



Hurst Legacy Award 2026

The Hurst Legacy Award was founded in 2019 to honour the incredible work of our founder, Jim “Hurst” Hayhurst. While he passed away in early 2020, his legacy lives on in the Trails Alumni who are benefiting from his creation of Trails over 30 years ago. The Hurst Legacy Award is presented annually to a Trails Alumni who consistently lives the Trails mission. This award proves that we all have the capacity and the responsibility to give back, regardless of our age, background, or abilities.

Christine Huyuh

Group: Golden Constellations 2013-2017

Trails Facilitator | Trails Scholarship Recipient | AIM Mentor

Bachelor of Environmental Studies in Planning Honours, Co-operative Program, with an Urban Design specialization from the University of Waterloo



“Trails meant that someone was always there to support and guide me, holding my hand when I needed it, and then letting go when it was time for me to spread my wings.”

I still remember my first day at Trails. The bus dropped us off at a big open field, and I felt so small, unsure of where I was or who I would become. Our first task was to pack for a two-night camping trip, and there were strict rules about what we could bring. I had a stuffed animal that I didn’t want to leave behind. One of the facilitators quietly packed it into her own bag and carried it for me the whole trip. I probably could have gone without it, but that moment stayed with me. It showed me that someone was listening and cared about what I needed.

That feeling followed me through my years at Trails.

At home, life often felt confusing and lonely. My parents worked incredibly hard to provide for my sister and me, but that meant I had to take on responsibility at a young age. There were not many opportunities for extracurriculars, and there were few constants. When Trails came to my school to give a presentation, I remember seeing a photo of bunk beds and imagining myself there, wanting to be part of something new. I signed up right away.

Trails quickly became one of the most consistent and meaningful parts of my life. No matter what was going on, I knew I would come back, see my friends, and spend time with mentors who genuinely cared about me. It was a place where I felt safe. We were encouraged to try new things and push ourselves, but never judged for recognizing our limits. I was also able to experience activities my family would not have had access to, like canoeing, snowshoeing, and high ropes.

Some of my defining memories come from Trails summer trips. My family did not camp, so everything felt new. I saw turtles and moose and swam in a lake for the first time.

During my Leader-in-Training trip, I struggled with solo kayaking. After years of canoeing, I saw myself as a strong paddler, so it was hard to admit I was struggling. When I finally spoke up, I was met with support, not judgment. The staff paired me with someone so I could keep going with confidence. That moment reminded me that Trails was never about doing everything alone, it was about learning, growing, and asking for support when I needed it.

Trails also helped me build confidence and step into leadership. I learned to speak up, take initiative, and trust myself.

My parents did not have experience with post-secondary school in Canada, so navigating that transition felt overwhelming. Through Trails, I was connected with an older alum at my university who supported me in my first year. With the Trails Scholarship, I was able to pursue my degree in Planning and Urban Design, work that allows me to help shape more livable, sustainable, and equitable communities. Without Trails support, I would not have gone to post-secondary school or be where I am today. Trails changed the trajectory of my life.

Inspired by the support I received, I have looked for ways to give back. In university, I worked as a Residence Ambassador and Teaching Assistant, and I continue to stay involved with Trails as a mentor. I want other young people to feel the same sense of belonging, encouragement, and care that shaped me.

Trails taught me that showing up matters. It gave me the confidence to ask for what I want, the courage to try things that scared me, and the responsibility to support others in return.

There is a piece of Trails with me in everything I do. The confidence I carry, the way I lead, and the way I care for others all started at Trails. Trails did not just change my life. It shaped the way I move through the world and the kind of community I hope to help build for others.