People don’t give to Institutions, they give to people

Congratulations on receiving a private SFU award! The money you received was donated to SFU by somebody in the community who believes in higher education. Here is why a letter of appreciation from you is important:

- Simon Fraser University’s donors are private individuals, corporations, charitable foundations and community groups. They give for personal and professional reasons – not only for the tax benefit – but because they have a passion for certain areas of study, or to pay tribute to the memory of someone who was dear to them. They give because they believe in the power of higher education to enhance our community, society and ultimately the world we live in.

- As a recipient of a private award, you can play a key role in strengthening SFU’s relationships with the donors of private awards. Your letter of appreciation to the donor of the award you have received assures them that their generosity is put to use by real people – real students. This helps keep their commitment strong, hopefully securing this funding for years after you graduate.

Your letter need not be lengthy or ingratiating; you don’t have to divulge any personal issues or even your address if you are not comfortable doing so. Your letter can be addressed to “The Donor of your award” and put in campus mail to my attention in University Advancement. To help you get started, here are some ideas to explore which your donor would find interesting:

- What is your experience of student life? Not all of our donors are university graduates and those that are may have studied in very different times and places.

- What are the challenges you face? How has this award helped you meet those challenges? Maybe you’ve been able to work fewer shifts this semester, or has it relieved some other pressure so that you can approach your studies with renewed focus? Has it provided you with personal encouragement?

- Why are you pursuing higher education? What are your educational goals? What are you excited about in your studies? How has it enriched you?

Thank you for taking the time to thank your donor. Please feel welcome to contact me at nbrenton@sfu.ca or 778-782-5310 if you have any questions. Remember, that nobody can make the case for student support in the way that you can.