

Guyana Awards Scholarship Recipients

SHERENA HUSSAIN

Sherena Hussain is the top graduating student at the Schulich School of Business, York University. By consistently maintaining the highest cumulative grade point average in her year, Sherena has been recognized by York as one of the institution's highest achievers and was featured in the December 2006 issue of *YorkU Magazine*.



Alongside her ability to achieve academic excellence, Sherena has been actively engaged in the Schulich/York community. As an ambassador for Schulich, mentor to junior students, and student academic advisor within her faculty's college, she has dedicated countless hours to the improvement of student life and the academic performance of incoming high school students. She has also participated in and co-ordinated Canada's first and second annual Ethics Bowl case study competitions. For her ongoing commitment to the University, Sherena has been awarded the prestigious Masters Lifetime Achievement Award.

Sherena has also been committed to the improvement of her local community. Having spent over two years with the Brampton Safe City Association, creating and implementing public awareness campaigns, she was recognized with the Gael Miles Award for Youth Safety. Sherena has volunteered her business skills to those in need, preparing tax returns for low-income families as a community tax volunteer with the Canadian Revenue Agency, and acting as an accounting advisor for small businesses. Moreover, Sherena has continued to support her local high school by mentoring students and delivering lectures about post-secondary education to prospective university students.

With her proven record of academic excellence and community involvement, Sherena exhibits the characteristics of a true role model. She will be attending Osgoode Hall Law School this September.

SAALIH MOHAMED SHAMEAD

Saalih Shamead was born in New York City and migrated in 2005 to Canada, where he attends Scarlett Heights Entrepreneurial Academy in Etobicoke. He

is a member of almost all of the school clubs and associations, from the EcoSchools team to DECA, the student business and marketing organization. As a member of the leadership team, Saalih has been involved in organizing events such as clothing and food drives. His love of travel has also taken him to the Arctic on a student exchange program.

Having been the valedictorian of his Grade Eight graduating class, Saalih currently maintains over a 95% average and is a York Scholar. He can often be found advising and mentoring his fellow students.



Saalih's achievements are not limited to academics. As team leader in the 2007 RBC/Shad Entrepreneurship Cup, Saalih led his team from Carleton University to win three Silver and two Bronze awards. He also placed second in the Retail Merchandising category at the DECA provincials.

In addition, Saalih is very involved in his community, particularly at the International Muslim Organization of Toronto (IMO), as a member of the Green Team recycling effort and as a Faith of Life Network volunteer.

Saalih will be pursuing a Bachelor's in Environmental Studies from York University, after which he plans to attend law school. His ultimate goal is to enter politics because he believes that it is through knowledge of the law that one is able to bring about real change for the better.

DEWAYNE JERMAINE FANFAIR

Dewayne Fanfair is a 22-year-old, third year Journalism student at Durham College whose goal is to be a Sports Broadcaster. He is an editor for the Durham College Chronicle and has done some online work for the Caribbean Camera newspaper in Toronto. Dwayne has just returned from a four-day conference in Puerto Rico, having been selected as the youngest journalist to represent Canada at Counterpart International's Caribbean Media Exchange on Sustainable Tourism (CMEx).



A member of the Ajax/Pickering Air Cadets from

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1999-2001, Dewayne scored 100% on his two-week combat training course and attained the rank of Lance Corporal. From 2001-2002, he was appointed Ajax High School's Student Executive for the Bell United Wave of Ajax/Pickering, and in 2002 was the goalie for J. Clarke Richardson Collegiate's soccer team.

Dewayne's community service includes mentor and spelling coach with the Canadian National Spelling Bee; First Aid volunteer for the Guyana Day Celebrations; and Camp Counsellor with the Toronto Basketball Association's Summer Camp. He also participated in the 2006 Mentorship Youth Workshop hosted by The Alliance of Guyanese Canadian Organizations. Apart from leading the Ajax/Pickering Air Cadets in the march past at the Guyana Ex-Police Association's 2001 Memorial Brunch, Dewayne also recited the poem "In Flanders Field" to honour his late grandfather who fought in World War II.

Upon graduation from high school, Dewayne received a Certificate of Endorsement in Integrated Technological Studies and was on the Honour Roll. He is currently working towards his diploma in Journalism (Print and Broadcast), with the objective of attaining a University degree in Communications.

SHARON SUKHDEO

Sharon Sukhdeo is a 17-year-old Grade 12 student at Vaughan Secondary School, and a licensed pilot. An honours student, she gained early admission to three of the top universities in Ontario, including the University of Toronto, to pursue an undergraduate degree in Life Sciences.



Sharon's long-term goal is to pursue a career in medicine as a Paediatrician.

A proud Canadian, Sharon holds the highest and honoured position of Cadet Squadron Commander for over 200 cadets with the Royal Canadian Air Cadets (RCAC). For the past four years, she has been a clarinetist in the Vaughan Wind Ensemble and also plays the saxophone, flute and harmonium. In addition, Sharon volunteers at North York General Hospital. Always cognizant and proud of her Guyanese heritage,

Sharon believes in preserving the multiculturalism of the community. She teaches Hindi, the language of her indentured ancestors, and related cultural practices to students in her community.

Over the years, Sharon has won many awards and recognition for her outstanding achievements. Among these are a number of RCAC awards including "Top Instructors" Award for Excellence in 2007; scholarships for the Senior Leaders Course at Canadian Forces Base, Cold Lake, Alberta in 2006; and the Glider Pilot Scholarship in 2007. She obtained a C badge from the Federation Aeronautique Internationale (The World Air Sports Federation) for sustaining lift in a Schweizer SGS 2-33A glider for over one hour – an outstanding feat for a new pilot. Most recently, Sharon was awarded the prestigious Duke of Edinburgh's Young Canadians Challenge Silver Award.

RICHARD DANIELS-LEE

Richard Daniels-Lee is 22 years of age and a fourth year student at the University of Windsor, completing a degree in Sociology and Criminology with a minor in Psychology and Communications. Richard's long-term goal is to pursue post-graduate studies to become a lawyer. He is currently Director of Promotions for the Caribbean and African Organization of Students at Windsor.



Richard graduated from Neil McNeil High School in 2004 on the Honour Roll, and was awarded the Geography Award for the highest mark in his senior class. In November 2004 he was awarded the Ann Newman Youth Scholarship by the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, and received the Alliance of Guyanese Canadian Organization's Community Youth Award in February 2008.

Athletics is another field in which this young man has excelled. He was named the Most Valuable Player (MVP) and Athlete of the Year for Neil McNeil in Basketball, Track and Field and Cross Country. In addition, Richard was the Metro Toronto Champion in the 400-metre Hurdles in 2002, 2003 and 2004. He received the Ontario Track and Field Association Gold Medal in the 4x200-

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metre Relay and Silver in the 4x400. He also competed in the Canadian Junior National Championships where he placed 7th in the nation.

Richard has been and continues to be an excellent role model for young people in our community and beyond, having consistently demonstrated a maturity and discipline beyond his years. His commitment to higher learning, while balancing community involvement and sports, indicates a well-rounded personality.

KAREN NAIDOO

Karen Naidoo was born in Canada, raised in Guyana, and migrated back to Canada in her teenage years. Her experiences in Guyana have made Karen a strong and passionate voice for the preservation and promotion of Guyanese heritage and culture.



Currently completing her Masters in Environmental Studies at York University, Karen has been active in her community since she was sixteen. She has worked with local high schools to provide presentations and information on youth services such as Kids Help Phone, and was a Sexual Assault Counsellor at York.

Karen has recently worked on a voluntary basis with the Wellesley Institute, doing community mapping which focuses on recent immigrants and how their health is affected by the cultural/temporal transition. She also facilitated a focus group of young women from Caribbean, South Asian and African backgrounds to investigate how they access health care. This work is closely tied to her current research as it is focused on Caribbean women and the effects of settlement on their mental health. This research, hopefully, will lead to a change in mental health policy from a bio-medical model to one that is more inclusive.

A hard-working self-starter whose range of activities extends far beyond those mentioned above, Karen is a volunteer with Calabash, a group working towards creating a magazine for Caribbean youth in Toronto to provide an avenue for these youth to express their concerns on particular issues.

Karen's goal is to work with an organization such as the United Nations that assists and lobbies on behalf of ethnically diverse and marginalized immigrants.

ARIELLE KALA PRESCOD

Arielle Prescod consistently endeavours to be 'the best she could be', while contributing to her community and aiming for the stars. Always striving towards academic success, she is also conscious of her civic responsibility as a global citizen. Her proudest accomplishments include being a founding member of the Black History and Heritage Committee at her school and participating in the annual 'Many Faces of Newtonbrook' cultural festival as part of the Guyanese group.



Arielle's extensive community involvement includes:

- Member of the Board of 'Elements', a youth-run tutoring and mentorship program for young girls aimed at encouraging marginalized youth to pursue careers in Science and Technology. Arielle participated in writing a successful funding proposal to the Youth Challenge Fund, resulting in the group receiving \$312,000 to implement this program over the next three years.
- Volunteering at her elementary school, teaching dance and assisting with activities for children in the Derrydown Public School 'Triangle of Hope Saturday Program', an arts-based enrichment program for young students.
- Member of the Can-Caribe Children's Dance Theatre, a winning competitive dance team. Arielle has performed at several local and national venues and recently added choreography to her repertoire, which has earned her several awards.

While being extremely proud of her Guyanese heritage, Arielle is also a proud Canadian who is fluent in English and French. The recipient of a local Canada Millennium Award Scholarship, Arielle will pursue studies in Economics and International Development at the University of Ottawa in September 2008, followed by law school, with the goal of becoming a U.N ambassador for Canada.