

Cultivating the Path Forward - iMpowered Women for the Mining Workforce

IMII's minerals industry members are committed to having a workforce that is representative of the communities in which they operate. To this end, the **iMpowered** scholarship was created to support college, polytechnic, and university women and Indigenous students with financial responsibilities for the family, enrolled in a science, technology, engineering, mathematics or computer science program and interested in a career in the minerals industry.

International Minerals Innovation Institute (IMII), on behalf of its mineral industry members – BHP, Cameco, K+S Potash Canada, Mosaic and Nutrien, and Innovation Saskatchewan, are pleased to announce the winners of the scholarship, awarding \$100,000 for the 2020-2021 academic year.

Vonda Roberts, an Indigenous woman from the Wahpeton Dakota Nation, is enrolled in the Exploration and Mine Engineering Program at Northlands College. Intrigued by the teachings of geology, minerals, workings of a mine, pit designing and project management, this program has opened her eyes and her heart to various job opportunities available in mining and a whole new life that she had not imagined.

"This scholarship is a symbol and an indication that age is not a factor when it comes to Education. You can return to school regardless of your age. It inspires men and woman of all ages to never give up and that there is hope. That I could go back to school and still be successful. My family and my children are all very proud of me, I can see it in their eyes. They are the ones I want to impress and be successful for, I feel they can look at me now as a great role model, of which



L to R: William Thomas, Co-ordinator, Exploration and Mine Engineering Program, Northlands College; Vonda Roberts

I always wanted to be. I am proud to inspire them to continue with their own education." says Vonda. "This scholarship will help with my tuition and books as well as meeting all of our needs and necessities. And, in knowing what it is like to have no financial aid at all, I'm planning on opening trust funds or RESP's for my kids to help with their future education."



L to R: Jamie Hilts, Dean, School of Mining, Energy and Manufacturing, Saskatchewan Polytechnic; Sharon Wang

Xiaoying (Sharon) Wang is an international student studying the Geomatics/ Surveying Engineering Technology program at Saskatchewan Polytechnic. Coming to Canada with her young son to study, Sharon plans to use her past and current education and experience to pursue a career in the mining industry.

"For the past one year as I was pursuing my diploma degree of Geomatics/ Surveying Eng. Tech. in Sask Polytech, Moose Jaw, I worked five part time jobs to help support my family. Sometimes I worked for two different restaurants in one day. This was very tiring, and I often started doing my assignments and preparing for my exams after midnight after finishing my part time jobs," Sharon remarked. "With the help from IMII, I don't need to

feel always so worried and tough for the next studying year. I can pay off my tuition soon. IMII gives me not only financial support, but also gives me big courage and lets me regain hope for my career.”

Michelle Low, a young mom juggling education while raising a toddler, has had a passion for rocks and minerals for many years. Enrolled in the Mining Engineering Technology program at Saskatchewan Polytechnic, she is overjoyed to have finally found something that described everything she wanted to be and do with her career.

“This investment in me, as a woman striving for my dream in an industry that I am not only passionate about but determined to succeed in is extremely uplifting and appreciated,” Michelle commented. “This scholarship will provide security for my family by reducing some financial pressures and gives me peace of mind - a different level of focus has washed over me since learning about the scholarship - I love what the future holds for me and my family. I have never been presented with such a gift in my life and I am so very grateful. Thank you International Minerals Innovation Institute (IMII).”



L to R: Michelle Low; Jamie Hilts, Dean, School of Mining, Energy and Manufacturing, Saskatchewan Polytechnic; Corine Strube

As one of the inaugural winners of the scholarship, Corine Strube knows all too well the impact the scholarship brings. “The impact the scholarship has had on my life has been amazing,” says Corine. “The lack of financial stress allows me to focus on my studies and makes things so much easier – not worrying about small things like car repairs and utilities. But even more so than having all the basics covered, this scholarship has given me back the opportunity to enjoy life with my daughter.

Corine, a Metis woman enrolled in the Chemical Technology program at Saskatchewan Polytechnic, was successful in her renewal application for the scholarship program. “When I went back to school as a mature student and single mother, I never dreamed of having this much support and strength behind me,” she stated. “I’m looking forward to a great year of hard work and learning, thank you to IMII for all the help and commitment to my education and pursuit of learning.”

The scholarship program is a five-year initiative that has IMII committing over \$500,000 to help build a diverse, inclusive, and qualified workforce for Saskatchewan’s minerals industry. Congratulations to Vonda, Michelle, Sharon and Corine!

For more information:

Al Shpyth, Executive Director, IMII

Phone: (306) 668-2057

al.shpyth@imii.ca

www.imii.ca

About IMII:

International Minerals Innovation Institute is a unique innovation supporting network of mining companies, government departments and agencies, and post-secondary and research institutions, jointly funded by industry and government. It exists to deliver innovations that matter to mining in Saskatchewan.