

## REVISED BURSARY DRAWS ATTENTION

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Chair – RHSC Bursary Committee

The Royal Heraldry Society of Canada (RHSC) operates an annual bursary, named “The Christopher Wallis Bursary”. The namesake of the bursary, Mr. Christopher Wallis, F.R.H.S.C., is a prominent stained-glass artist. Mr. Wallis is in his 90’s and lives in Dashwood ON, north of London. He was elected to a Fellowship in the RHSC in 1996. A biography of Mr. Wallis can be seen in the RHSC website, under “about RHSC – Fellows” in the year 1996.

While our RHSC bursary has been around for about twenty years, It was not well known and had only been used once prior to 2001.

In 2016 I was asked by the RHSC National Board to review this bursary with the idea of revising this financial tool and to see how it can be used with an appropriate educational institution in Canada. At the time I was the Chair of the RHSC Heraldic Arts Committee (HAC) and the idea of revising the bursary program was reviewed and discussed with the HAC members. At the RHSC National Conference and Annual General Meeting in Ottawa ON in June of 2016 the HAC report made the recommendations that: 1) the bursary program continue; and 2) the value of the award be increased from \$1,000 to a new level of \$2,500. The RHSC voted to accept these recommendations and I was tasked with developing a plan to put this into action.



Christopher Wallis FRHSC with a 50-year retrospective exhibition of his work in 2013.  
Photo credit: The Sarnia Observer 22 April 2013

At the RHSC National Conference in North Vancouver BC in May 2017 the action plan of the revised Christopher Wallis Bursary Program was presented to the RHSC Board where it was accepted and approved. At the 2017 AGM the details were presented to the members who supported the implementation plan. As a result the revised bursary program was to be activated with the Ontario College of Arts and Design University (OCADU) in Toronto ON.



OCADU was selected due to its size as the largest educational institution of its type in Canada. And its student body comes from sea to sea to sea. In my discussions of the bursary implementation plan with the university, OCADU suggested we split the bursary amount of \$2,500 into two separate amounts; an amount of \$1,250 for the Faculty of Art and the other \$1,250 amount for the Faculty of Design. Over the summer of 2017 the formal Gift Agreement was completed between our organizations and Mr. Ted McNabb FRSC signed on behalf of the RHSC as its President. We agreed to provide the \$2,500 total bursary amount annually to OCADU for a three year period. This would also give us more bangs for our bucks in having two items the students can approach.

Our revised Christopher Wallis Bursary was activated for the 2017-18 academic year with OCADU students beginning to apply in August of last summer with an application deadline of 17 November 2017. As this is a bursary award the prime consideration is the financial need of the student applicants. And as such each application is subject to a financial review that would require detailed personal financial information on items like tax returns, lease or rental agreements, bank statements, child care receipts and other similar documents evidencing financial need. Due to the complexity of handling and administering a bursary, and notwithstanding the requirements of the Canada Revenue Agency, the OCADU handles all aspects of selecting the bursary winners on our behalf.

For our first year there were 1,184 qualified OCADU student applicants for our bursary. Slightly more than the several dozen or so I thought might apply.



OCADU Convocation at  
Roy Thomson Hall, Toronto ON  
Photo by Christina Gapic

The selection of the winners was completed in January 2018. Since this is a bursary and not a scholarship, we will only get the winners' names with their approval. In either case, the RHSC will be provided a formal package detailing the results including letters of appreciation from the winners. I'm certain Mr. Wallis will be interested in knowing the results.

From this positive first year ideas are welcome to help expand our awareness with the OCADU about the RHSC and our aims. The RHSC Education Committee Chair, D'Arcy Boulton UE, PhD, FRHSC, AIH, FSA is developing ways for OCADU to consider including heraldry in its curriculum as well as any student body presentations. OCADU is also developing an expanded on-line platform for promoting their various bursaries and financial aid for students; we will be part of this so we can also promote student membership in the RHSC. I would like to think we will attract more student interest in our Christopher Wallis Bursary for the 2018-19 academic year.