

## A surprise estate gift

**IT'S NOT OFTEN** that an unexpected phone call delivers news that will change lives. That's what happened one morning for Norma Cameron, Planned Giving Officer. The call informed her of an estate gift of over \$3.5 million to support students in UVic's Faculty of Engineering. This was the largest gift UVic had ever received for student awards at the time. Stranger still, the donor had no prior relationship with the university. Norma began to research who was behind this remarkable gift and unearthed the story of a gold-mining engineer and his loyal and loving daughter.



## The Summerhayes story

**PHYLLIS** Henrietta Summerhayes was born on January 28, 1908 in San Jose, California. Her father, Maurice, immigrated to California from England and became a fruit grower. He met and married his wife, Hilda, and they had their first child, Dot. Maurice took his family back to England to retrain as a mining engineer, a career that eventually took him to Timmins, Ontario. Hilda decided to return to California with Dot. Soon after, Phyllis was born.

Phyllis grew up thinking she had no father. But when Phyllis was in her late teens, her father appeared in California. He took them on many adventures and tried to make up for the missing years. Phyllis and her father became so close that she moved to Vancouver Island to live with him until his death in 1953.

Phyllis spent the rest of her life in Victoria. Aside from playing Bridge, reading and travelling, she was a meticulous bookkeeper and a very successful investor and financial planner. When she passed away at the age of 96, she had amassed a fortune, which she wanted distributed between thirteen family beneficiaries and the university.

Phyllis' gift created renewable scholarships and bursaries for engineering students. The awards are named after Phyllis' father, Maurice, showing just how much he meant to her.

The story of Phyllis Summerhayes is an integral part of the history and future of the University of Victoria, and the hundreds of past, present and future students who have been touched by her generosity.

**2005** Over \$3.6 million from the Summerhayes estate established the Maurice William Summerhayes Memorial Fund at the university.

**2006** The first four recipients were awarded a total of \$10,000 in scholarships and \$34,865 in bursaries.

**2015** The market value of the fund had increased to more than \$5 million. That year, \$150,000 was awarded in scholarships and \$100,000 in bursaries.

**2017** The market value of the fund as of March 31, 2017 is \$5.63 million.

**2017** The total amount awarded to students in scholarships and bursaries to date is \$1.3 million: \$436,000 in 84 scholarships and \$909,000 in 400 bursaries. That's 484 lives touched by one gift!

**"UPON RECEIVING THIS INCREDIBLE GIFT,** a colossal weight lifted from my chest and I was overwhelmed with joy. This outstanding donation *made my university career in engineering possible.*"

— Andrew Bornstein, 2007 scholarship recipient; Pipeline Construction Engineer, Fort St. John, BC.

**"THE COSTS AT THE BEGINNING** of each semester, tuition and textbooks in particular, was always a heavy financial burden, so this bursary really helped. It was great knowing *there was community support for students.*"

— Lisanne Naeth, 2007 bursary recipient; Principal of Evolve Engineering, Victoria, BC.

**IN 2008,** Jason Jubinville started his engineering undergraduate degree at UVic with financial support from the Summerhayes scholarship. The renewable scholarship motivated him to study hard and allowed him to spend time outside of class boosting his résumé and making professional connections. During his degree Jason was president of the Engineering Students Society and an instructor with Science Venture. These experiences gave him a head start in applying for subsequent co-op positions, and later, co-founding a successful business.

Between scholarships and co-ops, Jason was able to graduate with no student debt, which made a significant impact on his decision to launch a software startup along with three other UVic engineering grads. Echosec—a geographical social media search and discovery platform—has offices in Victoria and Cardiff, UK. Over half of the Victoria-based team are UVic grads or co-op students. Jason maintains close connections with UVic, offering advice and mentorship to other students with entrepreneurial ambitions. He's also completing the Engineering Entrepreneurship Masters Program at UVic.

**"MY FIRST BUSINESS DECISION** was to go into engineering."

— Jason Jubinville, 2008–2012 scholarship recipient; Senior Executive, Echosec Systems, Victoria, BC.



**"AFTER GRADUATING,** I hope to return to Kashmir to advocate for more women to pursue secondary education. *To me, there's no greater gift than education, and I intend to pass it on.* If I can encourage just a handful of women who are thirsty with the desire to learn, it will be worth it."

— Jalila Jalila, 2014 and 2015 bursary recipient; 4th year student, computer science.

**"AS I AWAITED THE START OF MY FIRST YEAR OF UNIVERSITY,** I received an email from UVic which truly changed my life. The email stated that I had been awarded the Maurice William Summerhayes Memorial Scholarship. It was like the blurred screen between what I desperately wanted to be able to do and what I actually could do had suddenly been removed. I have no doubt that the reason I have been able to maintain my GPA and keep my scholarship thus far is because I have been able to focus entirely on my studies, allotting my time and worry to homework rather than a part-time job and finances.

*"A scholarship is an incredible thing; someone, some person who the recipient will likely never meet, decides that they want to help another. In my eyes, my scholarship does not just provide money; it provides opportunity."*

— Sophia Kirk, 2015 scholarship recipient; 3rd year student, mechanical engineering.



**"WORDS CANNOT EXPRESS MY GRATITUDE** and appreciation

for being selected for this award. I am truly surprised and grateful. This award will allow me to pay for not only my student fees, but also my housing costs. Post-secondary education and housing is getting more and more expensive each year. *But with help like this, I know I will be able to overcome these hurdles and fulfil my educational endeavours.*"

— Charndee Bhangoo, 2016 bursary recipient; 4th year student, electrical engineering.