



For immediate release — Thursday, November 26, 2020

Abbondanza endowment provides record number of scholarships to Faculty of Fine Arts students

Thanks to 20 years of community support, the University of Lethbridge is excited to announce a record number of scholarships from the Abbondanza Fine Arts Scholarship Endowment for the 2020/2021 academic year. This fall, an astounding 30 scholarships were provided to Fine Arts students studying art, drama, music, new media and multidisciplinary programs.

In 2019, the growing endowment reached over \$1.6 million, allowing the opportunity to rewrite terms of reference for award distribution and creating new award categories. The endowment, which originally supported financial awards for senior Fine Arts students only, now provides scholarships to entrance, continuing, senior and graduate-level students.

“As an international student from a low-income, single-parent family, an education in a prestigious Canadian university such as the University of Lethbridge would not have been possible without financial support,” says Anna Nikolova, a new media graduate student. “The Abbondanza scholarship made it possible for me to cover my housing expenses for the upcoming semester and afford additional technology to successfully continue my new media projects, the most important being my MFA thesis.”

Initiated by visionaries Tony Rose and Rocco Suriano, owners of Italian restaurant Coco Pazzo, and the then Faculty of Fine Arts dean, Carl Granzow, Abbondanza became one of the most anticipated social events on the calendar. The growth of the endowment is from two decades of continuing community support from sponsors, attendees and the dean’s office.

“I felt it was important scholarships would be available to the fine arts and I didn’t see a lot of dollars moving in that direction, so we approached Carl with the idea for a fine arts fundraiser,” says Rose, who still attends Abbondanza annually. An evening of abundance was created, with Italian food, exquisite entertainment and fine art highlighting student and faculty talents. It continues to bring together passionate arts supporters and philanthropists, many who have attended every event since 2002.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has delayed the 20th Abbondanza event in 2021, but the need for student scholarships continues to grow.

“During an extra difficult time, we are thrilled to see 30 students have their economic stress reduced this year thanks to generous donations to the Abbondanza endowment,” says Dr. Mary Ingraham, dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts. “While we’ll miss hosting our friends at an in-person event this year, we hope you will join us in celebrating 20 years of Abbondanza online and continue to give when and where you are able.”

Community arts supporters are invited to visit go.uleth.ca/abbondanza to learn more about this year’s award recipients and to make donations online. Sponsorship opportunities are still available. Donations can also be accepted by cheque or credit card over the phone by contacting [University Advancement](#).

Watch the Faculty of Fine Arts [website](#) and social media in the new year for online celebrations looking back at 20 years of Abbondanza, community support and student gratitude.

“I cannot express how deeply thankful I am that we have such gracious donors giving young artists and students the means to continue to further their education and allow them to nurture their talents,” says dramatic arts student Jordyn Nixon. “This is the greatest gift a performer or artist can ask for in terms of the growth that it can help foster within the post-secondary world. Thank you so much for believing in me and what I have to give to the Fine Arts, and for your continuing support to the University of Lethbridge and its students.”

To view online: <https://www.uleth.ca/unews/article/abbond%3%A0nza-endowment-provides-record-number-scholarships-faculty-fine-arts-students>

-- 30 --

Contact:

Kelly Morris, PR/Communications, Faculty of Fine Arts
403-915-1854
kelly.morris@uleth.ca