

This article shows how one person was able to finance his education through the unexpected gift of a stranger. The graph below the article gives information about how other students finance their education.

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## The Gift: How One Act of Kindness Changed a Life

by Monty Hall as told to Robert Kiener

*Although I haven't appeared on television as host of "Let's Make a Deal" since 1991, not a day goes by that someone doesn't recognize me. "Hey, Monty!" a stranger will invariably yell at me. "What's behind Door Number One?" While I appreciate the recognition, I sometimes wish that I were known more for what I do today—charity work.*

*I make more than 50 charity appearances a year and must have raised nearly a billion dollars for worthwhile causes. In 1988 I received the Order of Canada for my humanitarian work.*

*Countless times I have seen that if you cast your bread upon the waters, it will come back a hundredfold. But there is one story in particular that, for me, illustrates the point. To this day it can still move me to tears.*

On a crisp spring day in 1942, Max Freed, the owner of a Winnipeg shirt-making company, Hercules Manufacturing, was returning to his factory with a bundle of orders tucked neatly beneath his arm. Business was good and Max, although only 30, was carving out a niche as a successful businessman.

- 5 As he walked to his office, he noticed a young man across the street, on his hands and knees, scrubbing the front steps of Churchill's, a clothing wholesaler. The young man looked familiar. Freed crossed the street and asked him, "What are you doing here?"

The 20-year-old answered: "I work for Churchill's. My boss told me to scrub these steps."

"What's your name?" asked Freed. The young man told him.

"Is your father my butcher?" "Yes," the youth replied.

Freed went to his office and phoned the butcher. "I just saw your son washing the

steps at the company across the street from mine. He seems like an intelligent young man—is that the kind of work he's chosen to do?"

- 10 "He wants to go back to college," the soft-spoken butcher told Freed, "but I can't afford to send him." He explained that his son had worked for two years after graduating from high school, saving for college. But after a year and a half at the University of Manitoba, his money had run out. Business was poor, and even though the butcher's wife worked two jobs, the family barely scraped by. The young man's weekly salary of nine dollars helped out tremendously.

"Tell your son to come see me tomorrow," Freed told the butcher.

The next night, after finishing his work as a delivery boy and cleaner at Churchill's, the wiry 20-year-old met with Freed in his factory office.

"Do you want to go back to college?" Freed asked.

"More than anything!" the young man replied.

- 15 Freed looked him straight in the eye. "I'll put you through college. Write down how much money you need and bring it back to me—tuition, books, everything."

A smile broadened across the youth's face; he could not believe this was happening. Where had this guardian angel come from?

The next day when the young man showed Freed his figures, the shirt-maker looked them over and said: "Don't you want something for yourself? Don't you eat lunch or get the occasional haircut? You'll also need some new clothes. Add all that in."

Before handing over a cheque, Freed told the young man, "There are several conditions I

insist upon.” The youth sat silently, eyes wide with expectation.

20 “First, you must tell no one where this money came from.” The young man nodded. “Second, you must maintain top grades; I’m not sending you to college to be a playboy.”

“Third, this is a loan. You have to pay me back every penny when you can afford to. And lastly, you must promise to do this for someone else in your lifetime.”

“Thank you, Mr. Freed,” the 20-year-old replied. “I won’t disappoint you.”

Each month he visited Freed to report on his progress. At the University of Manitoba, he earned high grades, was near the top of his class and was elected president of the student body.

Over three years, Max Freed lent the butcher’s son \$990. The young graduate began repaying the debt as soon as he landed his first job after college. He sent Freed \$100 the first year, \$100 the next and the rest the third year after he graduated.

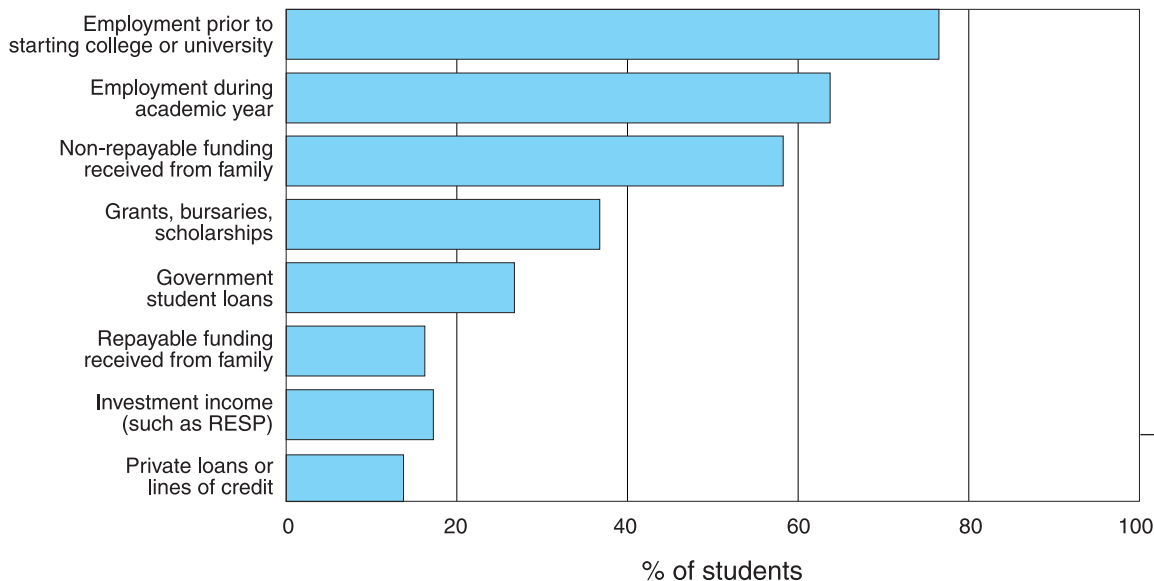
25 Throughout his life, he never forgot the day he’d been given the opportunity he needed to succeed. He also remembered the vow he’d made to do the same for someone else and has since helped several young people through college.

There was one promise the young man made to Max Freed that he couldn’t keep. For nearly 30 years, he told no one the identity of his mysterious benefactor. But he finally decided to tell his story because he felt it would inspire others to help someone, and because he felt that Max Freed deserved the recognition despite wanting to be anonymous.

I often tell this story. It reminds me that no matter what we do in life, no matter how high we climb the ladder of success, we will ultimately be remembered for how we helped others less fortunate than ourselves.

There’s another reason I love telling this story: I am the butcher’s son.

How Canadian students aged 18–24 pay for college or university



**A member of the Hockey Hall of Fame, Johnny Bower, was a National Hockey League (NHL) goaltender from 1958 to 1970. In this passage, the speaker remembers his surprise when he meets Johnny Bower.**

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## **The Game**

*by Rick Book*

Fresh asphalt and pine were my two favourite smells in the world. It meant we were almost at Waskesiu. “Whiskey Slough,” Prince Albert National Park, a five-hour drive from our farm into the lakes and rocks and trees of the Canadian Shield. Every summer, we became refugees from the heat that seared our dryland farm. We’d come up in July, when the fields were still lush with promise, and we’d often return two weeks later to find the crops burnt to a crisp, hope shriveled, and dreams put off for another year. Waskesiu was our green oasis.

Our car was loaded and so was the white speedboat on the trailer behind—tents, sleeping bags, cooking gear, water skis and fishing rods. My sisters and I’d strain to be the first to spot the park gate, the lake, the golf course and then the town itself. It was like rolling into a prairie Disneyland with its painted cabins, the brown log museum with the stuffed buffalo inside, the velvet lawn bowling greens, tennis players in their whites. And Johnny’s Café.

Dad pointed it out as we drove by. “There it is.” I had expected it to be all lit up with flashing lights and big signs. But it was a simple little building with clapboard siding, yellow with white trim, just like Grandma’s house. A faded wooden screen door with a Coca Cola handle. And the sign, Johnny’s Café. Through the window, a glimpse of people at the counter.

“Why don’t you go in later and get his autograph?” said Mom as we drove on to our campsite. “After we get the tents set up.”

5 Forty-five minutes later I pushed through the door. Palms sweaty, stomach tight, mouth dry as August. I walked to the shiny old cash register at the end of the counter. A skinny blonde girl with a very dark tan and very red lips was smoking a cigarette and fiddling with the radio dial. She turned when she saw me, took another drag.

“Hiya.” She didn’t inhale. “What can I do for you?” She smiled, friendly, not much older than me but miles ahead.

“Is J-J-Johnny Bower here? I’d like to...ah...like to get his autograph.” *Stupid farm kid.* That was probably what she was thinking.

“Sure thing,” she said. “Just a sec.” She wheeled around and walked to the back, through swinging doors with round steamy windows.

The Toronto Maple Leaf goalie was wearing a white T-shirt, whitish pants and a dirty apron that he wiped his hands on as he walked alongside the counter toward me.

10 “Hi, kid, how are ya?” said Johnny Bower, the guy I’d watched for years on TV, mostly on a snowy black-and-white TV.

*He’s shorter than Dad, I thought. And almost bald.*

“Hi, Mister Bower.” Swallow. “I wonder...could I have your autograph?” I couldn’t take my eyes off his face. It was like it had been made out of rubber and left out in the sun too long. And while it was melting someone had come along with a sharp stick and drawn all these lines on it. I could even see little dots where some of the stitches had been.

“Sure...got an autograph book?” I shook my head. “No problem.” He bent down under the counter and pulled out a paper place mat with flowers on one corner. “This do?” he asked. I nodded.

Johnny reached down into the pocket of his apron for a ballpoint pen next to the yellow receipt pad. “What’s your name, kid?”

15 “Er...Er...ic.” Johnny put the place mat on the counter, leaned over, pen hovering. “You play hockey?”

“Yup.” A gulp. A swallow. A nod of the head. “Right wing. For Lashburg.”

Johnny nodded. His pen swirled over the paper like a skater. Miss Lipstick was back, adjusting her hair in the mirror behind the milk-shake glasses.

There was a sign on the counter: Today’s Special—Hot Turkey Sandwich. And then panic!  
*What if he asks me my favourite team?*

“There you go, Eric.” He looked up. “So, who’s your favourite team?”

20 A slap shot to the gut.

“Uhhh, Canadiens.”

Johnny’s head jerked; he straightened up. “Canadiens!” he said. Three men at the far end of the counter turned. Miss Lipstick gave me a scornful look. And then Johnny Bower threw back his head and laughed. A big deep laugh. “So, I suppose you like that Jacques Plante guy, eh?” I cracked a smile, nodded, picked up the place mat in case he changed his mind.

“Thank you very much,” I said. “I think you’re great, too.” I wanted to make a run for the door.

He laughed some more, winked at Miss Lipstick, then reached out and swallowed my hand in his. “No problem. Come back for breakfast anytime, kid.” He turned and headed back to the kitchen. I ran to the door. I took about a week to recover, and then I went back, once, ate bacon and eggs and toast real slowly, but the NHL’s second greatest goaltender wasn’t there.