

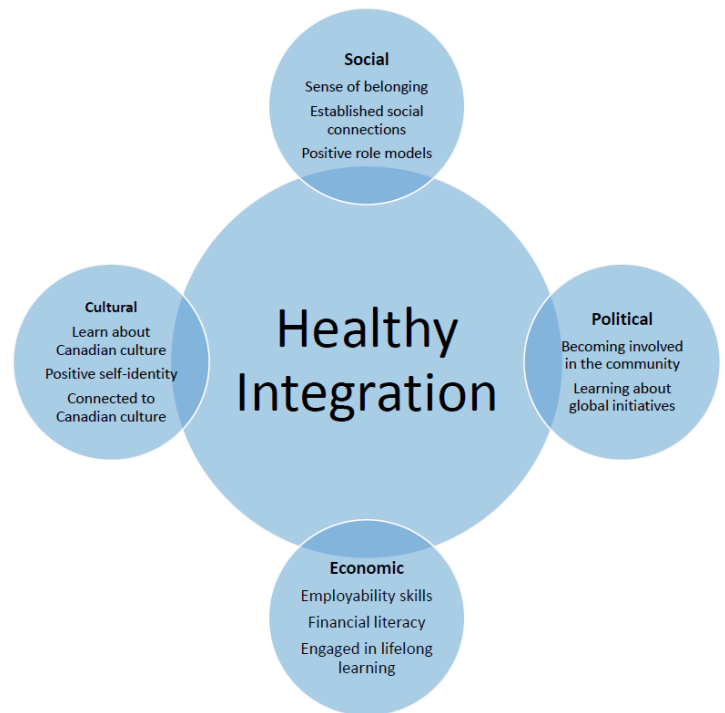


# YMAP Program



The YMCA Achievement Program (YMAP) is a free afterschool program for newcomer youth to Canada and first-generation Canadians who currently attend high school (Grade 10-12, ages 14-20). YMAP runs at 6 different locations around the city (both within YMCA branches and community locations) with 11 program cohorts. There are also two other programs under the YMAP umbrella called YMAP Infinity and YMAP Community Advocates. These programs focus on working with youth ages 18-25 who have graduated high school. Annually, there is approximately 400 youth that participate in the program

Youth participate in a curriculum that focuses on the development of life skills and cultural awareness in order to belong and thrive within a Canadian context. The curriculum focuses on four integration models: Economic, Social, Cultural, and Political. Topics are grouped into themes which include but are not limited to Jobs and Career Exploration, Financial Literacy, Self-Worth, Diversity and Multiculturalism and Health and Wellness. Youth engage in 2 hours of program activities and lessons each week in the after-school hours. Outside of the weekly program sessions, youth can engage in events which involve but are not limited to volunteering, field trips, conferences and celebrations. This may be done within their own cohort, site, zone, and/or city-wide. This provides youth the opportunity to meet and develop relationships with youth all over the city in an informal, yet structured environment. As the YMCA values health and fitness, YMAP provides youth a free YMCA membership which gives youth access to the whole facility during and outside of program hours. In addition, youth are provided a nutritious snack every session.



With all these opportunities offered to the youth, the program aims to develop well rounded individuals who will contribute to the development of our society and will assist fellow youth and newcomers in their integration into Canadian communities.

## About the Scholarship

The YMAP Lou MacEachern Rotary Scholarship is awarded each year to 6 YMAP participants in grade 12. YMCA Calgary organizes the application process for eligible youth to complete then the submitted applications are reviewed by a committee who selects the recipients. Applicants must be attending post-secondary school in the Fall and demonstrate financial need. Beyond these requirements, YMAP participants also answer the following questions.

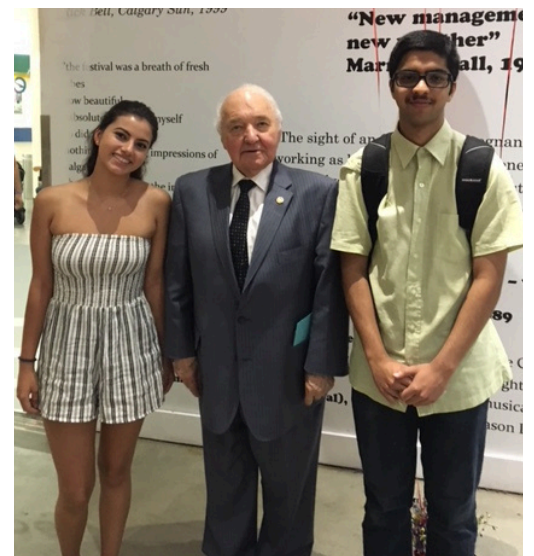
1. What have you chosen to study in post-secondary school? Why?
2. What or who has influenced your decision to follow your chosen career path?
3. How has your participation in YMAP helped you through high school?
4. What difference will this scholarship make in your pursuit of post-secondary education?

Once selected the YMAP participants must also provide a copy of their acceptance letter, proof of enrolment and a thank you letter in advance of receiving the funds. YMAP participants who receive this award are honoured at the year-end celebration annually.

## Impact

The YMAP Lou MacEachern Rotary Scholarship has been in place since 2006 and has supported 114 newcomer youth to date in achieving their educational aspirations. Over \$119,000 has been directly given to high school students in their pursuit of post secondary education and provided them financial support during a challenging transition in life.

For the past 19 years, this opportunity has enabled youth to focus on their personal objectives and goals instead of on the financial burden associated with higher education. Allowing them to continue to build a sense of belonging as well as lifelong community connections is crucial to the success of newcomer youth. We greatly appreciate your partnership and investment in helping young people reach their full potential.



## Deborah's Story...

*Before joining YMAP, Deborah admits "I liked being the leader, but for the wrong reason. I never listened to anyone else and cared more about [my own] success – I didn't care about community". Deborah's participation in YMAP opened her eyes to a world beyond her own culture and experiences. "Hearing other opinions/stories from youth around the world has been one of the most valuable lessons in YMAP". In addition to gaining a more global perspective from her fellow YMAP participants, Deborah believes it was her exposure to world issues and global initiatives in the YMAP Leaders program that helped her decide to pursue a career in humanitarian aid and/or social work. Deborah was accepted to Mount Royal University and after her first year at Mount Royal, she transferred to the University of Calgary to pursue a degree in international relations. Receiving the Lou MacEachern bursary allowed her to be involved more in programs and volunteer in her community, instead of working all the time to support her education.*