



## Welcome Back! Let's Have the Best Year Ever

Welcome to the 2025-2026 school year. We hope everyone had a chance for some rest and relaxation with friends and family and are returning to work with renewed energy and enthusiasm.

The Angel Foundation for Learning is gearing up for another year of supporting students who need assistance.

AFL provides funding for student nutrition programs so that all children are fed and ready to learn and succeed in school. We also offer assistance with the cost of basic essentials for students including eye glasses, hearing aids and other assistive devices, emergency support when the unexpected happens, school apparel and bursaries to support students' post-secondary aspirations.

AFL is the only charity that exists solely to assist TCDSB students and their families. And unlike many of the larger charities out there, very little of the funds we receive are used for administrative expenses thanks in large part to the support from the leadership at TCDSB who recognize the incredible need, and value the work that AFL does to help kids.

As the economic uncertainty continues to be top of mind for most of us, we understand that some may not be in a position to increase their financial support, but it is our hope that everyone will do what they can to help us fight food insecurity and poverty in our school communities. There are so many ways that you can assist us, from simply telling others about our various events and initiatives, and encouraging them to support the AFL, following us on social media channels and sharing information about who we are and what we do, and of course giving whatever you can, whenever you can to help us help kids.

Please take a moment to read on and see some of our highlights as last school year drew to a close. We feature the anticipation of 13 more schools evolving into Student Nutrition Program communities this month. This is an accomplishment built on the legacy of principals, support staff, teachers and nutrition coordinators over the past 10-15 years. The TCDSB is engrained with a legacy of care and it is thanks to this continued anchor of faith, hope and charity that we will soon have programs in every single school in the coming years! When we stop and pause, we may not always feed the hungry, but we will always feed the needy. Those who need to belong, those who need to be at peace and those who need a seat at the table of equity. This is our program that we continue to build together!

We thank you all for your ongoing caring and compassion, and wish you a successful, enjoyable and fulfilling year ahead.



## AFL Celebrates Further Expansion of Student Nutrition Programs

During the 2024-2025 school year, seven new programs opened in TCDSB schools, thanks to the renewed commitment from the City of Toronto, giving an additional 2,389 children access to nutritious morning meals/snacks.

The high cost of groceries combined with the shift to part-time employment in many sectors has taken its toll on many students and families within the TCDSB. For many children, the snack or meal they are able to enjoy at school is often the only nutritious food they receive during the day.

We all know how important good nutrition is to the development of children and to their ultimate success in school, and it is this recognition by the local government which is the impetus behind the expansion of school food programs across the City of Toronto.

Our thanks goes out to the school administrators, the volunteer nutrition program coordinators and our own SNP team for working together with enthusiasm and creativity to launch these SNPs at Josyf Cardinal Slipyj, Nativity of Our Lord, St Malachy, St Mary of the Angels, St Victor, The Divine Infant and Venerable John Merlini.



Through a generous donation from Catholic Charities of the Archdioceses of Toronto (CCAT) with ShareLife combined with a small grant from the Hodgson Family Foundation, six additional schools were able to pilot morning snack programs last year.

The continued commitment to ensuring that all students have access to healthy snacks daily, has resulted in additional funding from the City of

Toronto which has enabled AFL to launch SNPs at 13 more TCDSB schools starting in the fall of 2025.

The investment was announced at The Divine Infant late last year. The additional programs will operate at Mother Cabrini, O L of Peace, St Clement, St. Margherita of Citta Di Castillo, St Elizabeth, St. Pius X, St Antoine Daniel, St Norbert, Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, St Anselm, St Gerald, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Transfiguration of Our Lord. Our thanks to Mayor Olivia Chow and City Council for their continued commitment to student nutrition.

AFL is truly grateful for the additional funding which gets us yet another step closer to ensuring that no child will go hungry during the school year.





## AFL Awards over \$52,000 in Bursaries

The Angel Foundation for Learning is pleased to announce the winners of the many student bursaries and school awards for 2025.

“Each year we are humbled by the quality of the applications we receive which outline not only their amazing academic accomplishments, but also the details about the personal challenges that they have had to overcome in order to succeed,” says John Wujek, Executive Director of the Angel Foundation for Learning. “These are dedicated students who respond with kindness and compassion to those who need their support, and who always strive for excellence in all that they do.”

“It is truly heart warming to see the positive impact these students have had on their peers, and on their communities through their community service and leadership activities,” says Don Walker, AFL Chair. “Their stories of self-sacrifice and perseverance are an inspiration to their families and to all of us.”



- AFL Student Bursary for Indigenous Youth -- Brooke Dusome-Jackman from St Patrick, Thierry Sotomayor-Lepage from Brebeuf and Matthew McLaughlin from Senator O'Connor (right middle and bottom)
- Tom Leon Student Bursary -- Sharon Onebunne from Mary Ward, Ralph Bou Abboud from Bishop Allen, Mariya Mushasta from St Anne, and Stephnie Perera Gunawardane from St Patrick (right top)
- belairdirect Bursary for Newcomer Students -- Kyrylo Pylypiuk from James Cardinal McGuigan
- Proudly Pinoy Bursary for students pursuing careers in education -- Darryl Lesaspi from Senator O'Connor and Alyssa Anne Kiersten Mercado from Marshall McLuhan
- Exceptional Student Bursary – Isabella Carneiro
- AFL Skilled Trades Bursary –Jaden Stephens from Father Henry Carr
- AFL Bursary for Studies in Mental Health – Zeina Alhassan, St Joseph Morrow Park
- AFL Music Bursary – Yanna-Angela Baltazar, St Patrick
- AFL Visual Arts Bursary – Jennifer Dan, James Cardinal McGuigan
- Spirit of Inclusion Award – Tirion Gavin Lleno, St Joachim
- AFL Literacy Award to Support Resources for Exceptional Students – Michelle Bottos, St Paschal Baylon
- AFL Library Award in Honour of Kathy Harding – Chiara Rizzo, Immaculate Conception

Donations to our Award and Bursary Fund are always welcome, and can be made online through CanadaHelps or directly to AFL by cheque or etransfer to [angel.foundation@tcdsb.org](mailto:angel.foundation@tcdsb.org) and can be earmarked for a specific bursary or award if the donor wishes to identify their area of interest.

## Another Successful Golf Tournament in Support of Students

AFL was truly grateful to all who attended and supported our annual Charity Golf Tournament, helping us to raise approximately \$46,000 for urgent student needs. Our appreciation to our supporting sponsor belairdirect as well as our other incredible partners and donors:



We also thank our golfers and our lunch guests and of course all who donated items for our silent auction and raffle. We had an incredible day at Glen Eagle and can't wait to do it all again in 2026.





## Opportunities This Fall

There are so many ways to support AFL throughout the fall:



**Get your 50-50 raffle ticket** for a chance to win big for Thanksgiving. Early bird draw on September 28, 2025. <https://www.rafflebox.ca/raffle/angelfoundation-afl5050>



**Support AFL in the Toronto Waterfront Marathon.** Our team of angels will be running/walking in support of kids on October 18th. Sign up for the 5km walk/run or the

virtual marathon or make a donation to the angel team.

<https://racerooster.com/events/2025/95235/2025-tcs-toronto-waterfront-marathon/fundraising-organization/72945>

**Join Us at this Year's AFL Gala, Moonlight Magic: An Evening to Inspire Dreams** happening November 28th at Venu Event Space. Early bird pricing is in effect through to Thanksgiving weekend. <https://form.jotform.com/251594271894266>. We are also looking for sponsors as well as in kind donations for the Gala auction, raffle and door prizes. Your donations or tips about who to contact for assistance is much appreciated.

Can't attend but want to help? Make a donation of \$20 or more by etransfer to [angel.foundation@tcdsb.org](mailto:angel.foundation@tcdsb.org) and the funds will be used to help students.



**Consider Celebrating Milestones** (anniversaries, birthdays, retirements) with a donation to AFL, or honour a friend or family who has passed away with a memorial donation. <https://angelfoundationforlearning.org/donate/>

**Sign Up for Cents Off Your Pay Cheque** and for as little as \$1 every two weeks, you can help feed a student throughout the year. <https://angelfoundationforlearning.org/cents-off-program/>

## Get Ready to Cheer for Your Toronto Marlies

The AFL-TCDSB-Marlies School Day Game is coming March 4, 2026 at Coca Cola Coliseum, Exhibition Place. Watch for information coming soon. Last year the event was a sell out and generated over \$22,000 for urgent student needs. We hope for a repeat of that success this year and look forward to seeing many of you at the game.



## MLSE Sports Promo Codes

For fans of basketball, hockey, football and soccer, MLSE continues to offer a promo code to AFL supporters to save money on tickets to home games for Raptors905, Marlies, Argos and TFC. Argos and TFC season is winding down with just a couple of games remaining, but Marlies and Raptors905 are getting ready for their season openers. Watch for information to be posted here <https://angelfoundationforlearning.org/discounted-sports-tickets/> on how you can get your discounted tickets and MLSE donates a portion of the proceeds from the tickets to AFL.



## Calling all Students! We Need Your Talents for our Christmas Cards

Advent will soon be here so it's the perfect time to remind you of our annual holiday tradition. All students are invited/encouraged to participate in a Christmas art contest.

Using any medium they wish, students are invited to submit digital versions of Christmas themed artwork. Any holiday motif is welcome, though naturally we ask students to consider creations that reflect our Catholic Christmas traditions.

Submissions must be in full colour, and be sent electronically as high resolution jpeg (300dpi or larger) to [angel.foundation@tcdsb.org](mailto:angel.foundation@tcdsb.org). Suggested size would be 8-1/2 x 11 or 4-1/4 x 5-1/2" (or something that is easily scalable down to the specified size).

We will be selecting 10 designs for our annual Christmas cards and students whose designs we choose will receive a gift pack including a \$50 gift card. They will also receive credit on the cards themselves and recognition in our social media posts. Most importantly, these students will be helping their peers as proceeds from the sale of the cards will be used to help TCDSB students throughout the year.

**Deadline for submissions is Friday, October 24th at 12:00 noon.**

We look forward to seeing what students come up with this year.





## Other Recent Highlights



AFL was so proud to be participating in the Catholic Charities Toronto preconference "Pilgrims of Hope". It was a wonderful day connecting with representatives from many diverse charities doing incredible community service work. We had some meaningful discussions on collaboration, values, challenges and best practices in charitable work and now look forward to the conference coming in 2026. Representing AFL were Chair Don Walker, Vice-Chair Marguerite Thomson, Executive Director John Wujek and Manager of Communications, Fundraising and Events Emmy Szekeres Milne.



AFL paid a visit to the dedicated SNP team at Michael Power/St Joseph to express our appreciation for all that they do to ensure that every student has an opportunity help themselves to healthy snacks daily.

Our sincere thanks to the Ecclesiastical Insurance Office and in particular John Del Grande, a long standing supporter of AFL and former TCDSB Trustee for his leadership in obtaining a grant of \$5,000 to support the student equity fund for post-secondary education (aka Peggy Project).



We also extend our sincere appreciation to the Metro Toronto Convention Centre for their donation of beautiful flower arrangements to welcome CEC and Cardinal Carter staff back to work. Our gratitude also goes out to those who picked up the flowers and chose to make a donation to the Foundation. It was a lovely way to start the new school year. Pictured below is the newest member of the AFL team: Susan Li.



## So What Happens with Your Donations?

Student Nutrition remains our core business and therefore in addition to funding received from the various levels of government, AFL provides support for SNP related equipment and supplies for schools, as well as providing some top ups when funding is insufficient to cover the cost of food for students.

Here's a snapshot of where the funds were dispersed last year.

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Arts Fund	\$1,245	Extreme Needs Funds	\$ 21,785
Loretto Fund for Newcomers	\$ 23,130	Reliable Life Fund	\$ 10,977.30
Camp Fund	\$ 5,779.53	Social Work Emergency Fund	\$ 64,300
Peggy Project	\$40,306 (to offset the cost of application fees to Ontario colleges and universities)		
School Allocation Expense	\$20,370	Vouchers for school uniforms	\$12,500
Awards & Bursaries			
\$ 54,500			

### PLUS

Grocery cards to support student nutrition over the summer in the transition programs, program for studnets with multiple exceptionalities and Focus on Youth programs \$136,980.50  
ATeam Student Leadership Initiative Focusing on Community Service and Philanthropy \$ 45,163.45

And all of this is made possible through the generosity of individual donors, and the benevolence of our loyal sponsors/supporters just like belairdirect, TCDSB, CIBC, MLSE, TD, RBC, McCarthy's, TECT, TSU, CUPE1328, TCPVA and many other corporate supporters who share our commitment to helping children and youth across the Toronto Catholic District School Board.

# Extra coverage is always a plus.



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