanagan. Entrepreneurship is in the region's DNA. From agricultural entrepreneurs to technology start-ups, the Okanagan is a place where people roll up their sleeves, dream big, and make things happen.

Okanagan College already plays a key role in nurturing the skills that drive these businesses. The Hall family's investment will expand that even further. With access to the Hall Entrepreneurship Incubator, students across all programs will work with mentors and seasoned entrepreneurs, test ideas, access startup funding, and build teams.

This gift sends a powerful message: your ideas matter here.

"In getting to know Okanagan College more deeply, we came to appreciate the passionate and dedicated people who work there, the drive of the students and alumni, and the College's strong connection to the community. We are confident that, with our investment, the Hall School of Business and Entrepreneurship will become the premier place in Canada for students to learn, practice, and launch entrepreneurship, as a school defined not just by excellence in the classroom, but by real-world impact," said Ed Hall, co-founder of Canadian Adult Communities and Regency Retirement Resorts.



The Hall family

This gift is about giving the next generation – and anyone with determination and a good idea – the support they need to build a thriving future for the region they call home.



Scan to learn more and for opportunities to get involved.

A Place to Thrive, Built by Community

For decades, the OC Kelowna campus was missing one of its most important classrooms. There was no gymnasium. No space for intramural leagues or tournaments. Convocation ceremonies were held outside.

Thanks to an extraordinary show of generosity from families, alumni, businesses, and community leaders, we have reached our **\$14 million** fundraising goal and will open the Don Folk and Family Recreation and Wellness Centre in fall 2026!



Cliff and Lois Serwa

"This Centre will be a game-changer for Okanagan College. It will transform the student experience, support health and well-being, and create opportunities for connection in ways that simply haven't existed before."

– **Dr. Neil Fassina**, OC president.

The impact of the Centre extends far beyond the College. It will become a gathering place for our entire community, fostering a lasting sense of belonging. Designed with the whole student experience in mind, it will also provide a place to unwind and recharge, building healthy bodies and healthy minds.

Generosity Thrives Here

Bringing this vision to life required a massive collective effort that was remarkable to witness.

The momentum began as we launched the campaign with a transformational \$5 million gift from the Folk family, inspired by a profound belief in the power of sport to build confidence and resilience.

Others quickly joined them. Honorary Campaign Chairs Cliff and Lois Serwa contributed \$1 million. Later, a partnership with the City of Kelowna brought an additional \$4 million, allowing the College to expand the design and provide students and community with access to City-run leisure programming.



Thanks to our incredible donors, who showed up in many ways – from tribute gifts to corporate contributions and alumni support – we have crossed the finish line!

It only happened because an entire community came together to make it possible. We didn't just build a recreation and wellness centre. Together, we created our most important classroom. A place where healthy futures will thrive.

From left to right: Jim Kentel, Braden McKay, Robin Smith (President of the Rotary Club of Kelowna), Geoff McIntyre and Darcy Haw



A Lifetime of Giving Back

When Jayne Brooks first walked through Okanagan College's doors as a Business Administration student in 1974, she had no idea she was beginning a relationship that would span more than five decades.

After graduating, she was invited to join the Business Administration Program Advisory Committee, opening the door to a lifelong connection with the College. She later became one of the founding members and first president of the Okanagan College Alumni Association (OCAA), helping create a community that engages graduates with the institution.

That connection grew into a career spanning more than 30 years as an instructor, dean and academic leader. But no matter what role she held, what she loved most was helping people discover what they were capable of.

"Teaching can be incredibly rewarding," she says. **"There's a sense of accomplishment when we see a learner get it and succeed."**

One experience, however, forever changed the way she thought about the power of education. During a trip to Africa, she met children who faced unimaginable hardship yet remained determined to learn. They understood that education represented something far greater than a classroom. It was their opportunity for a better future.

That experience stayed with Jayne.

"I realized that sometimes opportunity is all it takes. If we can help students access education and experiences beyond the classroom, we can change the direction of their lives."

— Jayne Brooks



Today, Jayne continues to create those opportunities. Over the years, her generosity has taken many forms, from recurring gifts for specific projects to a planned gift and an annual student award. For her, the method matters less than the impact.

"I like to give back and support worthy causes, whatever they might be," she says. **"Every little bit helps. Even if you think it might not be enough, you can be sure that it will help somebody."**

Jayne's lifelong commitment to Okanagan College has been recognized with both the Distinguished Alumni Award and the Distinguished Service Award. Yet perhaps her greatest legacy is one that can't be captured by an award. More than 50 years after she first arrived on campus, she is still opening doors for others through the opportunities her generosity creates.

The Sky Is the Limit

Every flight begins long before an aircraft leaves the ground. It starts with the skilled Aircraft Maintenance Engineers (AMEs) whose expertise, precision, and commitment to safety keep Canada's aircraft flying.

As British Columbia's aerospace industry continues to grow, so does the need for these highly trained AMEs. Thanks to a transformative \$17 million commitment from Barry Lapointe through the BPL Legacy Association, more students will now be able to pursue those careers at Okanagan College.

Through a partnership between OC and the BPL Legacy Association, the charitable organization behind the KF Centre for Excellence, this investment will help establish a \$22 million centre for aerospace training and technology at Kelowna International Airport.

"My goal has always been to inspire and prepare the next generation of aerospace professionals right here in the Okanagan. By expanding training opportunities through Okanagan College, we're investing in people, our community, and Canada's future in flight."

– **Barry Lapointe**, Founder & Chair,
BPL Legacy Association

Located beside the KF Centre for Excellence, the new facility will expand OC's Aircraft Maintenance Engineering program from 64 to 140 students each year, a critical increase that will help meet the growing demand across the Okanagan. It will be a place where students learn alongside industry, gaining experience in an environment that reflects the realities of today's aerospace sector.

"It's exciting that future students will have even more opportunities to grow, learn, and succeed. I am confident that the skills I am gaining will help my career take off," said Mikayla McDermott, student, Okanagan College.

BC's aerospace industry includes more than 200 companies and contributes approximately \$2.5 billion to the local economy each year. Strengthening local training opportunities helps ensure those economic benefits continue to grow across the Okanagan and beyond.

By investing in education today, we can build a stronger workforce for an industry that plays a vital role in our province's future. Together, Okanagan College, the BPL Legacy Association, and industry partners are helping ensure the Okanagan continues to be a place where talent, innovation, and opportunity reach new heights.

Dr. Neil Fassina, Barry Lapointe, Mikayla McDermott, Dr. Samantha Lenci and Caitlin Hartigan



A Dream Decades in the Making

For years, Jacquelyn Durant believed her chance to become a nurse had passed.

She built a career, raised two children, and navigated personal issues that prevented her from completing nursing school when she first enrolled in 2011. Although the dream never disappeared, it often felt out of reach.

Later, with the encouragement of her husband and family, Jacquelyn decided to try again. Today, she is in OC's Practical Nursing program in Salmon Arm, proving that it is never too late to pursue a calling. **"As the saying goes, if not now, then when? If not me, then who?"** she says.



Returning to school in her 50s has been both exciting and challenging. Like many mature learners, she is balancing coursework, clinical training, and the financial realities of starting a new chapter later in life. Support from the Trish and Phil Practical Nursing Bursary has helped ease those pressures, allowing her to focus on what matters most: learning the skills she needs to care for others.

For Jacquelyn, nursing is an opportunity to leave a positive, lasting impact on every person she serves. **"Nursing is more than a profession – it is a job done by people who care deeply and strive for excellence."**

Stories like Jacquelyn's remind us that education rarely follows a straight line. Through donor generosity, students can pursue a future that once seemed impossible. And the impact extends far beyond the teaching lab, reaching the patients, families, and communities whose lives they will touch.

"I feel very fortunate to be doing my training at Okanagan College," she says. "Thank you so much for helping me make a lifelong dream a reality."

– Jacquelyn Durant



Imagine Excellence

This year marked an exciting new chapter for the Okanagan's culinary, wine, and tourism scene.

From community celebrations to international recognition and visionary new partnerships, each milestone reinforced our region's reputation and potential. We are becoming a world-renowned destination.

To meet this moment, we need a new kind of educational experience. Okanagan College is leading the way.



"The Okanagan is unique. For students, just like visitors, the experience is truly from field to fork and grape to glass. And Okanagan College is at the heart of the region, helping prepare the people who will shape its future."

– **Dr. Neil Fassina**, President, Okanagan College

Centre for Food, Wine and Tourism

In 2027, OC will open a vibrant new learning Centre that captures the essence of the Okanagan.

The \$61.5-million Centre for Food, Wine and Tourism will be Canada's first purpose-built facility to integrate food, beverage, and hospitality education and applied research.

A Recipe for Excellence

Jun 24, 2024

Breaking Ground – OC groundbreaking ceremony for the Centre for Food, Wine & Tourism.



Dr. Neil Fassina and Helen Jackman onstage at Elevate with local celebrity chefs who competed live, and judges Howard Soon, C.M., and Audrey Surrao

Oct 4, 2025

Elevate – Our new signature fundraising event, showcasing the best of the Okanagan culinary scene.

Oct 1, 2025

Chef Ned Bell appointed Creative Advisor – An Okanagan local, BC Chef Ambassador and inductee to the BC Restaurant Hall of Fame, Chef Bell will shape the vision for the Centre.

Oct 31, 2025

International Recognition – Kelowna was named the first Canadian Creative City of Gastronomy by UNESCO.



Students will sharpen their skills in professional learning spaces designed to reflect today's industry. They will learn from chefs, winemakers, and business leaders, explore local farms and vineyards, and gain worldwide experience.

Imagine a flagship restaurant showcasing local ingredients and emerging talent. A modern conference centre, overlooking the valley, where students bring exceptional events to life. Imagine excellence.

Over the past year, that future began taking shape in remarkable ways.

"Imagine ten years from now. Graduates from this Centre leading award-winning kitchens, shaping sustainable food systems, and representing the Okanagan on the world stage. Imagine a region that continues to grow not just in reputation, but in resilience, supported by people who were trained right here, with a deep understanding of what makes this place so unique. That's the future we can build together. And I couldn't be prouder to be part of it."

– **Chef Ned Bell**, Creative Advisor for the Centre for Food, Wine and Tourism



Scan to learn more and for opportunities to get involved



Nov 15, 2025

Inspiring Community Support –

Innkeeper's Gala raised more than \$175,000 for local community initiatives, including OC's Culinary Arts Department.

Fall 2027

Building Opening – New Centre opens for students.

Mar 19, 2026

A Powerful Partnership – OC announced a partnership with Niagara College to bring its renowned Winery and Viticulture curriculum to the Okanagan.

**2028 and beyond
Future Evolution** –

Ongoing investment in programming and applied research to meet industry needs.

A Passion Poured Forward

Some people collect wine. David Montpetit collects experiences. And wine!

Amazing meals have shaped the way he experiences the world and cares for people. Growing up in Ontario's Niagara wine region, David was drawn to the hospitality industry. At 14, he began working in restaurants as a dishwasher, then as a server, bartender, manager, and eventually investor.

That passion would lead him to study Hotel and Food Administration at the University of Guelph, where he completed a Bachelor Commerce degree in the field. But even as his career evolved, the memories of being a student trying to make ends meet stayed with him. **"I was a broke student myself,"** he says. **"I know just how hard it can be."**

Years later, standing on stage at Elevate, our signature culinary fundraiser event, those memories came flooding back. As a guest judge at the Black Box Chef Competition, David was inspired by OC's student chefs. In that moment, something clicked. **"When I was on stage, I felt compelled to help those students with their journeys,"** he shares.

What he didn't know was that inspiration was about to come full circle in a deeply personal way.

At his 60th birthday celebration just months later, surrounded by family and friends, David received a surprise gift unlike any he had ever known. In his honour, his wife Kim, through her family's Humphreys Family Foundation, established the David Montpetit Culinary Excellence Award Fund. The tribute was presented by Okanagan College President Dr. Neil Fassina - \$60,000 for 60 students on his 60th birthday.

David feels the Okanagan is ready. He believes that OC's new Centre for Food, Wine and Tourism and Kelowna's designation as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy will help students define the next chapter for our region. **"We have an opportunity here to set the benchmark,"** he says.

For David, hospitality is about generosity. About creating experiences that bring people together. And then passing that spirit forward to the next generation.

"I hope students give back. Whatever their passion is, elevate it and pass it on. Teach. Share wisdom and guidance. Raise everybody up."

– David Montpetit

David Montpetit and Graham Goebel (Superintendent for PCL Construction)
at the Centre for Food, Wine and Tourism construction site



Built for Success

Most students don't get the chance to build a dream car in class.

At Okanagan College, that's exactly what a group of Automotive Service Technician (AST) and Collision Repair Technician (CRT) students are doing this year. Working together in the shop, they're assembling a Factory Five Racing Mk4 Roadster – a replica of the iconic Cobra sports car.

The project offers something few classes can replicate: the chance for students to apply their skills to a real vehicle from start to finish. They are installing components, refining bodywork, and gaining the experience they need to prepare them for promising careers in BC's automotive industry.

But the impact doesn't stop when the final bolt is tightened.

Thanks to a \$30,000 gift from Craftsman Collision, the completed vehicle will be auctioned, and the proceeds will be reinvested through the **OC Foundation's Kit Car Fund** to support future kit car projects, equipment upgrades, and enhanced learning opportunities for students. It's a model designed to create sustainable impact.

"What begins as a collection of parts becomes something much greater: a complete, outstanding vehicle built with teamwork, problem-solving, and determination."

– **Danny Marques**, Associate Dean,
Trades & Apprenticeship

Stay tuned for the auction!

It will be your chance to own a remarkable vehicle while helping the next generation of skilled trades professionals get their careers into gear.



AST and CRT students unboxing the kit car.

Life With Intent

Isn't that wonderful?

Greg and Elizabeth Gregory lived with curiosity, creativity, and deep intention. Their journey carried them from wartime England to the deserts of Utah and eventually to the Okanagan Valley. Even with their passing, their story continues through a generous legacy gift to Okanagan College that will impact students for generations.

Greg and Elizabeth profoundly believed in the value of education, precisely because they had experienced its loss. While Greg served in the British Army during the Second World War, Elizabeth was forced to leave school at age 14, which left her with a conviction: education should never be reserved only for those who can afford it.

War, sacrifice, and rebuilding showed them firsthand how easily access to learning can slip away, and the incredible doors it can open. This belief inspired their gift.

After the war, Greg immigrated to Canada, where he met Elizabeth. Together, they built a rich life full of exploration. They camped across Utah's vast deserts, collected fossils and arrowheads, sketched wildlife, and never stopped learning.

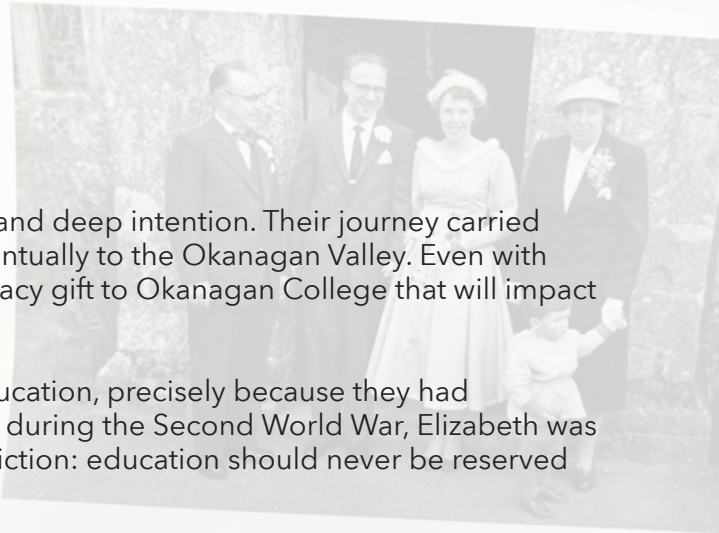
When their daughter, Joy, was in her last years of high school, they moved to the Okanagan and fell in love with the region's beauty and sense of community. Their neighbour and close friend Jean remembers them as people who embraced life fully. **"They believed you should live with intent,"** she says.

Though neither attended Okanagan College, they believed in its mission and wanted to help determined young people who were willing to work hard and build better lives. Through their will, they established an annual bursary for students facing financial barriers who are pursuing careers in the skilled trades.

"Greg would have been gratified to know their gift was changing someone's future,"

Jean says with a smile. Elizabeth's reaction, she believes, would have been simpler:

"Isn't that wonderful?"



Interested in leaving a gift in your will?

Learn more about planned
giving options by contacting

Sasha Carter

scarter@okanagan.bc.ca





Your generosity helps students thrive and
strengthens the Okanagan.

Thank You!

Okanagan College Foundation

Website: okanagancollegefoundation.ca

Telephone: 250-862-5630

Toll Free: 1-888-650-6968

Email: foundation@okanagan.bc.ca

Charitable Registration #86248 8194 RR0001

OC OKANAGAN COLLEGE
FOUNDATION