

From Struggling to Striving to Serving

From a young age, I've faced challenges that shaped how I understand the world and my place in it. Diagnosed early with speech delays, ADHD in kindergarten, and later with dyslexia and dysgraphia, I struggled academically and socially throughout elementary and middle school. Reading, writing, impulsivity, and even making and keeping friends didn't come easily. Yet despite these obstacles, I've maintained an 84% high school average and experienced success in all areas of high school life. This is something that I take great pride in and wish to help others do the same.

Living with learning disabilities has forced me to work harder and smarter. I've learned to use every available tool, including medication for focus, assistive technology to support reading and writing, and structured systems that help me stay organized. Over time, I've transformed my challenges into strengths. These experiences have made me more creative, self-aware, and resilient. Where once I struggled to express myself in writing, I now use text-to-speech tools and other supports to fully engage with academic work.

Outside the classroom, I've found a second home in sports and community service. I've tried basketball, soccer, cross-country, and swimming. Football became my area to excel. I joined my first team in Grade 9 and instantly connected with the discipline, teamwork, and energy of the game. Even when I broke my wrist in Grade 10, I finished the season with a "club" and later earned a spot on Team New Brunswick, representing my province at the national level. This fall, I'll be studying Criminology and Social Justice at Saint Mary's University. Balancing a full course load with the demands of varsity athletics will be a challenge. I know that I will require extra tutoring and support due to ADHD symptoms, dyslexia and dysgraphia. Despite these obstacles, I remain committed to my goals.

A recent study by The Government of Canada indicates that "16.5% of offenders met the clinical criteria for ADHD, while a further 25% scored in moderate range for this disorder." ADHD has been associated with unstable job history, presence of a learning disability, lower educational attainment, substance abuse, higher risk and need levels, and other mental health problems. ADHD was also found to predict institutional misconduct as offenders with the highest levels of ADHD were 2.5 times more likely to receive a further institutional charge. I've chosen to complete a Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in Criminology and a minor in Social Justice because I want to become a Community Policing Ambassador with the RCMP. I believe that youth, especially those who are struggling, deserve to be seen, heard, and supported. I know what it feels like to be overlooked and underestimated. I know that I can help others discover the tools needed to be successful. I want to be a role model who helps others find their way, just as so many people have helped me.

Leadership is a big part of who I am. Whether serving as a Peer Mentor for incoming Grade 9 students or organizing inclusive events as a Field Day Coordinator, I've learned

that leadership is about empathy, encouragement, and action. It's about creating environments where everyone can participate and feel valued. Through coaching junior varsity football and volunteering with the Moncton Minor Basketball Association, I've had the opportunity to give back through the sports that shaped me. I hope to inspire young athletes the same way my coaches inspired me.

Beyond athletics, I've also worked to address food insecurity in my community. I volunteer regularly with the Hot Breakfast Program at Beaverbrook School and have helped lead my school's contributions to the Fill the Bus Campaign, raising over \$150,000 in food and donations this year alone. These efforts have taught me that leadership means stepping up for others, especially when times are tough.

One quote that guides me is: "Great leaders don't set out to be a leader. They set out to make a difference." That's exactly what I intend to do. Studying criminology is my next step toward a life of service, leadership, and impact. I will help others find strength, belonging, and purpose.

*Thank you for taking the time to read my essay and consider me for the **DCCI Scholarship for Canadian Students with Disabilities** scholarship.*

Reference

<https://www.canada.ca/en/correctional-service/corporate/library/research/report/226-full-report.html>

New Brunswick
Canada

BIRTH CERTIFICATE
CERTIFICAT DE NAISSANCE

VITAL STATISTICS
STATISTIQUES DE L'ÉTAT CIVIL

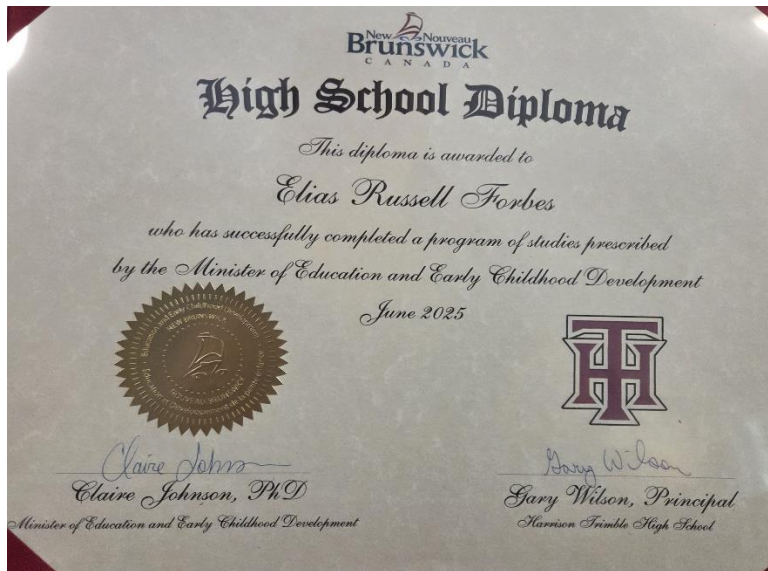
B165468

Name Nom	FORBES, ELIAS RUSSELL	Sex Sexe	M
Place of Birth Lieu de naissance	MONCTON	County Comté	WESTMORLAND
Date of Birth Date de naissance	19 JUN 2007		
Date of Registration Date d'enregistrement	20 JUL 2007	Registration Number Numéro d'enregistrement	2007 03 004467
Name of Father Nom du père	FORBES, LOUIS ELBERT		
Place of Birth Lieu de naissance	BRITISH WEST INDIES		
Maiden Name of Mother Nom de jeune fille de la mère	LEWIS, AMBER DAWN		
Place of Birth Lieu de naissance	NEW BRUNSWICK, CANADA		

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE EXTRACT FROM THE REGISTRATION OF BIRTH OF THE ABOVE NAMED PERSON MAINTAINED IN THE OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR GENERAL OF VITAL STATISTICS.
LES PRÉSENTES ATTESTENT QUE CE QUI PRÉCÈDE EST UN EXTRAIT CONFORME DU BULLETIN D'ENREGISTREMENT DE NAISSANCE DE LA PERSONNE SUSMENTIONNÉE.
REGISTRAR GENERAL DES STATISTIQUES DE L'ÉTAT CIVIL

Kimberley Blincoe
REGISTRAR GENERAL OF VITAL STATISTICS
REGISTRAR GENERAL DES STATISTIQUES DE L'ÉTAT CIVIL

DATE ISSUED
DATE D'ÉMISSION 01 OCT 2007



New Brunswick
CANADA

Elias Forbes
29 WOODHAVEN COURT
MONCTON, NB E1G 1H3

6106

July 10, 2025
File # 580525

This letter is in response to your recent application for student financial assistance as a student with a disability.

Under the Canada Student Financial Assistance Regulations, a **permanent disability** is defined as "any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment – or a functional limitation – that restricts the ability of a person to perform the daily activities necessary to pursue studies at a post-secondary school level or to participate in the labour force and that is expected to remain with the person for the person's expected life."

A **persistent or prolonged disability** is defined as "any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment – or a functional limitation – that restricts the ability of a person to perform the daily activities necessary to pursue studies at a post-secondary school level or to participate in the labour force and has lasted, or is expected to last, for a period of at least 12 months, but is not expected to remain with the person for the person's expected life."

The eligibility criteria to be considered as a person with a disability under the Student Financial Assistance program include:


- have a documented disability as defined in the Canada Student Financial Assistance Regulations;
- provide to Student Financial Services the required documents to verify the disability; and
- demonstrate federal financial need through the Student Financial Assistance application process for full-time or part-time studies.

Upon review of the documentation submitted, you have been approved as having a **permanent disability** under the Canada Student Financial Assistance Program. You are not required to submit the Disability Verification Form with future applications unless there are additional disabilities to be considered.

Student Financial Services

Student Financial Services / Services financiers pour étudiants
Post Secondary Education, Training and Labour / Education postsecondaire, Formation et Travail
Edifice Beaverbrook Building, P.O. Box / C.P. 6000 Fredericton NB / N.-B. E3B 5H1
Tel. / Tél.: 506-453-2577 Toll Free / Sans frais: 1-800-667-5626 Fax / Télécopieur: 506-444-4333

StudentAid.GNB.CA / AideAuxEtudiants.GNB.CA

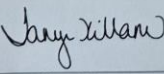
**Saint Mary's
University**

T 902.420.5562
F 902.420.5151
service.centre@smu.ca

CONFIRMATION OF ENROLLMENT

This is to certify that **Elias Forbes** (d.o.b. 19-June-2007, Student I.D. Number A00491807) is registered at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada as follows:

Academic Term:	September - December 2025
Primary Program:	Bachelor of Arts
Major(s):	Undeclared
Length of Program:	120.00
Credit Hours Registered in Term:	15.00
Student Status:	Full-time
Year of Study:	First Year
Total Credit Hours Completed:	0.00
Credit Hours Remaining:	105.00
Years Remaining:	3.50 (assuming 30.0 credit hours per year)


Tanya Killam, BComm
Director, Service Centre & Financial Aid & Awards
Enrolment Services
Saint Mary's University
July 08, 2025

Issued to: Elias Forbes on 8-Jul-25(A)

923 Robie Street Halifax NS Canada B3H 3C3

smu.ca