



Jesse Lafontaine

University of Alberta

Jesse Lafontaine is currently a 2nd year medical student at the University of Alberta (UofA). As the President of the UofA Medical Students' Association and co-founder of the Indigenous Medical Students' Association of Canada, he is committed to increasing Indigenous representation in the health-care fields and to empowering Indigenous voices in medicine. Jesse was recently selected as a Rhodes Scholar and will head to the University of Oxford next year to complete a MSc in Applied Digital Health and a Master of Public Policy before returning to complete medical school. In the future, he hopes to pursue a career combining his interest in Indigenous health with his skills in leadership and policy development.



Mohammad Al-Qadi

Centre de formation médicale du Nouveau-Brunswick

Mohammad is a second-year medical student at Université de Sherbrooke, Moncton campus. Since the beginning of his first year, Mohammad took on the role of vice-president of external affairs in his medical student society, closely working with the CFMS and the FMEQ and acting as a liaison to advocate for his classmates and relay information. Moreover, having an interest in education, he is the Team Leader for his healthcare class, collaborating with the faculty in order to give feedback and bring change to the curriculum. Mohammad is also involved in student life and wellness, having acted as an organiser and external representative for the 2021 Conference of Atlantic Medical Students. Additionally, he took on roles within various interest groups, and was a founding member of the "Helping Peers" student-led support group in Moncton. In his community, he worked on various projects, notably as a volunteer with Osteoporosis Canada, educating seniors about the disease and helping translate their presentation to French, as well as the project head of "Saine-Cuisinette", an initiative aiming to improve the nutritional literacy of fifth grade students. Outside of medicine, Mohammad enjoys playing basketball and reading about history, and looks forward to continuing his journey.



Elizabeth Rowe

Memorial University of Newfoundland

Liz is a third year medical student at Memorial University of Newfoundland. She has a strong passion for leadership and advocacy and has obtained a Bachelor of Philosophy in Interdisciplinary Leadership as an undergraduate degree. She believes in advocating to make medicine more equitable for healthcare providers and patients alike. As previous Government Affairs and Advocacy Committee (GAAC) Rep at MUN, she led others in advocating to federal and provincial governments for causes such as access to offloading devices for people with diabetic foot ulcers and coverage of Trikafta, a life-saving medication for people with Cystic Fibrosis. Her passion for political advocacy has also led her to co-lead a national team of students in developing and delivering the CFMS' first-ever student-led Political Advocacy Training. Liz is also particularly interested in gender equity in medicine and co-developed a MUN Med branch of the Federation of Medical Women of Canada alongside a colleague and several faculty members. She was also previously co-chair of the MUN Med EDI Committee, which advocates for equitable admissions and curriculum changes. In the future, Liz aspires to have a career that is devoted to informed advocacy and the pursuit of equity.



Rylee Mose

Northern Ontario School of Medicine

Rylee is a third year medical student at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM). Prior to medical school, she completed her Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Lakehead University and practiced as a Registered Nurse in Thunder Bay. Rylee's goal as a leader is focused on ensuring equitable access to learning opportunities for students, especially from Northern Ontario. She took the position of VP External on NOSM Student Council and has worked to address barriers students face while studying in Northern Ontario on a provincial and national level. Rylee also advocated for accessibility in her leadership roles; Rylee is the Student Accessibility Representative and as a student with a speech impediment she works to minimize barriers and promote inclusiveness. Rylee leads in both formal and informal roles, and supports others by leading by example. She is honoured and appreciates receiving this award and congratulates all other recipients.

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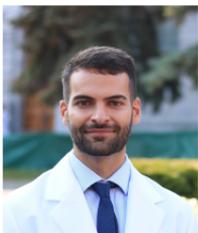
Award Winners



Jayelle Friesen-Enns

University of Manitoba

Jayelle Friesen-Enns is a Métis woman concurrently completing an MD and a Master's in Medical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases at the University of Manitoba. Jayelle has always been passionate about leadership and enjoys being an active member of their community; she has continued this in medical school as Class President, by sitting on multiple committees, and as a member of the Indigenous working group for the equity, diversity, and inclusion portfolio at the Max Rady College of Medicine. She is particularly interested in advocating for Indigenous representation and leadership in the medical field, as well as using her leadership positions to create new opportunities for Indigenous medical students. Their personal journey as an Indigenous person in medicine inspired them to co-found the Indigenous Medical Students' Association of Canada (IMSAC) in 2021. Jayelle looks forward to seeing this organization develop and is excited to find new opportunities to increase Indigenous representation in the field of medicine.



Abed Baiad

McGill University

Abed Baiad is a second-year medical student at McGill University who completed his bachelor's degree in Biochemistry (McGill 2020). Having served as the Class of 2024 President for the past two years during a pandemic, he was presented with numerous challenges but has been very adaptable in maximizing student feedback and addressing their concerns. For example, he maintains an active central complaint platform that has collected +220 complaints to date and frequently sends out deadline reminders, to-do lists and class newsletters. He also prioritizes student wellness through extensive polling and diligent communication with course directors to arrange numerous deadline extensions, reschedule suboptimal exams schedules; advocate for more frequent clinical teaching, accessible 24/7 study spaces, a safe in-person white-coat ceremony, and help organize frequent virtual and in-person events to tackle feelings of social isolation. In addition to his student leadership work, he finds time to help the community, either as a COVID-19 vaccinator, researcher, or volunteer with marginalized populations. Abed continues to collaborate with and respectfully challenge faculty members with the best interests of his class in mind, while hoping that his classmates continue to trust that he will take every concern seriously in the next challenging year ahead.



Calandra Li

University of Toronto

Calandra Li is a third-year MD/MSc student at the University of Toronto and the Institute of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation, studying Health Systems Leadership and Innovation. Calandra has always felt a profound duty to empower and raise up other women learners in medicine, thus, her MSc practicum project aims to assess the needs and values of women medical students, and their thoughts and experiences related to mentorship in medicine. The ultimate goal is to effect meaningful change towards a well-informed and supportive mentorship culture in medicine. During the 2020-2021 academic year, Calandra served as President on the University of Toronto Medical Society, representing over 1000 medical students on the regional and national stage. Advocating for the needs of other students is a passion of hers and she has always rooted her advocacy work in personal discussions with peers and her own lived experiences. During her term, she was able to advocate for additional academic supports and increased mental health services as students navigated their studies and clinical duties during the global pandemic. Calandra feels strongly called to be a leader and to champion change in medical education through student advocacy, research excellence, and innovative collaboration between students and Faculty.



Amadene Woolsey

Western University

Amy is a second-year medical student who became interested in global health after joining Soroptimist International in her teens. This led to an M.Sc. in Global Health at McMaster University. At the Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry, Amy is the Local Officer of Global Health Education, administering the Global Health Certificate Program that supports medical students in exploring their interests in global health. She was part of the leadership team that planned and executed the 'Critically Examining Global Health' conference in February 2021, attended by over 300 health professionals from around the world. Amy co-manages the Rural Medicine Mentorship Program, which aims foster interest in healthcare professions in teens in rural communities, and she is a mentor to undergraduate students interested in medicine through the Altitude program. Within the London community, Amy helped coordinate the ASPIRE grocery delivery initiative. To improve community wellness, Amy is working on research examining the effect of socioeconomic factors on atherosclerosis. Amy believes that global health should be approached at the local, national, and international levels, and is committed to her involvement in initiatives to improve health at every level.

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Award Winners



Freddy Lee
Dalhousie University

Freddy Lee is a fourth-year medical student at Dalhousie University. As class president and past president of the Dalhousie Medical Student Society, he has showcased a strong commitment to student advocacy and organizational leadership. He has represented the student body on faculty-level and national committees, with a focus on diversity and inclusion, student wellbeing, and supportive learning environments. Recognizing the need for funding available for student innovation and research, he recently created a pilot project to promote extracurricular research and to provide streamlined financial support to reduce out-of-pocket costs for medical students. The Student Innovation and Research Award selection committee also provides consultation and feedback on applications and other potential funding streams. As he leaves medical school, he hopes to have inspired others to harness their own creativity and initiative to make the most of medical school life and to build a sense of community among our peers.



Mitchell Crozier
University of Ottawa

Mitchell Crozier is a fourth-year medical student from the University of Ottawa, who is from Arnprior, ON, a rural town in the Ottawa Valley. He is passionate about leadership, health promotion, community empowerment, and advocacy. During his time as a medical student, Mitchell has applied his passion for writing and his enthusiasm for collaboration as lead or contributing author on eighteen publications, which cover an array of topics, including child health promotion, medical education procedural reviews, and health advocacy papers. While combining his interests in acute care and medical education, Mitchell has been on the planning committee for the Ottawa Student Emergency Medicine Conference since 2018. In 2020 he helped transition the conference to a virtual format to host over 100 medical students from across Canada. More recently, Mitchell has collaborated with his colleagues to co-found Ride to Connect, a cycling fundraiser, awareness, and advocacy campaign addressing social isolation and loneliness in Canadian seniors. To date, this initiative has raised over \$100,000 to help empower at-risk seniors with technology access and technological literacy training. He is very honoured to receive this award and is motivated to continue to apply his leadership skills as a resident.



Tharsini Sivananthajothy
University of Calgary

Tharsini Sivananthajothy (she/her) is a racialized woman of Tamil heritage from Scarborough, Ontario, currently in her second year at the University of Calgary Cumming School of Medicine. Informed by her lived experience, Tharsini feels a deep sense of responsibility, and accountability to her community and strives to create equitable and safe spaces for equity-deserving groups. This led to her co-chairing the "Dismantling Structures of Oppression and Inequity within Medicine" national conference, and her work as co-lead for a national grassroots advocacy initiative, "Calls to Action for Anti-Indigenous Racism Reforms within the CFMS" which was supported by over 1200 medical students. Tharsini is also heavily involved in her local medical school, serving in multiple leadership positions including Vice-President Community and Global Health for the Calgary Medical Students' Association (CMSA), Co-Chair of the EDI in Curriculum Taskforce, and Co-Lead for the Students Organised Against Racism (SOAR) initiative. Through these positions, Tharsini advocated for mandatory anti-racism training in medical education, and helped apply an anti-racist and anti-colonial lens to the CMSA's policies and procedures. She is the lead student investigator on a study exploring undergraduate medical students' sense of belonging, which has been recognized nationally by the Canadian Association of Medical Education.



Kika Otiono
McMaster University

Kikachukwu (Kika) Otiono is a third-year medical student at McMaster University. Prior to medical training, she obtained a Bachelor of Arts with a Minor in Biology from Carleton University as a TD Scholar. Kika believes that a critical aspect of eradicating medical racism in Canada is a commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion in medical education. In her role as the inaugural Director of Advocacy and Representation for the Black Medical Students' Association of Canada (2020-2021), Kika co-authored the "National Demands on Anti-Black Racism to all Canadian Faculties of Medicine." As the Admissions Co-Chair of the Social Justice Interest Group at McMaster, she worked with a team of her peers to advocate for changes to the curriculum, admissions process, and mistreatment policies. Kika also spearheaded the development of the first-ever anti-Black racism session presented to McMaster medical students. She currently serves as a member of the Anti-Black Racism Task Force at McMaster's Department of Psychiatry. For her advocacy work, Kika has received numerous awards, including the Canadian Medical Association 150th Anniversary Award.

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Award Winners



Avneesh Bhangu

Queen's University

Avneesh is currently a third-year medical student at Queen's University. Prior to his medical training, he completed a BMSc at Western University, before subsequently taking on the role of Project Manager with a healthcare consulting company focused on optimizing surgical inventory and healthcare costs. As a medical student interested in fostering tangible change, he was drawn to unique leadership opportunities related to personal interests in mental health and quality improvement. As Queen's Medicine AS Wellness Officer, he brought forward new initiatives targeted towards fostering interconnectedness amongst medical students, such as creating the inaugural Queen's Medicine Wellness Document and establishing the first ever Medical Student Wellness Support Training Program. Additionally, Avneesh co-directed the Quality Improvement Practical Experience Program (QIPEP) through which he encouraged student skill development by organizing QI projects and didactic sessions. Beyond these core interests, Avneesh currently sits as the Wellness Editor for 2 Minute Medicine, Medical Student Representative with the Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians, Mentor with Altitude Healthcare, and has varied research involvements in trauma care and emergency medicine. He looks forward to continuing to innovate through healthcare leadership and is humbled and thankful for receiving this award.



Lisa Renaud

University of British Columbia

Lisa is a second-year medical student at the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Kelowna, BC. She completed a Bachelor of Science Honours and Master of Science in Biochemistry at the UBC Okanagan before entering medicine. Lisa is Métis and is passionate about Indigenous health. In Fall 2021, Lisa and a colleague organized a department-wide cultural safety, humility, and allyship workshop for the UBC Faculty of Medicine to address a spoken need expressed by their colleagues. In her first year of the MD Program, Lisa planned and delivered academic and cultural programming for the UBC Okanagan Indigenous Undergraduate Research Mentorship Program. Prior to her second year, Lisa worked as a summer student intern on a perioperative flow project at St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver. Lisa's involvement is ongoing and fuels her passion for healthcare quality improvement. Lisa is a founder of Omega Ratio, a dietary fatty acid tracking app, which won the 2019 eUBCO Quick Pitch Challenge. Lisa has several volunteer roles that fulfill her interests in advocacy and teaching, including mentoring Indigenous pre-meds, facilitating peer to peer education, and serving on the UBC MD Admissions Diversity Task Force to advise and identify barriers preventing successful admission to medical school.



Amira Muftah

University of Saskatchewan

Amira Muftah has a passion for promoting health equity through advocacy, education, and collaboration. As the first Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Representative for the Student Medical Society of Saskatchewan, she spearheaded several curricular developments focusing on health equity, anti-oppression, and anti-racism. She has also collaborated with faculty and community members to enhance diverse representation among simulated patient encounters and clinical skills teaching. As a member of the Admissions Renewal Committee, she recommended innovative approaches to foster an equitable approach to the participation of underrepresented groups in medicine. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, she mobilized a student-based taskforce to assist local public health efforts. To address the social isolation reported by older adults during this time, she collaborated with a group of peers in connecting older adults with medical students to engage in weekly phone calls. Amira has volunteered at student-run clinics providing accessible medical care for many years. Through her extensive community engagement and outreach initiatives, she has learned the value of interdisciplinary care and effective communication. Amira hopes to promote collaboration among communities and health care providers in recognizing and responding to the needs of diverse populations.



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