

# CFMS – MDFM LEADERSHIP AWARD 2023

## Award Winners



### Jason Speidel

University of British Columbia

Jason is a fourth year medical student at the University of British Columbia, studying at the Vancouver-Fraser Medical Program. He has a passion for health advocacy and medical education. He has worked at promoting advocacy education at the provincial level in his role as Chair of the UBC Medical Undergraduate Society Political Advocacy Committee (PAC), running campaigns on access to contraception and ending overdose deaths. He has additionally worked at the national level as part of the Canadian Federation of Medical Students Government Affairs and Advocacy Committee (CFMS GAAC) where he helped develop a national advocacy training series. He was co-director for a student-led community health initiative in downtown Vancouver, aiming to provide health promotion for people living with mental illness and housing insecurity. He currently serves as Vice-President External for the UBC Medical Undergraduate Society where he works to ensure medical student voices are present at all levels of health advocacy and administration in BC.



### Sarah Almas

University of Alberta

Sarah is a fourth year medical student at the University of Alberta who immerses herself in leadership and volunteerism that promote inclusivity, empowerment, and mentorship. Upon entering medical school, Sarah joined her class council and Medical Students' Association as a Community Health Representative to organize hospital fundraisers, blood drives, vaccination advocacy campaigns, and initiated inaugural happiness awards to spread cheer and uplift her peers and faculty during the pandemic. As Co-Founder and the first President of the Association of Women Surgeons Chapter at the University of Alberta, her team established a unique mentorship program that created successful matches using intersectional components of the individual's identity, including gender identity, race, religion, immigration status, lived experiences, and values. Co-Leading other student groups, including Women in Medicine and Surgery Club, Sarah organized events to promote gender diversity in medicine and address barriers. As Project Manager of Re:Pro Podcast, Sarah led outreach to share accessible health information to empower people of all gender identities. Outside of medicine, Sarah is involved in mentorship and empowerment activities in her community, such as leading a Girl Guides Unit. She looks forward to continuing to stay engaged in advocacy, empowerment, and mentorship as she transitions into residency.



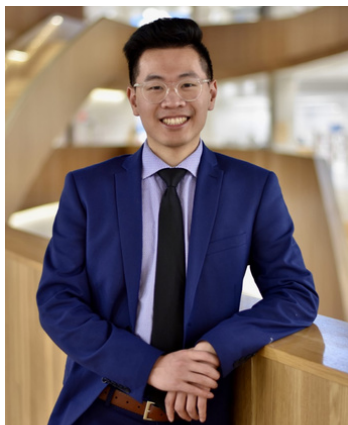
### Miles Llewellyn

Memorial University

Miles (they/them) is a third year medical student at Memorial University of Newfoundland. They have immersed themselves in advocacy work to improve the experience of trans and gender diverse learners in medicine and to address the shortcomings, failures, and discrimination of the healthcare field with respect to the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. Miles led MUN Med's gender and sexuality advocacy interest group, sits on the board of the Canadian Queer Med Student Association (CQMSA) and HealthPEI's Gender Affirming Care steering committee, and has spearheaded initiatives such as the implementation of pronouns as part of the OSCE evaluation criteria. They've had a hand in developing a pan-Canadian resource guide for gender affirming care and the creation of a 2SLGBTQIA+ educational platform for healthcare professionals. Miles is also engaged in a variety of research projects in the field, all with the intention of improving the experiences of queer folks participating in healthcare, as patients and providers.

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### Mathieu Chin

University of Calgary

Mathieu Chin is a final year medical student at the University of Calgary (UCalgary), where he served as the President for the Calgary Medical Students' Association and advocated on behalf of his peers on a local, provincial, and national level. His proudest accomplishment during his tenure was increasing student accessibility to educational resources, most notable where he obtained \$55,000 to provide UpToDate subscriptions for all medical students at UCalgary. Despite limitations imposed by the pandemic, Mathieu strived to enhance the student experience for others, evident through his role as the Co-Chair of Ice Bowl 2021, an annual ice hockey tournament for medical students in Western Canada. His passion for teaching and medical education has led to his involvement in creating review sessions and resources for first year students. Prior to starting medical school, he completed his Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology, and was involved with sports injury prevention research with the International Olympic Committee and the National Basketball Association. In his free time, he enjoys photography, video editing, and exploring a plethora of cuisines as a local food blogger. He is excited to continue his medical training as an Internal Medicine resident this July in Calgary.



### Adrian Teare

University of Saskatchewan

Adrian is a 3rd year medical student at the University of Saskatchewan who is passionate about advocating for improved mental health care, harm reduction, women's health, and immigrant and refugee health. During his time in the USask College of Medicine he has served as the Global Health Advocate for the Student Medical Society of Saskatchewan (SMSS), the President of the Immigrant and Refugee Health Group, and a general member of the Saskatchewan branch of the Canadian Alliance of Medical Students Against Human Trafficking (CAMSaHT). He also is a co-founder of Students for Harm Reduction and Informed Policy (SHRIP) and Universal Access to Contraception Saskatchewan (UACSask), student advocacy groups who have lobbied the provincial government for improved substance use/harm reduction policies and free universal contraception in Saskatchewan. Adrian is deeply committed to serving vulnerable populations and promoting peer education to help cultivate more compassionate and well-informed future care providers. Beyond his extra-curricular involvement, he has engaged in several research studies including: engaging rural Indigenous communities in research partnerships, evaluating efficacy of child and adolescent mental health training for primary care providers, and community-based research with harm reduction organizations in Regina, SK. He hopes to continue this work into his career and believes strongly in the duty of physicians to be health advocates, particularly for their most vulnerable patients. He is honoured to be a recipient of this award and be amongst such esteemed colleagues from across the nation and hopes for the opportunity to collaborate with many of them in some capacity in the future.

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### Nolan De Leon

University of Manitoba

Nolan De Leon (He/Him) is a first-year bilingual medical student and a second year Ph.D. student studying prenatal therapeutics, diagnostics, and pediatric care. Nolan completed his B.Sc. (co-op) with a joint major in Biochemistry and Microbiology at Université de Saint-Boniface and is a world record holding strength athlete and an internationally recognized strength coach. Nolan has a strong track record as a mental health advocate. He fought for greater financial and emotional supports for graduate students as a councillor on the Health Science Graduate Student Association, lead the “Get Back Up” movement where he inspired athletes around the world to use their platforms to raise money for local mental health initiatives, and is now the M1 President where he prioritizes student wellness and advocacy. As President, he is working to break the stigma around mental health in the medical profession, as well as assess and improve current EDI practices within the school and in Manitoban medical practices. Nolan is also an environmental and animal rights activist, volunteering as an executive on Project Green Healthcare where he works to implement greener practices in Manitoban Hospitals, as well as with Manitoba Underdogs who provide shelter for abandoned and abused dogs.



### Jamie Thompson

NOSM University

Jamie Thompson (she/her) is a motivated 3rd year Métis medical student with Métis familial roots stemming from the MacDonald family in Fort McMurray, Alberta. She has interests in OBGYN, community-centered research, Indigenous health, and Métis beadwork. After learning beadwork from Mitch Case at a Métis Youth gathering in the summer of 2020, she felt drawn to the craft as both an expression of artistry and medical knowledge as well as a way to occupy her hands during the long screentime hours of schooling during the pandemic. Thompson makes her anatomical beadwork pieces to bring awareness to Indigenous discrimination in healthcare and uses profits to give back to Indigenous health and community initiatives. She is now pursuing research on beadwork worn by medical students in clinical environments with Lakehead University’s Dr Lana Ray, the Engaging for Change Project, and a multitude of community partners. She hopes her work honors the many incredible Indigenous healthcare providers and scientists making waves in their fields, as well as inspires non-Indigenous providers to continue centering cultural safety in their practice and affirming the lived experiences of Indigenous patients.



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### Anchaleena Mandal

#### Queen's University

Growing up in the territory of Nunavut as a person-of-color and settler, Anchaleena's interest in medicine stems from a strong sense of social responsibility to address the health inequities and chronic shortage of physicians in rural and Indigenous communities across Canada. In 2017, she entered medical school through the Queen's Accelerated Route to Medical School (QuARMS) pathway. As an advocate for rural medicine and Indigenous health, she has been involved with the Society of Rural Physicians of Canada Student Committee (Co-chair 2021-23), Northern Ontario and Rural Medicine Committee of the Ontario Medical Students Association (Vice-chair 2021-22), Queen's Indigenous Health Education Working Group (2021-22), and many other local, provincial, and national groups. Out of her passion for mental health, she responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by co-founding the Rural and Isolated Support Endeavour (RISE), a national phone-support initiative that connected medical students with isolated individuals across rural Canada to provide companionship. As part of the Queen's Indigenous Health Standing Committee (2020-23), she is presently leading an Indigenous art installation initiative to promote awareness and foster reconciliation at her medical school. Anchaleena is currently in her fourth year of medical school at Queen's University and is an aspiring family physician of Nunavut.



### Nader Chaya

#### University of Toronto

Nader Chaya is a fourth-year medical student at the Temerty Faculty Medicine (University of Toronto). Prior to medical school, he completed his Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology and Health Science at York University and was the sole recipient of the Alumni Silver Jubilee Scholarship. He pursued medicine since it was a seamless blend of advocacy, empathy, and problem-solving. During 2019-2021, Nader served as the Inaugural Vice President of Student Affairs on the UofT's Medical Society, where he advocated for the wellness, mental health, and career explorations concerns of his colleagues. His role was vital in supporting learners by making vital resources and accommodations more accessible to them, especially during the pandemic. Nader worked closely with UofT leadership to put forward a robust platform which informed UGME/PGME learners of their rights, streamlined disclosures, & created an internal structure that is dedicated to addressing mistreatment within clinical environments. He founded the Med/Law Outreach Program, a program focused on helping underrepresented students who come from equity-seeking groups in the pursuit of medicine and law, through workshops and direct mentorship. As a resident, Nader hopes to pursue his passion for mentorship, wellness, and advocacy, as well as inspire others to become agents of change in their communities.

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### Jacob Saucier

University of Sherbrooke, Moncton campus  
(Centre de formation médicale du Nouveau-Brunswick)

Jacob is a third-year medical student at the University of Sherbrooke's Moncton campus. Since the beginning of his medical journey, Jacob has demonstrated profound interest in student life, wellness and research excellence. As the 2024 cohort representative, Jacob always had his cohort's best interest at heart during round tables with student associations, vice-rectors, and faculty directors. This responsibility was exceptionally important during the COVID-19 pandemic as new situations arose. Always contributing to student life, Jacob organized numerous banquets, initiations, suppers, activities and much more. His interest in wellness led to the co-organisation of a challenge where students were encouraged to participate in weekly wellness activities, and collectively run the distance equivalent to New Brunswick's perimeter while fundraising for Canadian children's hospitals. Co-founder of CFMNB's Research Interest Group, Jacob's vast interest in research led to the discovery of an unmet need amongst students: research accessibility. Since its inception, they've created a local student-researcher matching program and organized monthly activities, including presentations and networking opportunities, scientific redaction workshops and the first Atlantic Medical Student Research Conference. Outside of his academic activities, Jacob is a volunteer with Osteoporosis Canada and loves to organize educational conferences for at risk populations. Beyond his achievements, Jacob's an avid runner and surfer, who adores the ocean.



### Lorena Mija

University of Montreal (Individual CFMS Member)

Lorena Alexandra Mija is a second-year medical student at UdeM who has a profound passion for community involvement. She has been involved in its improvement since the beginning of her medical training. She founded the first blood donation awareness committee with the goal of expanding Hema-Quebec's mission on university campuses, which has successfully encouraged university students to take part in several blood drives. She has also taken on the role of elected co-VP Academics of her medical school cohort for the last two years and has contributed to the ongoing improvement of student academics and supported medical students in various difficult situations. Furthermore, Lorena has continuously fought for the installation of free mineral sunscreen dispensers in parks located in lower-income areas. She is also co-directing a children's storybook project which aims at teaching 6-to-9-year-old children, especially children of color, the importance of sun protection. Finally, Lorena wanted to offer equal opportunities to discover dermatology to all medical students across Canada, which is why she founded the first Canadian Dermatology Interest Group and created the first national mentorship program connecting medical students with staff and residents. Thus, Lorena aspires to continue and extend her community work throughout all her future medical career.

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### Aditi Sivakumar

Dalhousie University

Aditi Sivakumar is a medical student, philanthropist, and women's rights advocate.

After witnessing first-hand the devastating impacts that gender-based violence can have, Aditi Sivakumar made it her mission to provide educational information and aid to women and girls facing violence in Canada and beyond through My Empowerment Platform.

Founded in 2018, My Empowerment Platform is a national organization that provides aid and education to women and children who are facing violence within Canada and beyond.

Some of Aditi's initiatives with her organization include My Empowerment Packs, which are wellness kits and resource booklets for women facing violence and youth facing homelessness. She created Everyday Essential Express, a national contactless free delivery service that provides basic necessities to domestic violence shelters. In collaboration with Canada's Walk of Fame, MLSE, Scotiabank, a monetary donation and wellness kits were provided to thirteen charities across Canada. Aditi spearheaded an initiative to create a SRHR educational animation for newcomer and refugee populations.

Through her initiatives, Aditi has provided over \$30,000 worth of items to domestic violence shelters across Canada, and over \$5,000 worth of My Empowerment Packs to women and children in need, and her web applications are being used by thousands across the country.



### Andrew Nguyen

Western University

Andrew Nguyen is a third-year medical student at the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry. He completed his Bachelor of Science in Biology with a Specialization in Psychology before pursuing a Master of Science in Global Health at McMaster University. As a second-generation Vietnamese-Canadian, Andrew has been involved within the Vietnamese diaspora as the President of the United Vietnamese Students' Association of Eastern Canada (UVSA) where he spearheaded UVSA's first leadership summit of 100+ attendees engaging in mental health narratives. He subsequently joined the Union of North American Vietnamese Students' Association on their Collective Philanthropy Project to create 12 internship opportunities with non-profit organizations such as Pacific Links Foundation, Kids Without Borders, and the Children of Vietnam. His efforts continued in medical school when he co-founded the Schulich Mental Health & Wellness Community and started Schulich's very first peer support initiative called the Schulich Peer Support Program, which has since expanded to 30 peer supporters who are trained to help their peers in crisis. Andrew continues to address equity issues through his school's Access Pathway as the Admissions Representative on the Medical Admissions Committee. Andrew's purpose is to strengthen the narratives of marginalized populations through his leadership efforts and peer collaborations.



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### Abdullah Haroon

University of Ottawa

Abdullah Haroon is a fourth-year medical student from the University of Ottawa and will soon be joining Western University in London for family medicine residency. Making a positive and lasting impact on his community has been the vision of Abdullah's leadership as a medical student. During his term as a co-leader for uOttawa Women's Health Interest Group (WHIG), he proposed and co-led the first-ever national WHIG conference for medical students, Revealing the Unspoken; expert speakers were invited to discuss tabooed topics in Women's Health such as sexual assault and eating disorders. During clerkship, Abdullah noticed a paucity of Dermatology education in medical schools. His passion for teaching inspired him to innovate and lead the Canadian National Dermatology Curriculum Project (CNDCP). Abdullah recruited 17 medical students and 17 Dermatology faculty, one pair from each Canadian medical school, to help develop evidence-based, bilingual, standardized PowerPoints that medical students can use to increase their comfort in Dermatology. It gives him great pride to say that the CNDCP will become the first-ever medical student curriculum to be hosted by the Canadian Dermatology Association. Abdullah is very honoured and grateful to receive this award and looks forward to further developing his leadership skills during residency.



### Saman Arfaie

McGill University Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences

A third-year McGill medical student, Saman obtained his B.Sc. in Neurobiology, honours B.A. in Persian Literature, and double minors in Chemistry and Music at the University of California, Berkeley. A staunch advocate of inter-institutional collaboration and advocacy, he is the co-founder of the Canadian Medical Student Interest Group in Neurosurgery (<https://camsign.ca/>) and the Neuro International Collaboration (<https://neuro.international/>). At McGill, he serves as President of the McGill Osler Society. His first incoming book, COVID-19 Contextualized: A Mosaic of Interdisciplinary Works Through a Canadian Lens (University of Manitoba Press), brings together Canadian molecular biologists, infectious disease researchers, population health experts, healthcare professionals, policy and legal experts, historians, and psychologists to craft a narrative of COVID-19. His second incoming book, co-edited with Professor Phillip Pearl is Neurobiology of Creativity: Music, Medicine, and Art of Self-Expression (Cambridge University Press). He has presented his work at TEDx McGill University, and TEDx University of Alberta. In 2022, Saman was selected as one of the youngest Finalists for the Top 25 Immigrants in Canada. Outside of medicine, he is a classically-trained pianist and bibliophile. Saman is grateful and humbled by his colleagues, mentors, and professors for the inspiration they have instilled in him.



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