

NEWS RELEASE for 2015 Co-op Students of the Year Awards

“OUTSTANDING CO-OP STUDENTS EARN NATIONAL RECOGNITION”

Toronto, ON, March 14, 2016 – The Canadian Association for Co-operative Education ([CAFCE](#)) announces the 2015 Co-op Students of the Year: **Rachel McDonald** from the University of Waterloo and **Shauna-Kay Jones** from Sheridan College.

Rising to the top, from a field of 37 nominees, Rachel and Shauna-Kay embodied all the attributes of outstanding co-op students by making a significant impact in their co-op work term, achieving high academic performance, showing commitment to enhancing the profile of co-operative education at their post-secondary institution, and making a difference in their communities.

Rachel McDonald is a fourth-year student in Health Studies at the University of Waterloo, and after finishing her degree she plans to attend medical school. During her spring 2015 work term as a clinical research assistant at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, Rachel worked alongside radiation oncologists, providing patient care and developing research initiatives for palliative radiation oncology. Several of Rachel's papers and abstracts have been published in peer-reviewed journals. She also had the opportunity to participate in the Multinational Association of Supportive Care in Cancer conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, where she delivered two poster presentations. In her spare time, Rachel teaches swimming to individuals with disabilities as a volunteer with Adapted Aquatics.

“Rachel is one to embrace every opportunity that co-op has to offer,” says Anne-Marie Fannon, Director of the University of Waterloo's Professional Development Program. “Presenting her work to field leaders and publishing her papers in medical journals are among her many accomplishments while on co-op. She also helped to advance the field of research in co-operative education by completing a study, later published in the Journal of Cancer Education, of student employees in Sunnybrook's Rapid Response Radiotherapy Program. She continues to work with Waterloo's Centre for the Advancement of Co-operative Education on additional co-op research projects. Rachel is an exceptional young woman and I'm so pleased that she has been named as one of CAFCE's Co-op Students of the Year.”

Shauna-Kay Jones is a fourth-year student in the Computer Systems Technology, Software Development & Network Engineering Program at Sheridan College. In countless endeavors, Shauna-Kay has taken her learning from Sheridan's Software Development Co-op program and applied it to worthy causes. She led a team that developed a mobile application for the elderly and her capstone project resulted in a mobile application to support and motivate individuals on the autism spectrum. Shauna also excelled in her co-op work term as an Operations Control Room Support Engineer Assistant with Independent Electricity System Operation. She developed a protocol that is currently used to improve communication between provinces and the USA in the event of a software failure.

“I'm most inspired to hear Shauna-Kay speak about co-op itself,” says Cory Latimer, Manager of Co-operative Education at Sheridan College. “Shauna-Kay speaks proudly about the impact that co-op has had on her life, and the benefit for all parties of a participation in co-operative education. She has stated her commitment to being an advocate for the expansion and reinforcement of co-op programs and education in Ontario. I can't imagine a better advocate.”

In addition to receiving a \$500 cash award from CAFCE, with a certificate to commemorate their achievements, Rachel McDonald and Shauna-Kay Jones will each receive the \$500 Emery-Dufault Award. The Emery-Dufault Award was established by CAFCE in 2003 in recognition of the contributions of two of the founding fathers of co-operative education in Canada, Dr. Charles Leslie (Les) Emery and Professor George Joseph Dufault. Les Emery first introduced the idea of co-operative education to Waterloo College Associate Faculties, the forerunner of the University of Waterloo. His proposal and subsequent work led to the establishment in 1957 of the first co-operative education program in Canada. George Dufault set up and headed the Department of Co-ordination, now known as Co-operative Education and Career Action department, until 1958.

Each year CAFCE recognizes outstanding co-op student achievement at the college and university level. Co-op offices across Canada will be celebrating this and other co-op initiatives during National Co-operative Education Week, March 14-18, 2016. Currently there are 79 CAFCE member institutions across Canada and the U.S. representing more than 80,000 students.

Honourable mentions were awarded to **Andrew MacDonald** from University of Waterloo and **Stephen Kostuk** from Sheridan College.



Shauna-Kay Jones



Rachel McDonald

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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