Learner Achievement Award 2024 – Acceptance Speech from Parwinder Kaur

My name is Parwinder Kaur and I'm 25 years old. I'm currently enrolled in second year of Practical Nursing program at Holland college. I finished my high school in 2016 from back home India and came to Canada for my college studies. I'm from a very small village. The place, I come from people are not very welcoming towards women education. They think, girls should not study much, should get married once they turn adult and start a family, but I always wanted to study higher level of education and do something on my own. My father was supportive though. He was a farmer. He helped me with my tuition fees and helped me to come here by taking a loan for me. I took business program at Cambrian college in Ontario in 2017 and graduated from it in 2018. I worked nights and evenings while studying to pay my tuition and pay off loan that my father took for me.

 I moved to PE in 2019 and absolute loved the island. I worked as a shift manager at McDonald's and Cook at Boston Pizza. I have always worked two jobs to make my life better. My father had two mini strokes in last two years, he is not able to work anymore. I'm trying to support my family too. In 2023, I started a job at QEH as a service worker after my permanent residency. Upon working there, I really like the nursing profession. I love to provide care and support people so I decided to start my nursing career and enrolled in Practical Nursing program in September 2023 and found out that I'm pregnant in my first year, I struggled little because of my pregnancy but I managed to complete my first year successfully. I was not able to work because of busy school and my health. I had to use my EI benefits in my first year of school.

I delivered a healthy baby boy on April 15, 2024. His name is Vikrant. I had a summer break from school, so I stayed with him few months at home but now I'm back in school in my second year at the Holland College Practical Nursing program.

Thank you for this award.