

Ten Scholarships Awarded through the 2026 AEBC/Allyant Scholarship Program

Celebrating Canada's Student Accessibility Leaders

CANADA, August 10, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- August 2026 – The [Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians](#) (AEBC), in partnership with [Allyant](#) and the generous support of donors, is delighted to announce the recipients of the 2026 AEBC/Allyant Scholarship Program.

“

These students are already helping shape a more accessible and inclusive Canada through their academic achievements, community involvement, and commitment to creating positive change.”

Marcia Yale, Scholarship Committee Co-Chair

This year, ten outstanding students from across Canada have been selected for scholarships in recognition of their academic achievement, leadership, community involvement, and commitment to advancing accessibility and inclusion. Their accomplishments reflect the diverse talents, aspirations, and contributions of these emerging leaders who are helping build a more equitable Canada.

Among this year's awards are three named scholarships. Two of these are to commemorate the enduring

contributions of two members who made a significant impact on the AEBC community, Tom Teranishi (donated by the BC Affiliate) and John Rae (funded through the John Rae Legacy fund). The third named scholarship (donated by the BC Affiliate) is in honour of Rob Sleath, a passionate advocate for those living with vision loss.

John Rae Memorial Scholarship – Aidan Lapp

Aidan is a fourth-year Bachelor of Arts student at MacEwan University, majoring in Political Science with a minor in French. Legally blind, he aspires to a career in international security, specializing in peacebuilding and conflict economies. A Dean's List student since 2022 with a 4.0 GPA, he is committed to advancing disability inclusion and international cooperation. In June, Aidan was one of three youth delegates for Canada at the Conference of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

BC Affiliate Scholarship in honour of Rob Sleath - Brittany Metzger

Brittany Metzger is a dedicated health and wellness professional who is legally blind and is pursuing her goal of becoming a Registered Massage Therapist. She has completed certifications in health coaching, personal training, and bodywork therapy. An active community volunteer, she

has taught swing dancing in the Lower Mainland and is working toward creating an accessible online fitness platform for legally blind and partially sighted individuals.

Allyant Scholarship – Meili Lanthier

Meili Lanthier is a recent Business Administration graduate from l'Université de Hearst who will begin the Baking and Pastry Arts Program at Algonquin College this September. Living with Best Disease, a degenerative eye condition, she has overcome many challenges while pursuing her education. Proud of her accomplishments, she remains determined to achieve her goals while hopeful that advances in medicine will one day lead to an effective treatment.

Tom Teranishi Memorial Scholarship, Vesper Marlin Parkinson

Vesper (they/he) is in the third year of the Bachelor of Social Work program at the University of Calgary and is committed to providing blind, neurodiversity-affirming, and trauma-informed support. As a blind, autistic, disabled person, they value creating spaces where people feel understood, respected, and supported as their full selves. Vesper has experience supporting 2SLGBTQIA+, autistic, and disabled youth and young adults across community and educational settings.

Allyant Scholarship - Matteo Spina

Matteo Spina has faced significant challenges, including moderate hearing loss, vision impairment, and Mucopolysaccharidosis Type 1H (MPS), a rare condition that affects his mobility. Despite multiple surgeries and ongoing physical challenges, he has attended mainstream schools and earned a place on the honour roll every year. Because he enjoys working with numbers and performing calculations, he is heading to college with the goal of becoming an accountant.

AEBC Scholarship - Fadia Dirani

Fadia Dirani is an Education Resource Worker with more than 10 years of experience supporting children with diverse learning needs in the Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board. Born with albinism and a visual disability (20/200 vision), she is completing a degree in Early Childhood Studies and plans to pursue Teacher's College with a specialization in special education. Through her work and volunteer service, she is committed to creating inclusive learning environments where every child feels valued and supported.

AEBC Scholarship - Renuka Jantz

Renuka is an educator, legal scholar, and community advocate based in Edmonton, Alberta. Currently completing a Disability Studies diploma at NorQuest College, she plans to pursue a Master of Arts in Sociology in 2027, where her research will examine how disability disclosure on job applications affects candidates with vision loss. Through her leadership, advocacy, and lived experience with Retinitis Pigmentosa, she hopes to help build a more accessible and equitable future.

AEBC Scholarship - Hayden den Ouden

Hayden, from Barrie, Ontario will begin a Bachelor of Science in Physics at Dalhousie University this fall with the goal of pursuing a career in astrophysics research. He represented Canada and won a Bronze medal in Goalball at the 2025 Para Pan-American Games. He has also captured multiple OFSAA Gold medals in track and field and para-alpine ski racing. Living with severe bilateral optic nerve atrophy and rod-cone dystrophy, he has excelled academically. He spent two years as a Camp Counselor at CNIB Lake Joe, mentoring kids with low vision.

AEBC Scholarship - Kaitlyn Casperson

Kaitlyn was born and raised in British Columbia's Okanagan Valley and now lives in Montréal, Quebec. She is a third-year theology student at Quebec's Evangelical School of Theology. She hopes to work as a spiritual care worker in pediatric hospitals. Outside of her studies, she enjoys reading, crocheting, hiking, and camping. She is a member of a para-dragon boat team made up primarily of vision-impaired individuals. On weekends, she volunteers in the nursery at her church, helping care for young children.

AEBC Scholarship - Ludovic Charbonneau

Ludovic is almost completely blind. His remaining vision allows him to perceive some colours, shadows, and contrasts, but not enough to distinguish or describe objects. His lived experience has inspired him to become actively involved in the blind community. Through his programming studies, he hopes to develop accessible applications and games. He also operates a YouTube channel showcasing accessible games. In addition, he plays goalball, a team sport in which players rely entirely on sound to compete.

"Each year, we are impressed by the talent, determination, and leadership demonstrated by our scholarship recipients," said Marcia Yale, National President of the Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians. "These students are already helping shape a more accessible and inclusive Canada through their academic achievements, community involvement, and commitment to creating positive change. We are proud to support them as they pursue their goals and we look forward to seeing their impact in the years ahead."

The AEBC/Allyant Scholarship Program is made possible through the generous support of Allyant, donors, and community partners who believe that education creates opportunities, removes barriers, and empowers future leaders.

For more information about the program, visit: [AEBC Scholarship Program](#).

About the Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians

The Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians (AEBC) is a national charitable organization of primarily blind, Deafblind, or partially sighted members. AEBC works to empower blind, Deafblind, and partially sighted Canadians to drive change, influence systems, and live with dignity—by combining lived experience with focused advocacy and peer leadership.

Marcia Yale, Scholarship Committee Co-Chair

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