

2021 Mandelbaum Fellowship Award

Citation for Amy Shawanda

The logo for OCUFA, consisting of the letters 'OCUFA' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The letters are slightly shadowed, giving them a three-dimensional appearance as if they are floating above the text below.

Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations
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Citation for Amy Shawanda

This year's Henry Mandelbaum Graduate Fellowship for Excellence in Social Sciences, Humanities, or Arts for the doctoral level of study is awarded to Amy Shawanda, currently enrolled at Trent University in the Indigenous Studies program.

Amy is a formidable candidate whose academic work explores Anishinaabe maternal teachings in a contemporary context with the aim of better understanding how gaashiuag (mothers) can share their teachings and knowledge with children. Amy has a long history of service to the community and has proven herself as a leader.

Amy has published and presented extensively. Additionally, while completing her MA, she created and taught an Ojibwe/Odawa language course for staff and professors. She has acted as an advocate and shown her leadership in many arenas including working to ensure that Indigenous materials and culturally appropriate programming were implemented at her children's daycares and schools. She has vocalized the importance of recognizing racialized trauma in the classroom and advocated for trauma informed training for the classroom at Trent.

In 2014, Amy was the Indigenous/Aboriginal Role Model for the Let's Take Our Future Further campaign. She has been recognized by the Anishinabek Nation for student excellence and has lent her voice to CBC Radio for various issues, including child and family welfare, policing, and Indigenous youth movements.

Her dedication to the community is moving. Some of the ways she gives back include creating care packages for homeless people in Sudbury, creating meal kits for low-income families, creating beading auctions to support Indigenous action and subsequent legal actions (for example, for the land defenders arrested at We'suwet'en camps), volunteering with at-risk youth, being a hockey coach, and organizing powwows for daycares (pre pandemic).

Amy's referees spoke highly of her and her dedication and her ability to define and carry out a complex research project:

"...I have been pleasantly surprised by her high level of engagement and her perseverance...it has been a pleasure to be a part of her intellectual development."

Another reference named Amy "one of the most well-grounded, hard-working and astute students...[in] a very impressive cohort."



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The Mandelbaum selection committee found the depth and breadth of Amy's volunteering and leadership impressive and inspiring. The project she has undertaken to understand Anishinaabe maternal teachings is important research that they look forward to learning more about. For these reasons, and many more, OCUFA is pleased to award the Henry Mandelbaum Graduate Doctoral Fellowship Award to Amy Shawanda.