



Indigenous Student Achievement Awards

Feb 4, 2021

Indigenous students are honoured for their academic achievement, leadership, research, resiliency and community engagement. Additionally, we honour an international Indigenous student making significant contributions at USask.

Congratulations to this year's recipients.



UNIVERSITY OF
SASKATCHEWAN

Students from the following colleges and school chose to receive their award privately:

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND BIORESOURCES,

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE,

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION,

COLLEGE OF NURSING AND

JOHNSON SHOYAMA GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY.

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE

Hannah Bird

COMMUNITY AWARD

Hannah is in her second year of a four-year Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and the Indigenous Justice and Criminology program. Instructors have noted her intelligent and insightful writing and that she works exceptionally well with others and listens fully and respectfully while remaining engaged. In her first year she participated in Community Service Learning and chose the Friendship Inn where she received excellent reviews. She also excelled in the academic components showing the ability to connect community and research work to the academic literature.

Travis Black

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD

Métis Nation Saskatchewan

Travis is a final-year student in the interdisciplinary Honours program Mathematical Physics. He maintains a superior GPA higher than 91% across his major courses. He has a long list of achievements including an interdisciplinary award in 2019, an NSERC Undergraduate Summer Research Award in Summer 2019 and a research award through the quanTA research centre in summer 2020. Travis volunteers at Gabriel Dumont Institute and is well respected by his peers. We are incredibly proud of Travis, who we regard as one of our best all-around students.

Aurora Chartier

COMMUNITY AWARD

Proud Two-Spirit, Métis woman from the Métis village of Buffalo Narrows, SK

Aurora is a two-spirit, Métis woman originally from Buffalo Narrows, SK. She is a dedicated volunteer and activist on and off campus. In 2016, she joined her fellow Indigenous communities at the Dakota Access Pipeline protest at Standing Rock in Cannonball, North Dakota. For Aurora, harm reduction is a critical issue. She works tirelessly with the harm reduction and sexual wellness groups in Peer Health on campus and is actively involved in harm reduction programs off campus. For the last three years Aurora has volunteered with Safe Haven of Ness Creek Music Festival. This past spring, she played a key role in organizing naloxone training with the Saskatchewan Health Authority on campus. Aurora is an active member of the Saskatoon queer community and works countless hours as a volunteer in various groups on-campus. She has also assisted with youth drag workshops for OutSaskatoon's Rainbow Coffee youth group. Within the History Department, Aurora focuses her studies on Indigenous History, the understanding of not only the social, politics and historical context which shapes the lives of Indigenous People, but the ways in which Indigenous People have actively resisted, shaped and created history.

Kat Chief Calf

RESEARCH AWARD

Blood Tribe from Southern Alberta, grew up in La Ronge, SK

Kat is a Bachelor of Fine Arts honours student in her final year. She is being recognized for her work as a summer assistant at the University Art Galleries and her studio work. Kat's research was part of a larger project addressing systemic inequity in the university collections; investigating and rewriting documentation for the galleries' considerable collection of Allen Sapp works. In her studio work Kat subtly incorporates personal life experience, history and culture. She explores a range of media in her work with a poetic delicacy, attention to detail and elegant design.

Bishudwy Dewan

INTERNATIONAL AWARD

Chakma from the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh

Bishudwy is pursuing a Masters in Indigenous Studies. He is the first member of his family and one of the few in his community who have pursued higher education in North America. His Master of Arts research will focus on Indigenous migration, including the diasporic experience of Indigenous Peoples who migrated to Canada from Bangladesh in a multicultural society, and on how immigrated Indigenous Peoples in Canada experience and engage with other Indigenous Canadians.

Jennifer Falconer

RESILIENCY AWARD

George Gordon First Nation, SK

Jennifer is being recognized with an award in the resilience category. She is on track to graduate despite having to overcome significant personal challenges. She is a mother, student and a constituency manager with her local member of Parliament. Resilience is epitomized not necessarily by the degree of adversity you face, but how you rise to meet it, and for this reason Jennifer epitomizes resilience. As she explained, "I wake up every day excited for a new challenge."

Sydney Fremont

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD

Cowessess First Nation, SK

Sydney is the eldest son of Kelly Fremont (nee Pelletier) and Dave Fremont. He is of Cree, Saulteaux, and Métis descent, and belongs to the Cowessess First Nation where he grew up and graduated from high school. After five years of working in the labour force, he enrolled at the University of Regina. After a hiatus due to illness, he transferred to the University of Saskatchewan where he continues to pursue his passion for decolonization.

Kathleen Funk

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD

Métis Nation of Saskatchewan

Kathleen is a second-year Gabriel Dumont College student and is extremely responsible and motivated. She is very proud of her Métis heritage and expresses her cultural self quite creatively, with great strength and perseverance. She is a mother of very young children and works hard in all she does, both at home and academically. Kathleen is extremely resourceful and dedicated to helping others.

Kate Gillis

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD

Métis Nation

Kate is a first-year Master of Arts student in Indigenous studies. Her research focusses on the often overlooked role of women in the establishment of the Métis Nation. Kate is passionate and proud of her Indigenous heritage, and maintains close ties to her community. Apart from her studies, she continues to work part-time with the Rupertsland Institute, an affiliate of the Métis Nation of Alberta.

Meztli Henriquez

RESILIENCY AWARD

Denesyuliné and Salvadoran

Despite facing some very difficult personal issues in the academic year 2019/2020, Meztli has kept working at her studies, completing all of her courses. In Winter 2020 (a challenging term for all), she completed an outstanding final paper in of her Language and Culture class. Her instructor says about an outstanding paper she wrote, "is not only worthy of publication, but a powerful contribution to the discussion about the connection between language and wellbeing in the context of Canadian Indigenous communities".

Devin Kyle

RESILIENCY AWARD

Prince Albert, SK, and Thunderchild First Nation, SK

Devin is a third-year anthropology student who has demonstrated a capacity for academic success. Devin is a mature student who has been navigating parenting during the pandemic, in addition to his studies. Devin is a pleasant and thoughtful student who enjoys initiating discussions with his questions and comments. Devin writes, "By acquiring an education, I hope to also be a role model for not only my children, but also others." Devin's values and authentic connections to his culture are an important grounding for his academic and personal success.

Alex Litster-Paramor

RESEARCH AWARD

Hanley, SK

Alex is Cree-Métis and grew up in Winnipeg, MB. She is an excellent and talented student who is completing a history and social work degrees and consistently achieves excellent grades. In her writing and research she aims to draw on sources written by Indigenous peoples and have their voices be included in analyzing and understanding how colonial legacy informs policy and institutions. Alex has worked as one of two undergraduate researchers chosen to work with the COVID-19 community SK archive. In this role Alex has shown remarkable energy, tenacity and innovation.

Morgan Longjohn

RESILIENCY AWARD

Sturgeon Lake First Nation, SK

Morgan is a Plains Cree single mother who has overcome significant challenges, including trauma, addiction and homelessness. With support from the Sturgeon Lake First Nation and in getting clean, Morgan has excelled academically and professionally, having already reached thousands of First Nations people struggling with addiction, incarceration and poverty. Morgan is currently in her third year, pursuing a political studies degree. She hopes to use her degree to increase her impact on improving the lives of others.

Carson Mackonka

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD

Creighton, SK

Carson is a fourth-year Bachelor of Arts Regional and Urban Planning honours student. He grew up in Flin Flon, MB. His life experience includes an understanding of northern resource-based economies and Indigenous presence on the land. His strengths include his maturity, clear thinking, analytical mind and his ability to work under pressure. His nominator says Carson is one of the strongest academic students he's taught in his 12 years at the University of Saskatchewan with a course grade placing him in the top five percent of all students he has taught over a 12-year period.

Tara Nelson

RESILIENCY AWARD

Tara has been working on her degree since 1999 and, despite setbacks early on, has completed a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology (June 2019), a Certificate in Ethics, Justice, and Law (June 2019), and appears to be on track to complete a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy as well. In addition, she has made a significant contribution to the philosophy undergraduate community. She frequently attended the departmental colloquium, as well as numerous departmental social events, and has participated in events sponsored by the Undergraduate Philosophy Club.

St. Thomas More College

Micaela Champagne

LEADERSHIP AWARD

Buffalo Narrows, SK and Métis Nation

Through her work at Science Outreach, Micaela is striving towards delivering Indigenous science perspectives to students in Saskatoon. She is working to reclaim her culture and language as an Indigenous woman to positively influence her students by leading by example and honouring the generations that came before her. Her hope for her archaeology career is to repatriate as many of her Indigenous ancestral items and remains as possible. Micaela could have easily received two of the other awards as she also excels academically and is also engaged within her community.

Kieran Young

COMMUNITY AWARD

Opaskwayak Cree Nation, MB

Kieran is a fourth-year Indigenous Studies student who is committed to raising awareness about Indigenous culture. For example, his volunteer activities with Holy Rosary High School's Dreamcatcher Group began nearly a decade ago and he remains dedicated and active in sharing knowledge, expertise, and supporting others through the program. He has also volunteered with Canadian Roots Exchange under the rural youth leadership community engagement program, where he challenged misconceptions about Indigenous cultures, and he has volunteered as a coach at the Indigenous summer games.

COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY

Kaleb Tyler

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD

Onion Lake Cree Nation, SK

Kaleb was born and raised in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. He graduated from St. Mary High School in 2015 and then moved to Saskatoon to achieve an undergraduate degree at the University of Saskatchewan. Kaleb completed a three-year Bachelor of Science in Physiology and Pharmacology before being accepted to the College of Dentistry. In his spare time, he enjoys hiking, travelling with his friends and spending time with family, especially his two dogs, Oshi and Roo.

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Kennedy Halcro

COMMUNITY AWARD

Kennedy is a proud Métis teacher candidate and is very passionate of her heritage. She is a proud member of our student representative council; dedicating her time to help fundraise and plan fun activities for her colleagues and their families. She brings joy and our students together in a fun way! Kennedy promotes the SUNTEP program positively and has demonstrated polite and well-mannered behaviours throughout great adversity at times. She radiates incredible energy all around her which will enable positive growth for her future students!

Indian Teacher Education Program (ITEP)

Stephanie Carriere

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD

Melfort, SK

Stephanie is from Cross Lake First Nation and she is a fourth-year student. Stephanie has excelled this term with an 84.33% sessional average while taking six classes. She is in her practicum this term and will graduate with a Bachelor of Education in fall 2021. We are so proud of Stephanie's commitment, hard work and dedication to her studies, especially during remote learning.

Kal Ledoux

LEADERSHIP AWARD

Muskeg Lake Cree Nation, SK

Kal is a first-year ITEP student. He has dedicated himself to be the best student possible and has reached out to various people for additional academic support to become a better teacher candidate. He actively participates during classes and learning communities and motivates others to think beyond their own capacity.

Chante Speidel

LEADERSHIP AWARD

Sapotaweyak Cree Nation and Standing Rock Sioux Tribe living in Whitecap Dakota Nation

Chante is a first-year student who describes the qualities of a student leader as being consistent, “speaking out [with] encouragement”, having a positive attitude, and having great management skills. She models supportive leadership to her peers through doing and shows great commitment to the teaching profession in her first term.

TeeJay Sumners

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD

Montreal Lake Cree Nation, SK

TeeJay is a third-year ITEP student. She is very passionate about her direction as a future educator. This is demonstrated by her eagerness to research and seek answers. She is not scared to try new things/topics. She took an exceptional leadership role within the Introduction to Elementary English Language Arts class and shared plenty of personal experience and knowledge. She did exceptional in all assignments and felt she went above and beyond to ensure content was comprehended.

Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP)

Taryn Gunville

LEADERSHIP AWARD

Prince Albert, SK

Taryn is in her third year of the SUNTEP, Prince Albert program. She has shown true leadership to the SUNTEP community through her role as the vice-president of the student representative council, where she has hosted various events both in the SUNTEP community and the Prince Albert community. Taryn has also faced some challenges throughout her studies and showed true resilience and commitment to meet and exceed all expectations. Congratulations Taryn, you are very deserving of this award.

Tate McDougall

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD

Tate is a teacher candidate, very proud of his Métis culture. He was raised in Saskatoon with roots in Prince Albert, SK. He has consistently excelled academically throughout his four years at SUNTEP, and displays a proud sense of passion, devotion and care for his colleagues and students with whom he works. The success and development of others is a top priority for Tate; these qualities will serve his future students well.

Ashley Sorenson

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD

Prince Albert, SK

Ashley is in her second year at the SUNTEP, Prince Albert program. Ashley is a proud Métis woman, full-time student, wife and mother to a beautiful daughter. She is an extremely dedicated student who is committed to excellency. She arrives early for class and stays late, working diligently on her assignments and class work. Ashley shows great passion for integrating Indigenous knowledge and content in to her future role as a teacher. Ashley is a worthy recipient of this award.

EDWARDS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Brayden Caron

LEADERSHIP AWARD

Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation, SK

Brayden is from the small town of St. Louis, SK, and a member of the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation. He is in his fourth year at the Edwards School of Business as a marketing major and is very active in the student community. Brayden is currently the headperson of students supports for the Indigenous Business Student's Society and a member of the Edwards Business Student's Society and JDC West student organizations.

Allyn Eger

COMMUNITY AWARD

Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation, SK

Allyn, a member of the Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation, has a Bachelor of Commerce in Accounting from Edwards School of Business, is a Chartered Professional Accountant and recently returned to Edwards to pursue her Master of Business Administration. She is actively involved in the community, volunteering as treasurer on the Business and Professional Women of Saskatoon board, as well as sitting on the CPA ASSIST program board. Allyn possesses exceptional leadership skills, professionalism and work ethic while also focusing on continuing education and spending quality time with her son and husband.

Lori Waterhen

RESILIENCY AWARD

Ministikwan First Nation, SK

"My name is Lori Waterhen, and I am a member of Ministikwan First Nations. I am a fourth-year student at Edwards School of Business, majoring in business management. I am also a single parent of four amazing children. I am deeply honoured and grateful to receive this prestigious award. I want to thank the IAW committee and my outstanding support system for the nomination and the support throughout my educational journey.
Hiy Hiy!!!!"

Tyler Wellman

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD

"As of December 2020, I have officially completed my Bachelor of Commerce degree, majoring in finance. I am originally from Saskatoon, but plan on moving as I have started a full-time position in North Battleford as a grain buyer for a large agriculture supply chain company. I have thoroughly enjoyed all of my years and experiences at the Edwards School of Business and look forward to future opportunities to showcase the abilities I have developed."

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Dannielle Brewster

RESILIENCY AWARD

La Ronge, SK and Cross Lake Band, MB

Dannielle Brewster, a member of Cross Lake Band, MB, accepted an engineering student internship position with ADM Agri-Industries beginning in May 2020 in Windsor, ON. Despite the pandemic and amidst uncertainty, the internship went ahead as planned and Dannielle relocated to Ontario to begin her work placement. She overcame several barriers in her first few weeks of employment, related to the relocation, not the work itself, but persevered and stuck with her work placement.

COLLEGE OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES

Dylan Sjolie

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD

Edmonton, AB

Originally from Edmonton, AB, Dylan completed a B.Sc. in Animal Biology in 2013, then moved to Saskatoon in 2019 to pursue an Master of Science in Plant Sciences. In the second year of his masters, Dylan is focused on investigating population dynamics of the wheat stem sawfly in Canadian agro-ecosystems. Research will look to see how early-season abiotic conditions affect wheat stem sawfly survivorship and the effectiveness of wheat stem sawfly's natural enemies.

Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy

Lauren Wallingham

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD

Nacho Nyak Dun, YT

Lauren is Northern Tutchone from the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun, and she belongs to the Wolf Clan. She is originally from Mayo, Yukon and currently lives in Whitehorse, Yukon with her daughters. She grew up with a deep appreciation for her culture, Traditional Territory and family. Lauren is working on her Master's in Governance and Entrepreneurship in Northern and Indigenous Areas. Throughout her graduate studies, she has focused her research on First Nations education.

School of Rehabilitation Science

Carina McKay-Saturnino

COMMUNITY AWARD

Inuvik, NT

Carina is from Inuvik, NT and is a member of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation Band. She completed her Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology degree at Dalhousie University in 2019 and is now a student in the Master of Physical Therapy program in the School of Rehabilitation Science. After graduation, Carina plans to return to the Northwest Territories to work as a physiotherapist. In her spare time, she enjoys returning home, beading, and spending time with family.

COLLEGE OF KINESIOLOGY

Zach Lomsnes

COMMUNITY AWARD

Big River, SK

Zach lived most of his life in the small town of Big River, SK. Zach volunteers at events in that community. He loves spending time with the younger generation and being a strong role model. Zach has volunteered at youth events in both Lloydminster and Saskatoon. Zach thinks it is important to spend time with younger children, especially in Indigenous communities. He likes connecting with kids and seeing them have fun while learning about sports.

COLLEGE OF LAW

Jodi Hancheroff

LEADERSHIP AWARD

nihithaw (Woodland Cree) from La Ronge, SK

Jodi is a second-year law student from the Northern community of La Ronge. Currently, she is the president of the Indigenous Law Students' Association and volunteers with ProBono Students. She is currently a teaching assistant for the Academic Success program and for Kwayeskastasowin, "Setting Things Right" at the College of Law. Jodi will be returning to her community to work in prosecutions where she hopes to gain experience with restorative justice.

COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

Ryan LaBossiere

COMMUNITY AWARD

Williams Lake, BC and Métis Nation of British Columbia

Ryan, a second-year Métis medical student from Williams Lake, BC, has been passionate about environmental issues for years. As president of the Wicihowin Student Group, Ryan leads a group of medical students who wish to engage with people in Indigenous, rural and remote settings. Through role modelling, presentations and authentic connection the focus is to lessen the barriers faced by Indigenous populations to receiving equitable care and to increase representation of Indigenous people in medicine.

COLLEGE OF NURSING

Taryn Phaneuf

RESEARCH AWARD

Prince Albert, SK, member of Métis-Nation of Saskatchewan Western Region II

Taryn is a fourth-year student at the Prince Albert campus. She was an outstanding research assistant for Dr. Geoffrey Maina in 2019. His work and research focused on school-based interventions for preventing substance use in Indigenous children as well as the experience of caregiver stress of caring for relatives with substance abuse. The work resulted in publishing a manuscript and another will be published soon. Taryn has excelled in his program and has notable performances in theory classes, the clinical setting and in the field of research.

Lisa Tourangeau

LEADERSHIP AWARD

Cote First Nation, SK

Lisa consistently demonstrates excellent work ethic and embraces her culture fully. She excelled at sharing Indigenous ways of knowing and perspectives through the creation of a moving, poignant and system perspective podcast. She explored cultural sensitivity and cultural competencies in community health nursing and this was well received by her peers. She has been acknowledged as a leader who has brought awareness to non-Indigenous student perspectives and has raised their skills and awareness.

COLLEGE OF PHARMACY AND NUTRITION

Lauren Thompson

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD

North Battleford, SK

Lauren is a second-year student in the Bachelor of Science in Nutrition program in the College of Pharmacy and Nutrition. Lauren was the top student academically in Year 1 of the program (89.82%), which included courses integral to the curriculum, such as the professional practice courses.

WESTERN COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE (WCVN)

Hope Skorlatowski

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD

Hope is a first-year student in the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine program. She grew up on an acreage outside of Cold Lake, AB, and completed two years of an Animal Bioscience degree at the University of Saskatchewan prior to being accepted into the WCVN. Her passions include animal behaviour and training. She competes and trains in various dog sports as well as rides horses.