



MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning

The Karn Nichols Passion and Purpose Award

Eligibility Requirements

The Karn Nichols Passion and Purpose Award will be awarded to:

- A high school student currently enrolled in Grade 12 or recent graduate (no more than 3 years since graduating or receiving GED).
- Enrolled in post-secondary education at a College or University.
- Has previously attended MacPhee Centre programs,
- Demonstrates helping others and making a difference to those around them.
- Regularly contributes to their community, as demonstrated by long-term commitment and leadership as a volunteer, student, artist and/or athlete.
- A focus and awareness as to how passion and purpose intersect in their lives.



Selection Criteria

- A short essay (500 words min.), or a piece of art in the medium of your choice (painting, drawing, song, script, etc.) that outlines your financial situation and the importance of the bursary for you.
- A letter of acceptance from the post-secondary institution you will be attending.

Application Checklist

- Scholarship Applicant **Information Sheet***
- Official High School **Transcripts**
- Official **letter of acceptance** from post-secondary institute
- A **short essay** (500 words min.), or a **piece of art** in the medium of your choice (painting, drawing, song, script, etc.) that outlines your financial situation and the importance of the bursary for you.
- Portfolio** of any creative nature in any medium

*You can find this on our website (printable and digital), in the application package or in person at the MacPhee centre.

Submitting Your Application

Applications must be submitted by email or in person by **Thursday May 15, 2025**. Please note once your application is submitted, you can no longer make edits.

Applications can be emailed to: **info@macpheedcentre.ca**

Applications can be dropped off in person at:

MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning
50 Queen Street
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
B2Y 1G1

Have questions?

Please contact the MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning by email at info@macpheedcentre.ca or by phone at 902-469-2851.

About the Award



The award honours Karn Nichols for her leadership and contribution to the community and was first awarded in 2021. The Passion and Purpose Award is a thank you to Karn for all her hard work and dedication to the MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning.



The fund will provide up to one (1) individual scholarship totalling \$1,000 annually, and the exceptional opportunity to build a relationship with Karn while exploring career possibilities.

About the MacPhee Centre

At the MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning, we empower youth through art in a welcoming, inclusive environment supported by our community. We envision a world where empathy and diversity thrive and challenges are opportunities for growth. Through art, we inspire leadership, collaboration, and innovation, fostering a spirit of creativity.

Our mission is to provide a safe, youth-driven space for exploration and self-expression. Together, we're shaping a future where kindness and cooperation reign and every dream is supported. Our mission is to build a world where every young person can realize their full potential through the transformative power of art.

Karn Nichols

Former Chair of the MacPhee Centre Board, 2015-2021

“Some journeys are direct, some are circuitous; some are heroic, and some are fearful and muddled. But every journey, honestly undertaken, stands a chance of taking us toward the place where our deep gladness meets the world’s deep need.”

~ Parker J. Palmer

Karn is a one-of-a-kind human and service leader. She is ethical and virtuous, honest and thoughtful and leads by example. Karn’s focus on people and systems sets the foundation for what the MacPhee Centre is to our youth and community. She is a lifelong learner grounded in doing what is right. She believes in living an authentic life, staying true to her passions, and feeding her soul with things like nature and writing.

Karn started volunteering with the MacPhee Centre in 2009 after she heard Social Entrepreneur Bill Strickland speak about his creative learning centre in Pittsburgh. Karn, a new St. Mary’s University student, sat in the first row. She was mesmerized by how much passion and purpose Bill exhibited when he spoke about the work he did.



The MacPhee Centre was inspired by Bill's work in the US. When Karn initially got involved, it was the seed of an idea in the hearts and minds of a few founding Board members. Karn connected with these folks and offered to help out wherever she could. Over the years, she went from selling fundraising tickets to chairing our Board of Directors for over six years, finally finishing up in 2021.

During her time as Board Chair, Karn put in over 3,500 hours of volunteer time. In addition to volunteering where needed, she provided mentorship and coaching to the MacPhee Centre team and established our Advisory Council. She also ensured we remained focused on ensuring MacPhee created the conditions for youth passion and purpose to connect through the arts.

This award was created as a thank-you to Karn for her dedication and hard work at the MacPhee Centre.