

OCUFA

Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations
Union des associations des professeurs des universités de l'Ontario

2022-2023

OCUFA Henry Mandelbaum Graduate Fellowship for Excellence in Social Sciences, Humanities, or Arts

Citation for Aqsa Zahid

Read by:
Nigmendra Narain, OCUFA President

The Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations is pleased to present Aqsa Zahid with the 2022-2023 Henry Mandelbaum Graduate Fellowship for Excellence in Social Sciences, Humanities, or Arts at the Master's level.

Aqsa is a Master's student at the University of Toronto which is located on the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Aqsa is studying Clinical Psychology and expects to complete her degree in 2024. She entered her Master's studies after earning an honours Bachelor of Science from the University of Toronto in 2021.

Both Aqsa's exemplary academic pursuits and community involvement demonstrate a deep commitment to the betterment of individual lives through mental health and wellness. As a Master's student, Aqsa's publications and conference presentations are extensive and well beyond many early-stage PhD candidates. She has also achieved excellent grades in her graduate and undergraduate coursework.

Aqsa's commitment to her area of study extends beyond the classroom into the community. In 2022, Aqsa founded a non-profit organization, Seeds 4 Tomorrow, which seeks to plant seeds of mental health knowledge today to grow awareness and plan for a better tomorrow. The organization provides training and awareness building for young people of all ages in an effort to destigmatize these conversations at an early age. Aqsa also volunteers at the Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences in various

geriatric and forensic units, truly infusing her commitment to mental wellness at all stages of life.

Aqsa's references refer to her as a "rising star in the field of schizophrenia research."

One reference shared: "In my nearly 35-year academic career, I have interacted with or supervised hundreds of students in the University of Toronto system and I can confidently assert that Ms. Zahid is absolutely in the top 5 percent of this group."

It is with great pleasure that OCUFA awards Aqsa Zahid with the Henry Mandelbaum fellowship for the 2022-2023 year.

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Established in 2011 to honour former OCUFA Executive Director Henry Mandelbaum, the fellowship is awarded to two full-time graduate students (one master's, one doctoral) at publicly funded Ontario universities. Recipients have demonstrated academic excellence, provided significant community service, and shown exceptional academic promise in their university careers.