

CELEBRATING BLACK ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE



**Black Academic Scholarship Fund
2023 Award Luncheon**

Sunday September 24, 2023

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 1996 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 29 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.

2023 LUNCHEON & AWARD CEREMONY PROGRAM

12:30 – 12:45 PM	Welcome President – Kathleen Suite Scholarship Coordinator – Dr. Kelly Hennegan
12:45 – 2:00 PM	Luncheon & “Mingling”
2:00 – 2:45 PM	Awarding of Scholarships
2:45 – 3:00 PM	Acknowledgements & Closing Remarks

SPONSORED BY

Jackie Robinson Golf Tournament

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Congratulations 2023 scholarship recipients!

We are proud of you and your accomplishments. Undoubtedly, you are all destined for greater things, and we offer our support to you today and in the future. There are also many in our community who can offer you insights as you traverse the educational system and the workforce. We encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities - keep in touch, let us know how you are doing, join our other alumni, ask for help.

Our scholarship program would be non-existent without the dedication of our board members, our volunteers and most importantly, our sponsors and donors. They believe in our cause and the work that we do, and we are grateful for their continued support.

To all of you, a heartfelt thank you.

Kathleen Suite, President BASF

kathleen.suite@basfund.ca

www.basfund.ca

GOLF COMMITTEE CHAIR'S REMARKS



This year the Jackie Robinson Golf Tournament made a major change by moving its venue to the prestigious Summerlea Golf and Country Club. Our original date of July 27th was rescheduled to September 14th, 2023, after the region was hit by a horrific thunderstorm. Thanks to the dedicated members of the golf committee, who were on the telephone all morning, we were able to get the word out to our golfers regarding the change of date with as little inconvenience as possible.

Although we were able to sustain the number of golfers, we were faced with much cooler September temperature conditions – quite different from July's. All in all, the tournament was a success and despite the inconveniences, our brave golfers had a good time. This was augmented by some great raffle prizes, the outstanding ones being 2 airline tickets from Air Canada to any destination in North America, including Mexico, Hawaii, and the Caribbean, as well as a 58" Smart TV. There were also additional attractive prizes donated by faithful supporters.

We would like to extend our heart-felt gratitude to our supporters and volunteers for helping to make this a memorable tournament.

Glen Gunning

Chairperson, Golf Committee

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

Vice-President - Strategic Chair



Nicole Piggott has spent her career championing inclusive workplaces. Nicole is the Co-founder and President of Synclusiv and the Chief Operating Officer at Women in Governance before which she held senior leadership positions at Bombardier Aerospace, RioTinto, Iron Ore Company of Canada (IOCC), and FedEx Canada. Nicole has channelled her inclusiveness and sustainability through her role as the President of the Impact Board (formerly Partnership Africa Canada), Member of the Board at the National Safety Council, Strategic Advisor – Fabienne Colas Foundation and Co-lead of the McGill Goodman Cancer Research Institute.

Ms. Piggott has been a speaker at several Canadian Universities such as Ryerson University, University of Ottawa, Guelph University, McGill University and Concordia University. She is a member of the Global Affairs Canada, Gender and Trade Advisory Group and is a member of the CN- Paul M. Tellier Chair on Business and Public Policy research project team evaluating Business-Government Cooperation on Managing COVID-19 in Canada.

ALLISON SAUNDERS

Secretary – Chair Media & Communications



Allison is a Mother, an “Accidental Activist”, a Digital Content Strategist at Concordia University and more. In 2020, she was appointed as a co-opted commissioner at the Lester B Pearson School Board to assist with their commitment to fighting racism in their schools and centers. She is also on the Board of Directors of Overture with the Arts (OWTA), a non-profit organization that uses the arts as a vehicle for education and creative exploration and where students are introduced to elements of history, social and cultural change, Recognizing the need for change in her community, Allison co-organized the West Island Takes a Knee anti-racism protest in June 2020 and continues to use her voice to work towards a diverse and inclusive community in which all citizens feel welcome.

BOARD MEMBERS

CHIKE ODENIGBO

Treasurer, Member Scholarship & Golf Committees



Chike Odenigbo (BCom '20) is a graduate of the Bachelor of Commerce Program at McGill University and was a recipient of the Jackie Robinson scholarship back in 2017. As a student, Chike was vice president of finance of the McGill African Students' Society, an organization which not only brought together African students but also gave back to the community through student-run fundraisers. As a working professional today, Chike is very excited to be giving back to his community through organizations such as the Black Academic Scholarship Fund.

DR. KELLY HENNEGAN

Chair Scholarship & Alumni Relations



Dr. Kelly Hennegan is a resident physician in Family Medicine registered at McGill University (MDCM 2020). In 2016, she completed a Bachelor of Science degree at the same institution. A proud two-time recipient herself, Dr. Hennegan works to increase the visibility of BASF scholarships within the Black community. She is fortunate to have firsthand knowledge on the profound impact that the community's generous donations have on our youth. It is this unique perspective that has motivated her to remain involved with the BASF each and every year—first as an event volunteer, and now as a board member. Dr. Hennegan also oversees Alumni Relations, a growing area of interest within this non-profit organization. In collaboration with her fellow board members, she helps past recipients connect with one another, be that through social media groups, or in-person during networking events.

GLEN GUNNING

Chair Golf Committee



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.

“Life is not a spectator sport. If you're going to spend your whole life in the grandstand just watching what goes on, in my opinion you're wasting your life.”

— Jackie Robinson



2023 JACKIE ROBINSON SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES

“Young, gifted and bound for success”

Biomedical Scholarship

Ann-Clara François

Université de Montréal - Sciences biomédicales

Ann-Clara François is an undergraduate student in Biomedical Sciences at the Université de Montréal. She has a particular interest in neurodivergence, which she has studied in school and come to know by accompanying youth living with Autism Spectrum Disorder. She writes that these experiences have allowed her to embrace diversity in all its forms and better advocate for marginalized populations. Beyond this, she has worked as a camp counselor, a CHSLD caregiver, and a volunteer for OXFAM Quebec. Her referees praise her for being caring, hardworking and a strong advocate for her community.

Sylvia Piggott Memorial Scholarship

Victoria Platel

Université de Montréal

Littératures de langue française

Victoria Platel is an incoming French Literature student at Université de Montréal. Prior to this, she completed a Bachelor of Arts in English and Film Studies, where she received multiple merit-based grants and remained on the Dean's List for four consecutive years. Her former professors describe her as hard-working, active in her community and engaged in many social causes. She is described as consistently challenging herself to attain new limits in her 'excellent and original' artistic work. Outside the classroom, Victoria is involved in various art writing, sharing, and critiquing committees, including ones committed to supporting BIPOC and transgender individuals.

Artificial Intelligence Scholarship

Franck Michaël Atongfor Nguessong

Université du Québec à Montréal - Actuariat

Franck Michaël Atongfor Nguessong is an undergraduate student in Actuarial Sciences at the Université du Québec à Montréal, where he is completing an internship in Artificial Intelligence. Prior to university, he completed a degree in Informational Technology at the CÉGEP de Jonquière. He has held various programming positions in varied fields including health care, agriculture and insurance. He holds many impressive accomplishments including holding a GPA within the top 5% of undergraduate students at his university throughout 2022 and the top Mathematics prize in his department for this past semester. Outside of his academic work, Franck describes himself as interested in music, film, and fashion.

Beiersdorf Scholarship

Ommu-Kulsoom J. Abdul-Rahman

McGill University - Law

Ommu-Kulsoom J. Abdul-Rahman is a fourth-year law student at McGill University, where she is also completing a minor in Hispanic Studies. Ommu is a decorated scholar, having received multiple awards during her time at McGill including: the Osler Diversity Scholarship and the Barbados Canada Foundation Scholarship. She has been involved in several equity and diversity initiatives within her university, with a particular emphasis on encouraging Black youth to pursue Law, a field in which they have historically been underrepresented. Ommu-Kulsoom has broken down several barriers in her pursuit of academic greatness, including being the first-ever Black student to hold the title of editor-in-chief for the McGill Law Journal. She has been described by her referees as being hardworking, passionate, and a natural-born leader.

Undergraduate Scholarship

Elva Kabanza

Université de Sherbrooke- Psychologie

Elva Kabanza is a Psychology student at the Université de Sherbrooke, currently on exchange in Seoul, South Korea. She is described by her referees as being ambitious, determined, and extremely driven. Her academic goal is to become a licensed clinical psychologist. Thus far, she has played an active role in several research projects, while remaining steadily involved in her community. She has produced a documentary to condemn racism against the Black and Asian communities, the quality of which was praised by her referees. Prior to her psychology work, she previously worked as a lifeguard, volunteered in a CHSLD, and served as a pharmacy assistant.

Undergraduate Scholarship

Renaud Dion-Pons

Université Laval - Psychologie

Renaud Dion-Pons is a final-year undergraduate student in Psychology at Université Laval, where he has been heavily involved in research. He aspires to attain a PhD in his field and ultimately become a licensed psychologist. In his spare time, he tutors in a variety of academic subjects and volunteers on projects that aim to increase science literacy amongst the general population. Previously, he has also volunteered in seniors' residences, non-profit medical organizations and a residence for individuals living with intellectual disability. Professionally, he works as an intervenor for people living with schizophrenia and is actively undergoing training on a humanistic approach to suicide prevention.

Undergraduate Scholarship

Anne-Clara Sanon

McGill University - Law

Anne-Clara Sanon is a final-year Law student at McGill University, currently on exchange at the University of Birmingham, in the United Kingdom. Throughout her law degree, she has garnered several accolades including the McGill Black Student Community Engagement Award and the McGill Black Student Leadership Award. Amongst other accomplishments, she has worked in the Office of the Auditor General of Canada and the Centre for Research Action on Race Relations. She received high praise from her referees, who describe her as a hardworking, passionate advocate for marginalized communities.

Entrance Scholarship

Abdoul Barry

McGill University – Electrical Engineering

Abdoul Barry is a first-year Engineering student at McGill University. Besides his leading academic performance, he is a star basketball player whose hard work, determination, and talent led to him being recruited at the CÉGEP and later University levels. One of his former teachers praises him for consistently having a ‘positive growth mindset’, writing: ‘give Abdoul a challenge and he will accept it with confidence and determination’. This same referee commends him for his ability to balance his sports with his academics, but also his above-level critical-thinking on issues such as racial discrimination, feminism, and identity as a whole.

Entrance Scholarship

Monica Lywou Tonlé

McGill University - Medicine

Monica is an incoming McGill medical student. Having excelled in Arts and Sciences at Cégep de l’Outaouais, she was granted admission into her university’s prestigious medical preparatory program. Outside the classroom, she is deeply involved in her community, with volunteer initiatives including the facilitation of support groups for refugee African women from the LGBTQ+ community, tutoring, CHSLD work, and leading an environment club. She is described as being mature beyond her years and as being talented across a wide variety of fields.

Entrance Scholarship

Sabrina Renaud

Université de Montréal – Law

Sabrina Renaud is an incoming Law student at the Université de Montréal. Prior to this, she completed a CÉGEP degree in Social Sciences specialized in Law and International Relations, finishing at the top of her class

at Collège de Bois-de-Boulogne. She is highly engaged within her community and has a wide variety of volunteer experiences, including combating food insecurity as a member of Santropol Roulant, assisting with settlement of newly arrived immigrants and their children, and working in volunteer legal clinics. Her referees laud her for her intellectual curiosity, her perseverance and her strong commitment to justice for all.

Graduate Scholarship

Anaïka François

Université de Montréal - Psychologie

Anaïka François is an incoming doctoral student in Psychology at the Université de Montréal. Prior to this, she completed her undergraduate degree, with honours, within the same institution. Her research interests include: intersectional feminism; gender roles and identities; and intercultural studies. Alongside her schoolwork, she serves as a caseworker in a women’s shelter and previously worked in suicide prevention. She is described by her referees as being an exemplary psychology trainee, poised in both academic performance and research ability. They attribute this to her proactivity and dedication, as well as her profound intellectual curiosity.

Batshaw Bursary

Omosukpon Faith Okunbowa

Social Science (Law & Society) - Vanier College

Omosukpon Faith Okunbowa is a Social Science student registered at Vanier College. Born in Nigeria, she came to Canada in her teenage years, having to assume a high level of responsibility at very young age. She has shown a remarkable amount of resilience, being described as hardworking, driven, and extremely motivated. She aspires to one day attend university and specialize in Family Law. She has a particular interest in advocating for women and children’s rights.

Half bursaries have been granted to these (Batshaw) applicants in recognition of their efforts:

Amelia Lynch

Social Science – John Abbott College

Elijah Vatcher

Social Science – Vanier College

Dodridge McFarlane

*Community Recreation and Leadership Training
Dawson College*

2022 RECIPIENTS



Left to right: Davaine Joel Ndongo Sonfack, Hugo Dieujuste, Meredith Michelle Rémy, Farida Amani, Josephat Bulenga, Lori Marsha Sully, Mathem Maluak, Joanne Vilme, Nyeesha Mitchell-Blair.
Missing: Marie-Denise Vane, Sian Alysia Borden, Charena Dhanraj. *(Photography by Costa Sztrikacs)*

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GOLF TOURNAMENT SEPTEMBER 14, 2023 - SUMMERLEA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB



Photography by Brandon Bolen

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Hosted by THE BLACK ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP FUND (B.A.S.F.)

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THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS & DONORS**

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*BASF and the Golf Committee offer warmest
thanks to all who generously donated.
We look forward to seeing you again in 2024!*