



BLACK ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP FUND

2025 AWARDS LUNCHEON

SUNDAY OCTOBER 5TH, 2025

LE NOUVEL HOTEL, 1740 RENÉ-LÉVESQUE OUEST, MONTREAL, QC H3H 1R3



HISTORY

The Black Academic Scholarship Fund (BASF) is a non-profit organization which was founded in 1991 and exists to provide financial assistance to students from the Black Community who are in the process of acquiring an education in any area of study from an accredited institution; and to provide career advice, mentoring and counselling services. **To date, BASF has awarded over 300 scholarships with funds donated by supporters as well as from fundraising activities.**

The BASF collaborates with other organizations to identify internships and networking opportunities for alumni. BASF alumni have not only distinguished themselves in their professions, they have also actively contributed to the greater good through philanthropic and advocacy activities.

The Jackie Robinson International Golf Tournament is one of the major activities hosted by BASF annually to raise funds for the scholarship program. **Additionally, our sponsors have played a principal role in our ability to offer a wide variety of scholarships for the past 34 years.**

MISSION

The Black Academic Scholarship Fund (BASF) exists to provide financial support, showcase talent, and provide resources to students in the Black Community. We believe that everyone in society benefits when we foster and nurture young potential.

2025 AWARDS LUNCHEON PROGRAM

12:30 - 12:45 PM

WELCOME

Kathleen & Nicole

1:45 - 2:45 PM

AWARDS

Scholarship Recipients

12:45 - 1:45 PM

LUNCH

Networking

2:45 - 3:00 PM

CLOSING REMARKS

Raffle



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD



KATHLEEN SUITE
PRESIDENT

The board of the Black Academic Scholarship Fund offers its congratulations to the 2025 scholarship recipients and wish them another successful year.

Recipients, we applaud you on your achievements and encourage you to continue your pursuit of academic excellence. The path to success is not always easy. Hard work, dedication, focus, and sacrifice are often required to achieve one's goals. As you journey, continue to surround yourselves with positive people who

encourage you and care about your success. Do not be afraid to ask for help when you need it. In addition to your family, friends, and teachers, the BASF can also be a source of support. We encourage you to keep in touch.

Today's celebration would not be possible without the continued support from our sponsors, donors, community, and our dedicated Board. The BASF thanks you for sharing its vision and is grateful for the trust you have placed in its mission.

Kathleen Suite, President BASF

kathleen.suite@basfund.ca

www.basfund.ca



BOARD APPRECIATION & WELCOME

As we gather for this special luncheon, we take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude to two exceptional individuals whose dedication and leadership have helped shape the Black Academic Scholarship Fund (BASF).

Thank you to Allison Saunders, a longstanding Board member whose unwavering support of our communications efforts and commitment to renewal and continuity have been instrumental in advancing our mission. Allison's voice and vision have left a lasting impact, and we are deeply appreciative of her years of service.

Thank you to Chike Odenigbo, a 2016 BASF scholarship recipient who brought his passion full circle by serving on the Board. Chike played a key role in supporting the scholarship program and our annual fundraising golf tournament, helping to ensure that future scholars continue to thrive.

As we bid farewell to these valued members, we are equally excited to welcome two new leaders to our Board:

Nathalie Perreault, Chair of the Scholarship Program, brings a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to empowering students through education.

Siamanda Chege, our new Director, joins us with a strong background in community engagement and a shared passion for BASF's mission.

We look forward to the fresh perspectives and energy Nathalie and Siamanda will bring as we continue to grow and serve our community.



BOARD MEMBERS



KATHLEEN SUITE
President

Kathleen Suite is a graduate of Concordia University (BCom Finance & Accounting). After 20 plus years as a financial controller in two medium-sized private organizations, she now runs her own business, providing tax and accounting services to individuals, corporations and charitable organizations.

Kathleen is a firm believer of the principle of “giving back” to one’s own community and the wider community at large. She is especially passionate about education and how it impacts our youth. At BASF, she incorporates this passion as well as her accounting knowledge to ensure that the scholarship fund remains a viable and sustainable venture.

Nicole Piggott, founder of Synclusiv, has dedicated her career to fostering inclusive workplaces. She has held leadership roles at Women in Governance (WiG), Bombardier Aerospace, RioTinto, IOCC, and FedEx Canada. Notably, she negotiated the first partnership agreements between IOCC and Indigenous communities. At WiG, Nicole played a key role in developing the Gender Parity Certification, incorporating intersectionality in the assessment.

Since launching Synclusiv in 2021, the company has rapidly grown, shaping EDI strategies for top Canadian companies. In addition to the BASF, Nicole also serves on several boards, such as Impact (formerly Partnership Africa Canada) and the National Safety Council, and has guest lectured at major international conferences and universities across North America.



NICOLE PIGGOTT
Vice-President,
Chair Strategy
and Outreach

Gabrielle Piggott is a Manager of Marketing and Consultancy at Synclusiv, where she contributes to all aspects of the business from product design and marketing to business development client support on DE&I initiatives. With a Bachelor of Arts from McGill University in Gender, Sexuality, Feminist, and Social Justice Studies and minors in Art History and Communication Studies, Gabrielle is a passionate advocate for diverse and intersectional representation in both her professional and personal life.

Her dedication to equity and social justice has fuelled her involvement with non-profit organizations, including the Black Academic Scholarship Fund, Groupe Intervention Vidéo, and Apathy is Boring. At Synclusiv, Gabrielle also manages communication and marketing efforts, playing a key role in branding, “The Sync” newsletter, and enhancing the company’s social media presence.



GABRIELLE PIGGOTT
Chair of Marketing
& Outreach



BOARD MEMBERS



**NATHALIE
PERREAULT**

Chair of Scholarship
Program

Nathalie Perreault is the founder of NPC Consultants inc., an HR consulting firm dedicated to helping organizations and individuals unlock their full potential through strategic talent solutions and personalized coaching. With a strong foundation in business development from her years in the financial services industry, she brings a unique blend of analytical insight and people-focused strategy to every engagement.

A firm believer in access to education for all, she champions initiatives that support lifelong learning and equitable opportunities in the workplace. Passionate about empowering growth, she partners with clients to build thriving cultures and resilient leadership teams.

Siamanda Chege is a social entrepreneur and advocate for women's empowerment, cultural heritage, and equitable access to education. She is the founder of Beberavi and Siamanda Collectif, social enterprises that partner with women artisans worldwide to merge traditional craftsmanship with high fashion, creating sustainable livelihoods.

She also founded the Patrick Chege Memorial Orphanage in Kenya, providing holistic care and education to children in honor of her late father. With a Master's in Community and Economic Development and an Advanced Certificate in Nonprofit Management, Siamanda has collaborated with institutions like Parsons School of Design and contributed to global initiatives such as VISION 2050: Rethinking Fashion for a Regenerative Future.



SIAMANDA CHEGE
Board Directors



GLEN GUNNING
Board Director

Glen Gunning attended Kingston College and the Jamaica School of Agriculture before immigrating to Canada in 1970. In Canada, as a Chartered Insurance Broker (CAIB), he successfully practiced as a Life, Property & Casualty Insurance professional for 30 Years. His Involvement in the Montreal community has been extensive. He is a past President of both the Jamaica Association of Montreal and the Montreal Association of Black Business Persons and Professionals (MABBP). Mr. Gunning is a dedicated family man. He and his wife of 50 years, Dr. Pamela Gunning, are the proud parents of two accomplished daughters, Claudine & Roxane.



2025 BASF SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES



SYLVIA PIGGOTT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Gloria Mutombo

McGill University – Medicine

Gloria Mutombo is an incoming third-year medical student at McGill University, deeply committed to health equity, community empowerment, and transformative leadership. A proud daughter of Congolese immigrants, she serves as President of the Black Medical Students' Association, where she has led impactful initiatives—such as surgical workshops and arts-based events—that amplify Black voices in medicine. Gloria also collaborates with the Quebec Association of Sickle Cell Anemia and is currently leading research focused on health outcomes for Black women. With a background in ICU nursing, she brings both clinical experience and a strong advocacy lens to her work, striving to build a more inclusive healthcare system through education, outreach, and research.



HEALTH SCIENCES SCHOLARSHIP

Alheri Haruna

John Abbott College – Sciences

Alheri Haruna is a determined student who learned that success is about perseverance, not comparison. Transitioning from being the top student in high school to feeling like a “little fish in a big pond” at CEGEP challenged her self-esteem, especially as the only Black student in her cohort pursuing pre-med studies. Through resilience and a shift in mindset, she overcame self-doubt and rediscovered her drive. Actively involved in community service, tutoring, and leadership roles since high school, she remains committed to serving others while excelling academically. Her journey has taught her that as the pond gets bigger, the key is to keep swimming—focused on goals, values, and growth.



BEIERSDORF SCHOLARSHIP

Aliyah Baakoe

McGill University – Doctor of Medicine (MDCM)

Aliyah Baakoe is a medical student in the Doctor of Medicine (MDCM) program at McGill University's Outaouais campus. Committed to both academic excellence and community engagement, she has balanced rigorous studies with leadership roles in organizations such as the Black Medical Student Association (BMSA), the McGill Med-P/Dent-P Student Association (MDSA), and the International Federation of Medical Student Associations (IFMSA). She is also involved in radiology research and passionate about advancing equity in healthcare.

Driven by a strong sense of purpose, she has organized community events—such as a workshop on Deaf and hard-of-hearing awareness—and remains actively involved in mentorship and outreach. Her past initiatives include founding a Black Student Committee in high school, leading Black History Month projects in CEGEP, and tutoring peers in advanced math courses. Recognized for her leadership and dedication, she was named Women's Athlete of the Year in 2024 by the Nomads of Montmorency.

As a future physician, she aspires to continue combining academic achievement with meaningful service to underrepresented communities.



2025 BASF SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SCHOLARSHIP

Oluwaseunnla Precious Adelusi

Université de Sherbrooke – Sustainable Energy

A first-generation immigrant from Nigeria, Oluwaseunnla Precious Adelusi is a PhD candidate at the University of Sherbrooke, where she focuses on sustainable energy solutions through waste-to-energy research. She holds a bachelor's degree in materials engineering, a joint Erasmus Mundus master's in tribology, and is a recipient of the prestigious Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship. A passionate advocate for gender equity and educational access, she has led initiatives across Africa, Europe, and Canada—from founding mentorship programs for girls to organizing international webinars for African students. She also serves as the EMA Country Representative for Nigeria and has represented her university at leading global forums. Recognized with multiple national and international awards, she continues to balance academic excellence with community-driven leadership, fully aligned with BASF's mission to uplift and empower.



ENTRANCE SCHOLARSHIP

Cédric Jean

Université de Montréal – Baccalauréat en enseignement des mathématiques au secondaire

Cédric Jean est un étudiant en sciences de la nature qui s'apprête à débiter un baccalauréat en enseignement des mathématiques au secondaire. Passionné de sport et de musique depuis son enfance, il a joué au basketball au secondaire et au cégep, et s'implique aujourd'hui comme entraîneur dans son ancienne école pour transmettre cette passion aux jeunes. Musicien depuis neuf ans, il joue de la basse à l'école, à l'église et lors d'événements communautaires. Dévoué à l'éducation et à l'engagement jeunesse, il souhaite poursuivre ses activités parascolaires tout en poursuivant ses études universitaires, sans compromis.



ENTRANCE SCHOLARSHIP

Wilhem Pamba

l'Université de Sherbrooke – Études en droit

Wilhem Pamba est un finissant du Collège Dawson dans le programme Law, Society, and Justice, et il poursuit désormais des études en droit à l'Université de Sherbrooke. Actuellement employé au ministère du Tourisme, il combine ses intérêts pour la justice sociale, le droit et la représentation des communautés marginalisées, notamment noires et queers.

Son intérêt pour le droit a émergé à travers le théâtre, où il a découvert le pouvoir de l'art oratoire pour sensibiliser et remettre en question les normes sociales. Son parcours à Dawson a été marqué par des projets comme la conférence DCMUN 2025, qui a renforcé son engagement envers la justice internationale et les droits des minorités. Wilhem aspire à utiliser sa voix, ses compétences en communication et ses engagements communautaires pour créer un avenir plus équitable au Canada.



2025 BASF SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES



UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

Mélissa Délalie Houinsou

McGill University – Medicine

Mélissa Délalie Houinsou is a second-year medical student at McGill University and a passionate advocate for health equity, especially within Black and marginalized communities. Graduating summa cum laude with an Honours Bachelor of Health Sciences from the University of Ottawa, Mélissa's work bridges medicine, community engagement, and creativity. She founded Health Corner, a bilingual health literacy platform amplifying Black health leaders' voices and fostering visibility. Her research on sociocultural influences in obstetrical pain management and menstruation stigma informs her commitment to culturally sensitive care. As a published author and TEDx speaker, Mélissa blends storytelling with advocacy, while mentoring aspiring Black medical students and driving local civic change through initiatives like Cité Elles. Rooted in resilience and multidimensionality, her mission is to transform health outcomes through community, education, and innovation.



UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

Laury Gueyie Noutiamo

McGill University – Medicine

Laury Gueyie is a third-year medical student at McGill University's Outaouais campus, committed to advancing equity in healthcare and medical education. As the inaugural Outaouais representative for the Black Medical Students' Association of McGill, she brought the first BMSA event to the campus—a surgical workshop that also fostered dialogue on identity and inclusion. She has since served as Vice-President of EDI for the Association of Women Surgeons, mentored aspiring Black medical students, and contributed to more inclusive admissions as an MMI evaluator. Outside of school, she co-leads Hôpital des Nounours, a community initiative supporting young children, particularly from low-income Black and immigrant families. Laury is dedicated to practicing medicine with both excellence and purpose—ensuring the doors she walks through remain open for others.



GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

Yasmine Elmi

McGill University – Doctor of Medicine (MD-PhD)

Yasmine Elmi is a first-year student in McGill University's competitive joint MD-PhD program, specializing in medicine and epidemiology. Her academic work focuses on addressing racial and ethnic disparities in sexual and reproductive health, particularly among Black and Muslim women in Canada. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Translational and Molecular Medicine and a Master's in Family Medicine and Global Health from McGill, where she leads research on youth-led participatory health projects in Nigeria. Yasmine is also a dedicated community advocate. She has led national outreach through Let's Talk Science, co-founded the Black Volunteer Collective, and helped launch a mentorship initiative supporting over 100 students during the pandemic. At McGill, she serves on the Anti-Racism and EDI Committee, where she organizes initiatives to amplify Black voices in academia. Her work bridges research, medicine, and community service.



2025 BASF SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES



BATSHAW BURSARY

Trisha Melissa George

Saint James School of Medicine

Trisha is a medical student at Saint James School of Medicine in the Caribbean. After overcoming a difficult and unstable childhood, she found purpose through education and resilience. Originally in nursing, she transitioned to medicine after recognizing her greater potential — earning a 50% tuition scholarship through her MCAT performance. Her goal is to specialize in family and community medicine to serve underserved populations. Despite ongoing financial challenges, she remains determined, focused, and passionate about making a difference, both for herself and the communities she represents.



BATSHAW BURSARY

Kristina Bishop

Dawson College – Social Science

Kristina Bishop is a 22-year-old student currently completing her final semesters in the Social Science DEC program at Dawson College. She plans to pursue a bachelor's degree in social service, with the goal of building a better future for herself and supporting others who face adversity.

Kristina's path has been shaped by significant challenges. Raised in group homes under Youth Protection since the age of eight, she navigated instability, family incarceration, and personal rejection — experiences that tested her strength but also built her resilience. Despite these hardships, she found purpose in academics and sports, using education as a way to heal, grow, and move forward.

Those who know Kristina describe her as determined, empathetic, dependable, and ambitious. Her life experience has not only shaped her values but also fueled her commitment to helping others. She is passionate about creating change and proud of how far she's come.



BATSHAW BURSARY

Amelia Serena Lynch

John Abbott College

Currently in her final semester of CEGEP, Amelia views higher education as more than academics — it's a path toward personal growth, independence, and long-term success. Her academic journey hasn't been linear; she's faced setbacks, changed schools, and had to start over. But these experiences taught her resilience, perseverance, and the value of never giving up.

Recently, she completed a semester of volunteering at Saint-Anne's Hospital, where she participated in the Intergenerational Engagement program. By building meaningful connections with elderly residents, she saw firsthand the power of compassion and human connection — an experience that deepened her desire to uplift others in her community.



2024 RECIPIENTS



Left to right: Audrey Yansa, Kadesha Stephenson, India-Lynn Upshaw, Lamine Gueye, Wiertz Miguel Sime Tionjock, Jaelle Kouatchou Kouadop, Robertho Chéry, Oluwasuennla Adelusi, Jasmine Ivana Ramcharitar-Brown
Missing: Ian Klaus Springer, Salimata Konate (*Photography by Costa Sztrikacs*)



2024 AWARDS LUNCHEON



2024 AWARDS LUNCHEON



SCHOLARSHIP SPONSORS | THANK YOU

Your support helps us continue a legacy of excellence and opportunity.



PLATINUM SPONSORS

- Fondation Famille Pineau



GOLD SPONSORS

- Air Canada
- Beiersdorf, as represented by Ms. Sarnia Debrosse
- Ms. Nicole Piggott and Dr. Andrew Brown
- The Piggott Family (Adrienne, David, Gabrielle, Sydney and Glyne)
- Theresa Gayle Benedek



SILVER SPONSORS

- Batshaw Youth & Family Centres, as represented by Mr. Sam Barile
- Brian Bronfman Foundation

FRIENDS OF BASF

- O Milieu
- Ubisoft
- Jeff De Bruges
- IA Clarington Investment Inc.
- BMO Capital Markets
- Ms. Donna Killen – IA Private Wealth
- Ms. Nathalie Perreault
- Ms. Silvie Letendre
- Ms. Judith Brown
- Mr. Norm Steinberg
- Mr. Fitzgerald and Ms. Beryl Piggott
- Ms. Jean Griffith (née Piggott) and Mr. Darwin Griffith





BLACK ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP FUND

CONTACT US



info@basfund.ca



scholarships@basfund.ca



www.basfund.ca



3270 Rue Prince Charles,
Saint-Hubert, QC J3Y 4X4

DONATE

