



## SYLVIA HELMER SCHOLARSHIP

The Sylvia Helmer scholarship has been created to honour one of the long-time ELL educators in British Columbia. Before her retirement, Sylvia dedicated more than 25 years to ELL pedagogy and research, working with both ELL learners and their teachers as mentor, advocate and scholar. Sylvia's contributions to language learning includes years as a highly respected consultant for the Vancouver School District, a UBC professor and an ardent supporter of BC TEAL, ESL PSA and TESOL. Sylvia worked with Catherine Eddy to co-author *Look at Me When I Talk To You* as well as other publications to support and advance ELL professionalism.

**Purpose:** To recognize a refugee student graduating from a BC Secondary School who has combined hard work with school and community involvement, and who wishes to further her/his education/training at a tertiary institution in BC. This student will have started their schooling in BC as a student with refugee status in Canada.

**Amount of Scholarship:** \$1000.00

**Tenure:** Any BC post secondary institution/training facility.

**Criteria:**

- Graduating from a BC high school and wishes to attend a tertiary institution to further her/his education or training for a specific type of employment;
- Started their education in BC as a refugee student;
- Demonstrated consistent improvement in academic competence;
- Involved in school or community activities or service to others; and,
- ELL coursework at the secondary level.

**Expectations:**

The recipient of this award is expected to commence her/his post-secondary education within one year of receiving the scholarship. The recipient must also provide the BCTESOL with:

- proof of secondary graduation, and
- proof of acceptance to the chosen post-secondary institution.

**Application Deadline:** **Thursday, April 30, 2026**

**Application Process:**

1. Complete the Application Form on pages 3 and 4. You may ask a school official to work with you to help you complete the required information.
2. Obtain transcripts of your marks for Grades 8 to 11, including ELL Courses.

3. Obtain a copy of your marks in Grade 12 so far. Your report cards would work well for this. Include ELL Courses, if taken.
4. Write a personal essay (word process or type; two pages in length and double spaced). The essay should be about how going to a post-secondary program will help you to become a contributing citizen of Canada and BC. Sign and submit the *original* of your essay. Have one of your references sign it, also.
5. Obtain *three* letters of reference regarding your academic and community performance. Get *one or two* of these from teachers, administrators or counsellors. Get the *third* letter from someone who can talk about your support of and service to others, such as a coach, sponsor or community program coordinator. Once reference letter should confirm that you started your schooling as a refugee student.
6. Make two photocopies of everything you will be submitting – one original and one copy go to the BC TESOL and one copy is to keep for yourself.

**Note:**

- Only applications that are complete and submitted *on time* will be considered.
- Submit *only* the required documents. Do not submit additional information, photographs, etc.
- *Only successful candidates will be notified.* No materials will be returned.

**Mail completed application package to:**

Deborah Gomes, Scholarship Co-Chair  
c/o Eric Hamber Secondary School  
960 W. 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue  
Vancouver, BC  
V5Z 0L2

**Or email to [dgomes@vsb.bc.ca](mailto:dgomes@vsb.bc.ca)**



## SYLVIA HELMER SCHOLARSHIP

### Application Form

**Application Form:** Complete this form carefully and send it together with everything listed on the application outline.

**Eligibility:** Scholarships are only available for recent immigrants who have been granted permanent resident status in Canada.

#### PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Given Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Called Name (if different from above): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Country of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of Time in Canada: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Contact Information

Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

#### SCHOOL INFORMATION

Current school name: \_\_\_\_\_

Start date at current school: \_\_\_\_\_

Other schools attended in BC: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade counsellor name: \_\_\_\_\_

## FUTURE EDUCATIONAL PLANS

Name of the BC Institution candidate is planning to attend: _____ _____
Location: _____
Program candidate is planning to attend: _____
Anticipated start date: _____

## REFERENCES

You need three references: This means three people who can talk about you and your work at school or in the community. One must be a current teacher of the applicant. Some examples could be a teacher, a coach, a sponsor,

<b>Reference #1</b>
School Name: _____
School District #: _____
School Address: _____
Contact Person: _____
Role / Title of contact Person: _____
School Telephone Number of contact person: _____
School Email of Contact Person: _____
Length of time the contact person has known the candidate: _____
Context in which the contact person has known the candidate: _____

**Reference #2**

Organization name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference (Contact person): \_\_\_\_\_

Role of reference: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Work email of reference: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of time the contact person has known the candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

Context in which the contact person has known the candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reference #3**

Organization name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference (Contact person): \_\_\_\_\_

Role of reference: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Work email of reference: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of time the contact person has known the candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

Context in which the contact person has known the candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

**ALL OF THE FOLLOWING MUST BE INCLUDED. IN EACH CASE INCLUDE *THE ORIGINAL AND ONE PHOTOCOPY*. It is also a good idea to keep a copy of everything.**

- ☐ Completed Application Form [be sure to ask your references for permission to use their names]
- ☐ Canadian school transcripts for grades 8-11 [include ELL courses]
- ☐ Marks to date for Grade 12 [include ELL courses]
- ☐ Essay
- ☐ Individual letters from three references

**Note:** Submit only the required documents. Only successful applicants will be notified in writing. Submit two copies [1 original, 1 photocopy] for each item.

Application must be *received* by **Thursday, April 30, 2026**

**Please mail your application to:**

**Deborah Gomes, Scholarship Chair**  
c/o Eric Hamber Secondary School  
960 W. 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue  
Vancouver, BC  
V5Z 0L2