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Environmental Studies

Saint Mary's student Alexandra Doran spent most of her childhood fascinated with land, sea, and sky. She had an impressive rock collection and could name every type of cloud or weather pattern there was.

As she grew older, she set aside her environmental passion for typical high-school coursework—social studies, math, and languages—and set her sights on a degree in commerce.

"I made the mistake a lot of students do out of high school," says Alexandra Doran. "I chose business because I thought that was the best path to a successful career. I didn't realize then the power of an interdisciplinary education."

A transfer to the Faculty of Arts in her first year opened up a world of opportunity to Alexandra, and she discovered a love for philosophy and the sciences. In fact, an elective geology course revived her true calling and long-dormant passion for the environment. Lucky for Alexandra, the launch of the Faculty of Arts Bachelor of Environmental Studies (BES) program in her third year came just at the right time.

"The BES program is a perfect fit," she says. "It allows me to combine a discipline like philosophy, which teaches you how to think, with science disciplines like biology, which traditionally can be a bit cut and dry."

It is the BES degree's combination of science and arts that Alexandra believes will help prepare her for a career in environmental law. The passion she exudes when she discusses her favourite courses suggests she's on the right path.

"Dr. John Calder's geology course, "Global Change", is amazing," says Alexandra. "From the pattern of Earth's development to the dissection of modern-day hazards, I remember everything the

professor taught."

After graduating, Alexandra plans to pursue a Masters in Environmental & Resource Management at the University of British Columbia before continuing on to law school. Relocating to the West Coast is a natural choice because of its proximity to both the mountains and the ocean.

A Nova Scotian girl at heart, Alexandra can't be too far from the water. And she admits she'll probably bring her rock collection with her when she moves; after all, it's where it all began.

At the Spring 2013 Convocation ceremony, Saint Mary's Faculty of Arts celebrated the first students to graduate from its Bachelor of Environmental Studies (BES) program.

The BES, which was launched in 2009, is a 4-year interdisciplinary program that draws upon social sciences, humanities, and natural sciences to help students develop creative solutions to complex environmental challenges.

www.smu.ca/BES

Accessibility

Choosing what university to attend is a challenge for most students. But for Nicole Durand, a fourth-year French major, Saint Mary's was an easy choice.

Nicole made her decision to attend Saint Mary's University at her high school's recruitment fair after asking each university about their efforts to meet the needs of students who face physical challenges.

"I went up to each school's recruitment officer and I asked: What kind of programs do you have in place? How accessible is your campus?" says Nicole.

When she spoke to the young women representing Saint Mary's, they told her the Atlantic Centre of Research, Access, and Support for Students with Disabilities would help ensure her in-class needs were met. They also discussed Saint Mary's compact campus—all in one city block—and told her about the sequence of inner tunnels that connect its buildings.

"It was then that the light bulb went off and I knew—this is it! This is the perfect university for me!" she says.



Now on the verge of graduating, Nicole remains confident that she made the right choice. Over the years, she's grown proud of the inclusive environment at Saint Mary's.

"There isn't a ton of awareness about life in a wheelchair and how difficult it can be sometimes," says Nicole. "For example, you don't think about bathroom doors being too heavy when you are standing up. But somebody in a wheelchair notices how heavy doors can be."

Raising awareness is something Nicole knows all about. An advocate for active living, she

often speaks to young people about the importance of physical activity. The Halifax Regional School Board has even recruited Nicole to help champion Playground Activity Leaders in Schools (PALS), a program designed to encourage elementary school students to get active during lunch and recess.

"I talk to kids about all the sports that I play and my experience as a child on the playground," says Nicole. "In elementary school, I played skip rope with my friends. Instead of jumping, I turned the rope and got very good at Double Dutch!"

3 Nicole Durand



Nicole enjoys time on the ice with her father, Eddy Durand.

These days, Nicole's sport of choice is sledge hockey, a form of ice hockey for participants with physical challenges. A few years ago, there were no sledge hockey teams in Halifax. Intent on playing, Nicole convinced the board of Hockey Nova Scotia to launch one. When she discusses her sport, Nicole's eyes light up.

"My brother has played hockey since he was four years old, and I was always on the sidelines—I never got to play," says Nicole. "I'm grateful I found this sport. I absolutely love it."

In addition to playing sledge hockey and public speaking,

Nicole has maintained high academic standing. In fact, she has been on the Faculty of Arts Dean's List every year.

This spring, Nicole graduates from Saint Mary's with a Bachelor of Arts with a major in French. After that, she looks forward to moving to Antigonish to pursue a Bachelor of Education at Saint Francis Xavier University.

"I have always wanted to be a teacher, and my B.A. degree has given me valuable skills that I can apply in the classroom," she says.

Nicole particularly enjoyed her courses in psychology and

religious studies. "Introduction to Religion," a course taught by religious studies professor Dr. Wendell Eisener, was one of her favourites.

"A little bit of knowledge about various religions will help me understand and connect students with cultural differences," says Nicole. "I want to help students see the similarities they share with one another."

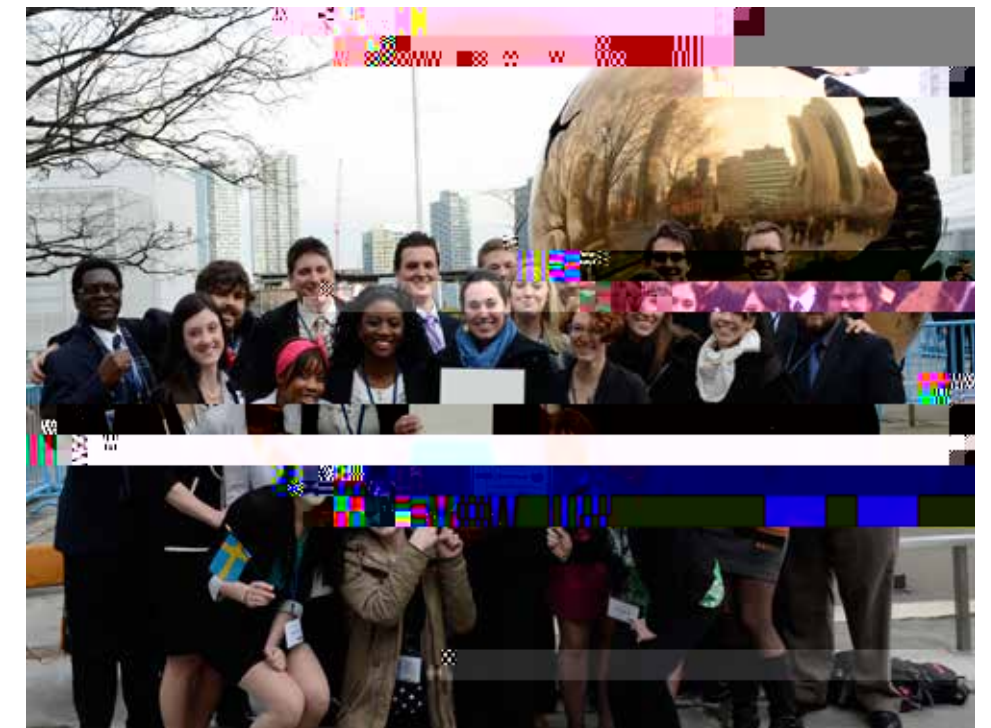
3 Nicole Durand

After five days of intense debate at the 2013 National Model United Nations (NMUN) Conference in New York, Saint Mary's students earned top honours for their representation of the Kingdom of Sweden. Five student delegates also received accolades for their outstanding position papers and performances in mock-international committees.

The conference is one of the largest university-level Model UN simulations in the world, and this year, over 200 universities and 5,000 delegates participated. With numbers like that, Saint Mary's is proud to be one of only four Canadian universities to earn a Distinguished Delegation Award.

Saint Mary's has a history of excellence at the NMUN Conference; Political Science professor Dr. Marc Doucet has been leading Arts students to victory for the past ten years.

Students participate in NMUN as part of Dr. Doucet's fourth-year political science course, "Model United Nations". This full-year class examines how the UN works and offers a unique experiential learning opportunity: participation in, and preparation for, a national mock UN conference. Over the



years, Saint Mary's students have represented a variety of countries, including Chad, Cameroon, Syria, Columbia, and Peru.

"Debating real, current issues in a competitive yet cooperative environment was exhilarating," says Kathleen O'Brien, fourth-year political science student, "Thanks to our preparation with Dr. Doucet, we were able to be leaders within our committees."

For Dr. Doucet, teaching the Model UN course every year rejuvenates his commitment to

teaching.

"When given the right opportunity along with the proper support," he says, "the level of individual determination and energy my students give to the success of the delegations as a whole is truly inspiring."

For Kathleen O'Brien, it is an experience she won't soon forget. "As a political science student, it was a great milestone to stand on the floor of the United Nations General Assembly."

John McKinlay

John McKinlay has always been curious about the intersection between psychology and the law. As a practising lawyer, psychological assessments play an important role in the cases he tries and often affect their strategy and outcome.

A few years ago, John took a leave from his position as a Member Representative with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) to pursue a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology at Saint Mary's. Thanks to credits from his previous degree from Princeton University, John was able to earn his degree in one year.



Part of what attracted John to Saint Mary's was his professional relationship with the Department of Psychology, particularly professor Dr. Robert Konopasky, an expert in psychological and forensic assessment. Since 2008, the two have collaborated on a number of research papers. One of their most recent, *Education's Perfect Storm: Outmoded or No Bullying Policies, Grievous Harm Litigation*, was presented to the Nova Scotia Cyberbullying Task Force.

In the paper, McKinlay and Dr.

Konopasky argue litigation against school boards is necessary if and when they fail to protect bullied children.

In a climate of increased awareness about bullying, Dr. Konopasky and McKinlay's recommendations offer solutions to curb systemic bullying. They believe they would also help reduce the psychological harm caused by bullying.

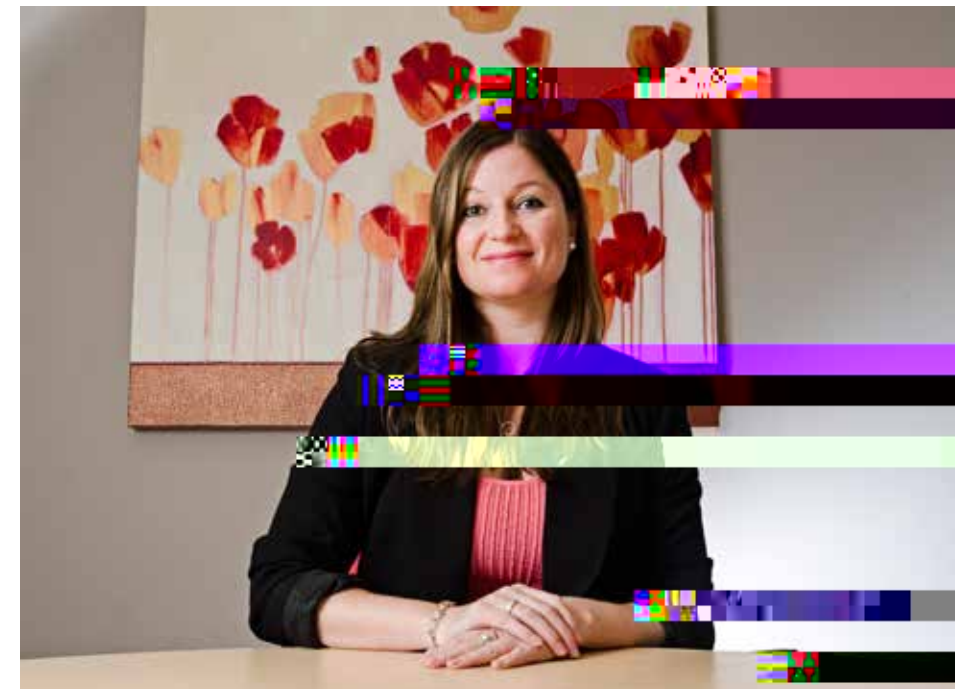
"It would give power to the people in the system," says John.

Thanks to his positive experience

as a Saint Mary's Arts student, John is now pursuing a Masters of Applied Science (Psychology) at the university. His ultimate goal is to combine his psychological knowledge with his passion for the law.

"My legal and psychological educations are intertwined: cross-examination of witnesses, courtroom arguments, client communications, negotiations," he says. "My whole approach will never be the same."

Amy Robson



worked to establish concrete goals for Amy's return.

But the road to change is not always a straight line, and Amy found her second year more challenging than her first. Feeling overwhelmed, di ing

When Amy Robson received a letter from the Office of the Dean of Arts in the summer of 2002, she thought her academic career was doomed. Because of poor academic performance in her first year at Saint Mary's, she'd been put on academic probation.

"No one wants to get a letter like that," says Amy, "I was devastated, ashamed, and scared to tell my family."

As a special concession, students on academic probation may be given approval to continue their

studies, provided they meet the minimum grade point average. But it is critical that they take appropriate steps to identify and address the issues that made it difficult for them to succeed.

Amy was committed to getting a university education, and so she decided to try and turn things around. At the suggestion of the team at the B.A. Advising Centre, she sought the approval of the Dean of Arts, Dr. Esther Enns, to re-enroll and set up periodic calls with her over the summer. Together, she and the Dean

Student Experience, Support, and Learning



education provider. She's also earned a graduate certificate in Workplace Wellness and Health Promotion from Centennial College.

Amy is grateful for the support she received at Saint Mary's and wants current students who may be facing challenges to know that academic and wellness services are there for them.

"Take advantage of the supports Saint Mary's has to offer—it will



Dr. Shelagh Crooks & Dr. John Reid



Since joining the Department of Philosophy in 1987, Dr. Shelagh Crooks has been repeatedly lauded as an outstanding professor and mentor. Driven by a desire to help instill the value of

critical reflection in her students, Dr. Crooks has inspired many to challenge their intellectual boundaries and embrace new ideas.

Dr. Crooks describes her classroom as a “thinking laboratory” where students test their ideas in the hurly-burly of group interaction and class discussion. She leads her students through thought experiments and asserts that there is no such thing as failure.

“All thought experiments have the potential to tell us something important, about the idea being

tested, and about each of us as thinkers,” she says.

In recognition of her exceptional accomplishments in teaching and educational leadership, Dr. Crooks was honoured this year by being named a 3M National Teaching Fellow. This award recognizes educational leaders and innovators across Canada, and has been known for 28 years as our country’s most prestigious teaching distinction.

Dr. James Morrison and Dr. John Reid

Two professors from the Faculty of Arts, Dr. James Morrison and Dr. John Reid, were both recently honoured with Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medals.

Dr. James Morrison, who was named a Member of the Order of Canada in 2009, has been a professor in the Department of History since 1990. This medal recognizes his teaching and research contributions to local

museums and historical societies in the fields of immigration and oral history.

Fellow recipient Dr. John Reid has taught students in the areas of Canadian and Atlantic Canadian history since 1985. He is also a Senior Research Fellow at the Gorsebrook Research Institute for Atlantic Canada Studies.



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Member of the Order of Canada
2009

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Dr. James McMullan

When the federal or provincial government make changes to gambling legislation, Dr. McMullan is the first expert reporters seek for comment.

A long-standing faculty member in the Department of Sociology and Criminology, Dr. McMullan is an influential voice in the gambling field. He’s also considered one of Canada’s leading experts in several areas of sociological and criminological research, including social theory, historical sociology, and critical criminology.

His academic career is prolific. He’s published eight books, various academic reports for government, and numerous scholarly research articles, including the often-cited *Social Surveillance and the Rise of*

the Police Machine and the more recent *Wins, Winning,*

This academic year, Saint Mary’s recognized Dr. McMullan’s exceptional research contributions by presenting him with a 2012 President’s Award for Excellence in Research. This award honours full-time faculty members whose exceptional contribution to research has garnered international recognition.

For Dr. McMullan, receiving the President’s Award is recognition of achievements accomplished in the company of mentors, colleagues, and students.

“I consider it a summing up of a career lived in a world of ideas



where I was able to pursue a wide range of intellectual interests—both local and international—that had impacts in academia, as well as in the world of social and political action,” he said.

Dr. Gavin Fridell

At cafés across North America, you’ll find campaigns urging patrons to choose Fair Trade Coffee. But what does *fair trade* mean? And to what extent can a cup of coffee, purchased through a fair trade network, beneficially affect a farmer or migrant worker?

These are the questions that interest Dr. Gavin Fridell, Saint Mary’s newest Canada Research Chair in International Development



Studies (Tier II) and author of *Fair Pitfalls of Market-Drive Social Justice*. Dr. Fridell believes that commodity agreements like fair trade coffee have the potential to promote local development and channel greater income into the hands of poor farmers and rural workers.

To evaluate this potential, Dr. Fridell is conducting a comparative

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where I come from, family is huge," says Harry. "Having that type of feeling around me keeps me focused on my goals."

Harry is confident his coursework in sociology and criminology will help him understand how culture and society influence the youth he mentors. He's also thrilled to be part of the first cohort of students enrolled in the B.A. Co-operative Education program, which provides students the opportunity to alternate periods of full-time study with three paid work placements in the community.

"The co-op program is a great fit for me because it allows me to apply ideas learned in the classroom to outreach activities, within the context of my degree."

Harry's first co-op position was Camp Counsellor for Autism

Nova Scotia's Ben James Summer Camp, a day-camp for children and youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Working with campers one-on-one, Harry strengthened his interpersonal and communication skills and developed a strong bond with his campers. In fact, he continues to stay in touch with a camper named Dylan and his family.

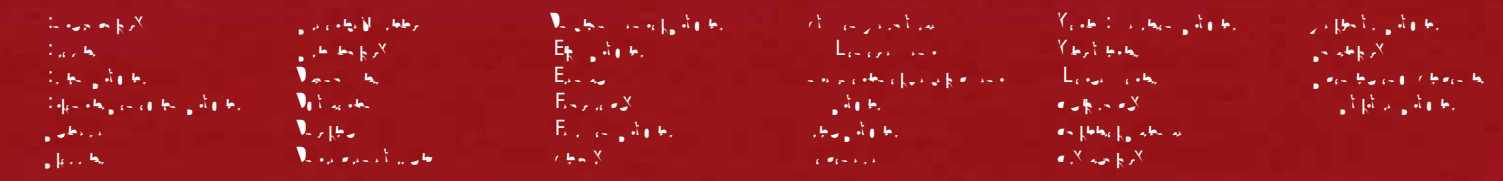
Given the long list of outreach programs that Harry participates in, it is safe to say he has positively influenced the lives of hundreds of youth like Dylan. Since Harry's first year at Saint Mary's, he has taken part in numerous outreach initiatives, including the university's Aspiring Athletes program and Montionball, a fundraising event for Special Olympics Canada. He's also a co-founder of "Just Believe," a monthly mentorship program that connects students

from Caledonia Junior High School with current Saint Mary's basketball players.

Harry also offers personal and athletic career advice to Nigerian youth who contact him through his informal mentorship project, Harry Cares, which was inspired by the NBA Cares program.

"When I returned to Nigeria from basketball programs in Europe, I always brought back jerseys and basketball shoes to give to the kids in my community," says Harry. "They started saying, 'Hey, Harry cares!' and I would say, 'Yeah, just like the NBA Cares program.' After awhile, the name stuck."

In recognition of his outstanding commitment to youth development, Harry was recently awarded the Atlantic University Sport's (AUS) 2013 Student-Athlete Community Service Award. He was also nominated for the prestigious Ken Shields Award, granted by Canadian Inter-University Sport, in recognition of his outstanding achievement in three areas: basketball, academics, and community involvement.



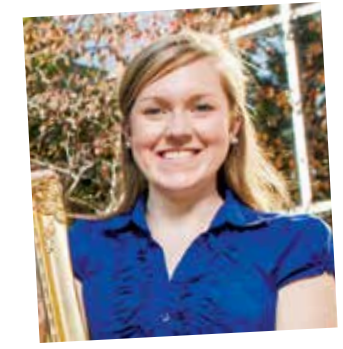
Quantitative Researcher, Nova Scotia Department of Justice

Stephanie's co-op with the Nova Scotia Department of Justice involved researching and analyzing justice trends and emerging policy issues relevant to Nova Scotia. Under the supervision of the Director, Policy Planning and Research, Stephanie developed research reports that supported justice initiatives. Pleased with her contributions, the Department of Justice has recently hired Stephanie for a second co-op term.



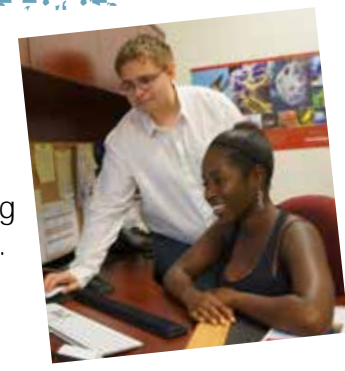
Program Assistant, Capital District Health Authority

Thanks to her co-op with Capital Health District Authority's Seniors' Mental Health Team, Melanie gained real-life experience alongside mental health clinicians specializing in geriatric care at the Nova Scotia Hospital. This psychiatric care centre is the largest mental health facility in the province.



Co-op Students, Dean of Arts Office, Saint Mary's University

Sean and Ama both worked in the Office of the Dean of Arts, under the direction of B.A. Program Advisor Olu Oredugba. Sean's main projects were updating the Arts website and organizing projects and presentations, while Ama focused on connecting with recent Arts graduates in an effort to expand the Faculty of Arts alumni database.



Researcher, Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

During her co-op with the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Chloe Gagnon collected baseline data from government sources to help the Council produce reports on various aspects of women's lives in Nova Scotia. Impressed by her skills and dedication, the Council hired her on a part-time basis while she completed her honours thesis after her co-op concluded.



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