



OUR SHARED FUTURE: THE STORY OF REID CHARLES-FINLEY

ORANO CANADA NORTHERN SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT: 2012-2013

Mining equals opportunity for youth in northern Saskatchewan. Reid Charles-Finley of La Ronge figured that out early in life.

At 28, Reid is now a power engineer at Orano's McClean Lake operation with a good income and excellent prospects for the future.

He has also gained valuable professional certifications and education, including his Red Seal, a third-class power engineering certification, a mining engineering technician diploma, and two years of undergraduate studies in geology at the University of Saskatchewan.

Reid and his older brother were raised in La Ronge by his mother Sandra Charles, who ran her own cleaning business in the community. His parents separated when he was young, but his father moved to Missinipi from Saskatoon in order to be closer to his sons. Both parents were hard working and set a great example that inspired their sons.

"As a kid, I had my head screwed on my shoulders pretty good," says Reid. "I was a good student in high school. I applied myself and didn't get into trouble. I did what every other kid does in Grade 11 and 12 with my buddies but I graduated with high 80s and had university in my sights."

After graduating high school, he attended the U of S on a full scholarship from Orano's Cigar Lake joint venture partner, Cameco Corporation. After two years of geological studies, he decided "he wasn't that into rocks" and returned to La Ronge.

Orano believes that together we can create our best tomorrow – one that meets the future energy needs of the world and builds strong, flourishing communities full of thriving people and healthy environments. We've designed our scholarship program to help youth like Reid take advantage of opportunities and make their dreams a reality. So, when Reid applied for a scholarship to continue his education at the mine engineering technician diploma program at Northlands College, we were thrilled to help him.

While studying at Northlands and at the U of S, Reid got a good taste of life at the mines through summer student positions and work placements at the Rabbit Lake mill, Eagle Point mine and the Key Lake mill.

He received his mining engineering technician diploma in 2013 and Orano's support for Reid came full circle when he got a job as a mill operator at McClean Lake. After a year as a mill operator, he started the power engineering program, and Orano covered the cost of textbooks and travel for the exams.

Reid had a vision for what he wanted to achieve, and with great focus, three years later, he gained his third-class certification as a power engineer in 2017. He is currently operating the utility boilers, acid plant and crystallization circuit at McClean and pursuing his second-class power engineer certification with Orano's support.

Reid says the support from the mining industry was a big factor in his success.

"My quality of life would be nothing like it is without the opportunities I was given," he says.

Reid says education opens doors to all sorts of opportunities for northerners, particularly in the mining industry, which offers great careers to skilled and educated people from the north. And the benefits of education are lasting.

"You can lose your job, but nobody can ever take away your education."

Reid has started a family of his own and is living comfortably in La Ronge. He is close to family and friends and is happy.

"It's worked out well for me. If you're a northerner with skills and some education there's a lot of opportunity. But it's like anything else, you have to apply yourself."