



## AHS 2017 Commencement Academic Awards of Distinction

**Governor General's Academic Medal:** Reisha Vos  
**Lieutenant Governor's Community Volunteer Award:** Reisha Vos  
**Rainy River District School Board Plaque (University):** Reisha Vos  
**Rainy River District School Board Plaque (College):** Brianna LeSage  
**Specialist High Skills Majors: Environment:** Shawnte Anderson, Jacob Arnold, Faith King, Eric Williams. **Hospitality:** Brianna LeSage  
**TD-Canada Trust Mathematics Awards:** Reisha Vos (university). Kacie Anness, Brandon Brown (college)

**ONTARIO SCHOLARS** Here is the AHS 2017 graduating class academic all-star team. They earned an eighty percent or better average in their top six grade twelve courses: Aidan Labossiere, Cole Krassey, Faith King, Hannah Hayes, Michael Ducharme, Jonathon Clairmont, Jacob Arnold, Brianna LeSage, Chloe Machura, Brenna Nephin, Reisha Vos, James White, Eric Williams, and Tony Zerebeski.

## AHS - and Atikokan - celebrate 29 grads

### M. McKinnon

Atikokan celebrated twenty-nine of its own June 23, the AHS 2017 graduating class.

Nearly half of the group, led by Governor General Academic Medal winner Reisha Vos, completed their final year with an eighty percent average in their top six classes, and earned Ontario Scholar designation. The group's outstanding achievements were rewarded by close to \$40,000 in scholarships, bursaries, and prizes. Vos led the way here too, becoming the first AHS student to win a Gaspard Canada 'Keep Canada Green' Scholarship; she won its top prize of \$2,500.

Eric Williams delivered a polished, warm, and light-hearted valedictory address, and Hannah Hayes prepared the now traditional slide show that evoked many fond memories.

Kerrilyn Huntley, a member of the 1996 class (and the 1994-95 Outers), made the address to the graduates.

She calls herself a "typical small town girl" who "still has roots in Atikokan".

"I wasn't the smartest kid, and I didn't like school much," she said. "But on the sports field, I gave it my all." She represented AHS at OFSAA in badminton, teaming with Rachel White - also a ringette teammate - to win NWOSSA and a provincial berth in doubles. She remains a keen athlete, playing baseball and hockey.

Huntley made special mention of the teachers at the high school, saying it was thanks to their

support that she was able to make it through in the face of a good deal of bullying.

Overcoming that adversity would eventually become a factor in her work life. She went on to college from AHS, studying first in health care and then in accounting, but finding no real place for herself in either field. A phone call one day about an apprenticeship opportunity changed her life.

She became a construction electrician with Hydro One, entering an apprenticeship program - one of the first women to do so - at the age of 25. It was a five-year program that included three ten-week academic courses (she completed those at Confederation College), and 9,000 hours of hands-on work and training.

"I lived like a nomad for those years, following the job from city to city, sometimes even living out of my car," she said. "It isn't easy being a woman in a man's job, but the world is changing. And I am a very stubborn person - I wasn't going to quit."

"It was all worth it!"

Today, she is a supervisor with the giant utility (and was the first woman to be named a foreperson with Hydro One), and often speaks to new and aspiring apprentices on behalf of the company and the trade.

Ultimately, her message to the grads was a direct one: stay open to what comes your way in life, and don't be afraid of working hard. You never know what may turn out to be life changing.

## Scholarships, Awards & Bursaries

**AHS Robert Briggs Award (\$300):** Brianna LeSage  
**AHS Staff Award (\$300):** Reisha Vos  
**Atikokan Medical Assoc. Scholarship (\$500):** Hannah Hayes, Faith King  
**Gaspard Canada 'Keep Canada Green' Scholarship (\$2,500):** Reisha Vos  
**Miss Alice Batho Scholarship (\$500):** Hannah Hayes, Chloe Machura  
**Lynn Enge Memorial Scholarship (\$1,000):** Reisha Vos  
**Schulich Leader Scholarship (nomination plaque):** Hannah Hayes  
**David Fontana Memorial Scholarship (\$500):** Faith King  
**Marv Kelly Lions Memorial Scholarship (\$500):** Reisha Vos  
**Atikokan Conservation Club (ASCC) Bill Beyers Memorial Bursary (\$100):** Parker Sampson  
**ASCC Gerry Jefferson Memorial Bursary (\$100):** Hannah Hayes  
**Atikokan General Hospital Bursaries (\$500):** Shawnte Anderson, Brenna Nephin  
**Atikokan Kiwanis Club Bursaries (\$500):** Hannah Hayes, Tony Zerebeski  
**Atikokan Lions Club Bursaries (\$500):** Shawnte Anderson, Aidan Labossiere, Reisha Vos  
**Atikokan Métis Council Bursary (\$500):** Shawnte Anderson, Marnie Bingham, Eric Williams  
**Atikokan Native Friendship Centre Bursary (\$200):** Matthew Gagne-Buchan, Jayden Sanden  
**Atikokan Non-profit Daycare Bursary (\$500):** Reisha Vos  
**Atikokan Retired Teachers' Education Bursary (\$500):** Aidan Labossiere  
**Atikokan Ringette Assoc. Bursary (\$1,000):** Reisha Vos  
**Atikokan Trappers' Council Bursary (\$200):** Hannah Hayes  
**AHS Technology Bursary (\$500):** James White  
**Atikokan Volunteer Firefighters' Bursaries (\$500):** Hannah Hayes, Reisha Vos, James White  
**Brian Morris Memorial Plaque:** Faith King, Cole Krassey, Aidan Labossiere, Parker Sampson, Reisha Vos, Eric Williams  
**Brian Morris Memorial Award (\$500):** Reisha Vos, Cole Krassey  
**Community Living Atikokan Bursary (\$500):** Shawnte Anderson  
**Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario (ETFO) Bursary (\$250):** Reisha Vos, Eric Williams  
**ETFO - Support Personnel Bursary (\$250):** Hannah Hayes  
**Ladies Auxiliary of Royal Canadian Legion Branch 145 Bursaries (\$500):** Matthew Gagne-Buchan, Jayden Sanden  
**Linda Davidson Memorial Humanitarian Plaque:** Faith King  
**Lucy in the Sky for MS Bursary (\$500):** Robert Smerchinski  
**Marshall Manns Jr. Memorial Bursary (\$500):** Cole Krassey  
**Northwest Catholic DSB Bursary (\$500):** Kacie Anness  
**NWO English Catholic Teachers' Assoc. - St. Pat's Staff Bursary (\$500):** Robert Smerchinski  
**OPG Secondary School Student Achievement Awards (\$250):** Chloe Machura, Eric Williams  
**Ontario Principals' Council (\$1,000):** Aidan Labossiere  
**OPSEU Local 725 Bursary (\$250):** Chloe Machura  
**OSSTF District 5B Bursary (\$1,000):** Cole Krassey, Eric Williams  
**Rainy River District Stewardship Award (\$1,000):** Jacob Arnold  
**Resolute Forest Products Bursary (\$500):** Cole Krassey, Eric Williams  
**Revive Bursary (\$500):** Kacie Anness  
**Robert C. Moffatt Family Bursaries (\$500):** Jacob Arnold, Faith King, Cole Krassey, Aidan Labossiere, Parker Sampson, Jayden Sanden, Eric Williams  
**Science North Award (\$100):** Hannah Hayes  
**Shelter of Hope Bursary (\$500):** Brenna Nephin  
**AHS Student Council 'Jessie Johnson' Memorial (\$250):** Tony Zerebeski  
**Jim Hogan Memorial Bursary (\$250):** James White  
**Sunshine Award in memory of Jessica 'Jessie' Johnson (\$250):** Faith King  
**Vollans Family Bursary (\$500):** James White  
**Quetico Foundation Shan Walshe Memorial (\$1,000):** Jacob Arnold  
**Tom Oppenheimer Outers Bursaries (\$500):** Shawnte Anderson, Faith King, Marnie Bingham, Hannah Hayes, Brandon Brown  
**Tramin Mining Services Bursaries (\$500):** Matthew Gagne-Buchan, Robert Smerchinski, James White