

2017 Mandelbaum Fellowship Award

Citation for Laura Jane Weber

The logo for OCUFA, consisting of the letters 'OCUFA' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The 'O' and 'C' are a lighter shade of blue, while 'U', 'F', and 'A' are a darker shade.

Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations
Union des Associations des Professeurs des Universités de l'Ontario



Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations
Union des Associations des Professeurs des Universités de l'Ontario

CITATION FOR LAURA JANE WEBER

Read by Gyllie Phillips, OCUFA Vice-President

This year's Henry Mandelbaum Graduate Fellowship award winner for the PhD level of study is Laura Jane Weber, a doctoral candidate at the University of Guelph in a combined program of Population Medicine and International Development Studies.

Laura Jane's work explores the practice of flying pregnant women out of their home communities in Nunavut to give birth in southern hospitals; in particular, she is investigating the potential physical, psychological, and emotional health implications for Inuit using mixed methodologies. She is committed to learning about Inuit perspectives on childbirth, both historic and contemporary.

Laura Jane was accepted directly into her PhD from her undergraduate studies and has already proven her academic potential through multiple refereed papers, presentations, and intensive research projects. As impressive as she is as an academic, her commitment to service truly inspired the selection committee. She is a deeply dedicated community builder and natural leader whose contributions are too many to mention, but the depth and breadth of her volunteering is remarkable.

In addition to Laura Jane's service work, she also takes the time to inspire others. On campus, she participated in the annual Project Serve Guelph and acted as a volunteer peer helper and mentor through Guelph's Student Life Department. She also coordinated the logistics for a weeklong community learning experience in Mississippi where 35 University of Guelph students learned about the intersecting impacts of racism and poverty in the United States.

She has an impressive record of international research experience through which she has made lasting impacts on strategic planning focused on community-led initiatives. Her research has tangible impacts on the lives of those with whom she works.

Laura Jane's references indicated that she is truly exceptional. One noted the impact Laura Jane has had on her own work:

I have been continually impressed with the calibre of her work and her achievements throughout the first year of doctoral studies. It has been a pleasure to work with her over the past year, and through our collaborations, I have continually been challenged in my own thinking and research in ways



Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations
Union des Associations des Professeurs des Universités de l'Ontario

that have expanded my own work and scope, and deepened my own understanding.

Her referees all spoke highly of her impressive volunteer record, noting Laura Jane's commitment to community engagement and work-life balance – from learning local languages while traveling, to receiving university awards for her athletic abilities, to mastering five musical instruments. The message from her professors was that Laura Jane stands out as an exceptional scholar, leader, and person.

Laura Jane's PhD work is timely and urgent. She intends to use her findings to make recommendations to policy-makers and healthcare providers. Her integrity, humility, and compassion for the marginalized make her well suited to this work. For these reasons, and many more, OCUFA is pleased to award her the Henry Mandelbaum Graduate Fellowship-PhD.