



Alterna Savings Supports the Co-operative Housing Federation of Toronto Through Five Scholarships

Toronto, ON – July 28, 2020– Alterna Savings, in partnership with the Co-operative Housing Federation of Toronto (CHFT), has awarded five Penny Bethke Scholarships to young community leaders that help strengthen cooperatives and their communities.

“Since its inception in 2004, we have been proud to support the CHFT Diversity Scholarship Program that is geared toward benefiting youth living in member housing cooperatives.” said Rob Paterson, President and CEO of Alterna. “CHFT and Alterna are both membership-based organizations with similar goals, values and deep community roots.”

Supporting young community leaders, as they pursue their studies can play a critical role in their success. Alterna, alongside CHFT, offer support that can alleviate financial burdens and encourage students to continue making a positive impact where they live.

Beginning in 2012, Alterna Savings sponsored and presented an annual memorial scholarship in the name of our past Board Member, community leader and social activist, Penny Bethke. Having spent the majority of her life’s work advancing the Canadian cooperative sector, and with a lifelong passion for education and cooperative values, we believe Penny’s memory continues to be well-served through this scholarship.

In 2020, through the scholarship program, Alterna awarded five Penny Bethke Scholarships to applicants who displayed a strong commitment to diversity and community involvement in their schools, co-op communities and in a variety of community-based organizations. To date, the program has awarded more than \$1,500,000 to over 370 CHFT Diversity Scholarship recipients.

Alterna is proud to support the [Co-operative Housing Federation of Toronto](#), an organization that believes in sustainable, affordable and equitable housing for everyone. CHFT represents over 160 member co-ops and serves the needs of its members in the Toronto, York and Durham Regions. Congratulations to the scholarship recipients!

2020 Penny Bethke Scholarship Recipients:



Alia Omar-Bujak - Robert Cooke Co-operative Homes

Alia is graduating this year from Richview Collegiate Institute. All through high school, she has been a First Aider with MedVents Canada, a vocational program of Scouts Canada. First Aiders get training in providing medical coverage at events. She is also a youth leader and mentor at her church, helping with a teen drop-in night. Alia served as a teacher assistant, helping younger kids with reading and schoolwork. She will attend University of Toronto and study paramedicine.



Raquelle Johnson - Innisfree Housing Co-operative

Raquelle is graduating this year from Wexford Collegiate School for the Arts, where she has helped with fundraisers and events at the school's Antilleans Culture Club. For several years she was a Healthy Schools representative at Wexford, promoting good nutrition. One summer she volunteered at a City drama and arts camp, helping with dance and theatre performances. Raquelle will be starting a forensic science program at the University of Toronto.



Makeda Kafele-Green - Cawthra Mansions Co-operative

Makeda is graduating this year from Oakwood Collegiate Institute. She has been active at Oakwood since her first year as an Ambassador, introducing new students to the school community through the Reach Ahead program and field trips. As a member of Afro-Can, she started the Black Youth Book Club, aiming to break stereotypes about black students and literacy. At her co-op, Makeda belongs to the Membership Committee. She will attend Wilfrid Laurier University to study Community Music.



Madhumitha Ramamurthy - Mimico Co-operative Homes

While attending Bishop Allen Academy, Madhumitha volunteered at St. Joseph's Health Centre in the summers and at Lakeshore Lodge, a long-term-care home, on weekends. At the hospital, she welcomed and directed visitors. At Lakeshore Lodge, she planned and assisted in recreation activities in arts and music for the residents. She also served as vice-president of the youth council, helping to coordinate youth volunteers. Madhumitha will start the second year of her life sciences program at the University of Toronto in the fall.



Taylor Seichter - Brimell Court Co-operative

Taylor is graduating this year from Winston Churchill Collegiate Institute, where she has been involved in a range of social justice activities. She has provided 400 hours of service over two years to Rosalie Hall, an agency that assists young parents and children. Her regular roles are sorting and distributing donations and helping with child care, but she has also dressed up as Santa Claus for holiday photos for Rosalie Hall families. She will enter Centennial College this fall to study child and youth care.

About Alterna Savings

Alterna Savings and Credit Union Limited (Alterna) has been the good in banking for 112 years! Alterna is made up of Alterna Savings and Credit Union Limited and its wholly-owned subsidiary, Alterna Bank. Together, we have \$9.3 billion in assets under management.

As the first full-service, member-owned co-operative financial institution outside Quebec, Alterna Savings shares its expertise with more than 183,000 members through a network of 36 branches across Ontario, that includes partners Toronto Municipal Employees' Savings, City Savings, Quinte First Credit Union and Peterborough Community Savings; as well as call centre and digital channels. Members and customers also benefit from industry-leading online brokerage, investment management services, and have access to the largest surcharge-free ATM network in Canada through THE EXCHANGE® Network, with over 3,700 ATMs to serve them.

For more information please visit www.alterna.ca and connect with us on <https://twitter.com/alternasavings>.



Media Contact:

Adrienne Finlay

Director, Communications

Alterna Savings | Alterna Bank

P: 416-895-7798

E: Adrienne.Finlay@alterna.ca