

**The Department of
Geography & Planning
2020 Awards**

Planning



Geography & Planning
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Message from the Associate Chair

Katharine Rankin, Associate Chair, Director of Planning

The annual awards ceremony affirms the contributions, the hard work and the expansive research of the community rooted in our Planning Program. I regret that we cannot convene this year in person to celebrate our donors, our alumni and our students. I am grateful that we can celebrate and recognize the extraordinary efforts of all of you through this booklet. Congratulations most of all to the student and alumni awardees, and thank you to everyone for your ongoing participation in and support for the Program in Planning at U of T.

Award Descriptions

Matthew W.F. Hanson Scholarship in Planning

Matthew Hanson was a graduate of the Masters of Science in Planning (MScPI) class of 2004, a wonderful friend and colleague who touched the lives of so many people before his passing. To honour him, friends and family created this scholarship to recognize students in the MScPI program for their efforts and contribution to student life.

Ann Borooah Graduate Planning Scholarship

Created through a program of the province of Ontario and the endowment established by a donation by Mr. Edward Sorbara and the University of Toronto, this award is presented to an outstanding graduate student who is studying planning and has obtained first-class standing.

Benjamin Sonshine Urban Planning Scholarship

Established in 1997 by the Sonshine family, in honour of their late father Benjamin, this award is presented to an outstanding student who has completed an undergraduate program in geography at the University of Toronto upon entering the MScPI Program at the University of Toronto.

Canadian Institute of Planners Award in Academic

This prize is awarded annually to the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) student member with the highest academic standing in the MScPI Program at the University of Toronto.

Award Descriptions

Mitchell Goldhar Award for Excellent Achievement in the Planning Program

This award is given, on the basis of academic merit, to an outstanding graduate student either entering or continuing in the MScPI program.

Graduate Planning Award for Black Students

To be awarded to students who identify as Black. Priority will be given to students who do not hold major scholarships, and who have not previously received departmental awards.

Graduate Planning Award for International Students

To be awarded to International students. Priority will be given to students who do not hold major scholarships, and who have not previously received departmental awards.

Alan Tonks Planning Scholarship

Provided by an endowment created from the proceeds of a gala dinner held in honour of Alan Tonks upon his retirement as Chairman of Metropolitan Toronto in 1997, this award is granted to outstanding students in the second year of the MScPI program who are concentrating their studies in the areas of urban planning, urban transportation or urban infrastructure.

Award Descriptions

Friends of Planning Graduate Scholarship for Innovation

This award was created through the hard work and dedication of the Friends of Planning Alumni Committee. It is awarded annually, beginning 2010, to a student entering the second year of MScPI program who demonstrates, through their studies, volunteering and/or work experiences, innovative thinking and practice to plan for or promote planning among diverse communities.

Ian D. Macpherson Award

Established in honour of the late Ian D. Macpherson by his professional planning colleagues, this award is given annually to an outstanding student, registered in either year of the MScPI program, whose work has demonstrated both high academic merit and practical problem-solving ability with respect to some aspect of planning.

Edie Yolles Award in Urban Planning

This award was created in honour of the late Edie Yolles, a Planning student at the University of Toronto in the 1960s. After graduating Yolles worked as an urban planner with the Metropolitan Toronto Planning board. Later she became dedicated to film, and produced and co-directed the feature film 'That's My Baby'. She won a number awards for her film work. In her honour, this award is granted annually to a student of merit graduating from the MScPI program, who demonstrates a comprehensive approach to planning and has acquired the necessary skills.

Peter R. Walker Planning Scholarship

Created through the efforts of the Planning Alumni Committee of the University of Toronto Association of Geography Alumni and named for its key benefactor, this award is granted to students entering the second year of the MScPI program. The recipients are individuals who have made significant contributions to planning practice through applied work and thus exemplify the "best all-round planner."

Award Descriptions

LEA Consulting Ltd. Award in Planning and Transportation

This award is given to a graduate student in the MScPI program with an interest in transportation, on the basis of academic merit.

Peter R. Walker Master of Science in Planning Fellowship

This fellowship recognizes academic achievements and contributions to the practice of planning through applied work of students in the MScPI program.

The U of T Planning Alumni Graduate Scholarship

This award is given to a graduate student enrolled in full-time studies in the Department of Geography & Planning, on the basis of academic merit.

Thomas Luther Panton Scholarship

Awarded to a student in the MScPI program on the basis of financial need and academic merit.

AWARD RECIPIENTS

Joanna Ilunga-Kapinga



Joanna Ilunga-Kapinga is a second-year MScPl student in the Department of Geography and Planning at the University of Toronto. In 2019, Joanna completed her undergrad degree at the U of T and double majored in Peace, Conflict, and Justice Studies, and Political Science. Her research focuses on transit-oriented development, vertical housing, mixed-use buildings, and city accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Joanna is also very interested in the Belt and Road Initiative happening in the Global South. This interest influenced and pushed her to pursue a degree in planning. When she's not in class, Joanna is serving as the 2020-2021 Urban Land Institute Representative for the second-year cohort and as a Compliance Director for the G7 Research Group at the U of T. Joanna enjoys curating playlists on Spotify, reading, watching foreign films, interior designing, and exploring the city for the best pastries.

Alan Tonks
Planning
Scholarship

Thomas Kempster



Thomas' research interests concern neighbourhood change, community control, and non-market housing policy in the neoliberal city. Motivated by the desire to see municipalities take a stronger role in ensuring a right to housing, Thomas hopes his research and career can help further a vision of city planning where governments are able to extract more public benefits from urban economic growth. His planning thesis, supervised by Dr. Alan Walks, examines the politics which lead to the non-market housing outcomes of master planned communities in Toronto and Vancouver.

Alan Tonks
Planning
Scholarship

Saieda Fahima Begum



Saieda has a BA in Political Science and a degree in Social work. She has worked as a front-line registered social worker in both a domestic violence shelter and in developmental services. In her work and her current research, Saieda's goal has always been to ensure a better quality of life for people in the broader community. In her current research, she is studying urban ecosystems and climate resilience. She is also looking forward to learning about policies that strive to support communities, particularly marginalized groups.

**Ann Borooah
Graduate
Planning
Scholarship**

Rameez Sadafal



As cities expand, nature begins to feel the pressure of rapid urbanization. Such pressures include fragmentation, degradation, and habitat loss. In response to this, Rameez Sadafal's research focuses on utilizing Ontario's planning process to protect and restore habitats and their respective biodiversity. This includes identifying the value that nature provides to the environment through essential ecosystem services such flood prevention, carbon sequestration, and climate regulation. Professionally, Rameez's goal is to one day use this research to strengthen Ontario's ecosystem-based approach to planning.

**Benjamin
Sonshine
Urban
Planning
Scholarhsip**

Andrew Tidswell



Andrew is a recent graduate of the the MScPI program. As a student, his research focused on community planning and affordable housing. He was particularly interested in looking at how rules and norms around public consultation, density limits, and construction financing impact non-profit housing developers. Andrew is currently working in transportation planning with LEA Consulting in Toronto.

**CIP Student
Award in
Academic
Excellence**

Keisha St. Louis-McBurnie



Keisha St. Louis-McBurnie is completing her Master of Science in Planning (MScPI) and researches alternative practices for inclusive city-building at the intersections of housing, community economic development and land use planning. More specifically, her planning thesis is exploring the extent to which the Canadian co-operative housing sector has been engaging with innovative partnerships and structures (i.e. community land trusts) to deliver new affordable housing and sustainable, mixed-income communities across the country.

**Friends of
Planning
Graduate
Scholarship
for
Innovation**

Pragya Priyadarshini



Pragya Priyadarshini (she/her) is an international student in the second year of the MScPI program. Before joining the program, Pragya was a fellow at the Indian Institute for Urban Settlements in Bengaluru, preceding which she worked as a human-centered design practitioner for four years. Her work is rooted in Disability Justice (DJ). It examines and creates DJ informed pedagogies, urban practices, and interdependent ways of living. At U of T, Pragya is closely involved with the Graduate Geography and Planning Student Society (GGAPSS), where she currently serves as VP Academic and leads initiatives on strengthening peer support for BIPOC, international, queer, trans*, and disabled students.

**Friends of
Planning
Graduate
Scholarship
for
Innovation**

Marissa Irene Uli



Marissa grew up in a diverse community in Indonesia where deep social inequalities motivated her to become involved in grassroots organizing from a young age. She quickly became a youth leader in her community, working collaboratively on projects dedicated to inclusivity, social justice, and long-term capacity building. Her experiences back home in Indonesia inform her current research. Marissa is interested in understanding how she can use 'bottom-up' planning practices and human-centred design to inform her understanding of inclusive public engagement and collaborative social planning. Currently, Marissa is writing her planning thesis on formal capacity-building networks and how they engage in decision-making processes/building regarding funding and the distribution of their resources.

**Friends of
Planning
Graduate
Scholarship
for
Innovation**

Zeina Ahmed



Zeina Ahmed is a second year MScPI graduate student. Her areas of research include urban design and the intersection of planning and the built environment. Her interests are particularly focused on how people plan for and experience space and how these spaces shape communities, especially with regards to equity-deserving groups. Zeina's personal interests and professional background include visual arts and communications design and she folds this expertise and consideration into her everyday work.

**Graduate
Planning
Award
for Black
Students**

Jhamela Stapleton



Jhamela is completing her second year in the MScPI program at the University of Toronto. Influenced by her undergraduate degree in Criminology and Equity Studies, her current interests include the racialization of space and equitable planning. Having completed two design studio courses in her first year of graduate school, Jhamela has developed an affinity for urban design. Driven by a geography course she took last year, and also by a heightened visibility of homelessness in Toronto, Jhamela is in the midst of writing her planning thesis, tentatively titled “Taking Up Space: Thinking Through Encampments as Safe, Communal Living Quarters for Homeless Torontonians”. In her thesis, Jhamela hopes to stress that the presence of encampments are a symptom of a broken housing system, while simultaneously acting as a treatment, and source of change-making

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**Graduate
Planning
Award for
International
Students**

Amy Protheroe



Amy is an MScPl student interested in public and active transportation. Her research interests lie at the intersection of public health and the built environment. Her current research looks at transit station access in Calgary and Edmonton. She investigates the role of park and ride facilities, land use patterns, bus networks, and active transportation infrastructure in shaping how individuals access light rail transit. Her work also seeks to understand differences in municipal policy and the way that has influenced station access mode share in both municipalities.

**Ian D.
Macpherson
Award**

Joanna Ilunga-Kapinga



Joanna Ilunga-Kapinga is a second-year MScPI student in the Department of Geography and Planning at the University of Toronto. In 2019, Joanna completed her undergrad degree at the U of T and double majored in Peace, Conflict, and Justice Studies, and Political Science. Her research focuses on transit-oriented development, vertical housing, mixed-use buildings, and city accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Joanna is also very interested in the Belt and Road Initiative happening in the Global South. This interest influenced and pushed her to pursue a degree in planning. When she's not in class, Joanna is serving as the 2020-2021 Urban Land Institute Representative for the second-year cohort and as a Compliance Director for the G7 Research Group at the U of T. Joanna enjoys curating playlists on Spotify, reading, watching foreign films, interior designing, and exploring the city for the best pastries.

**LEA
Consulting
Ltd. Award
in Planning
and Transport**

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**Matthew
W.F. Hanson
Scholarship
in Planning**

Charles Caldwell



Charlie Caldwell is a 2nd year student in the MScPI program, pursuing the concentration in Environmental Planning. He is broadly interested in political ecology, sustainable design, intentional communities, and the role of culture, ideology, and institutions in environmental decision-making. In addition to supporting faculty projects as a Research Assistant within the Department of Geography & Planning and the School of the Environment, Charlie is currently completing a placement with the CNIB Foundation, through which he is researching the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on accessibility in public spaces.

**Matthew
W.F. Hanson
Scholarship
in Planning**

Mark Tennenhouse



Mark's research interests are in housing policy, real-estate development, and the role of an expanded public sector in addressing persistent housing crises. This has included evaluations of the effects and efficacy of rent controls, and more recently, the temporary use of hotels as shelter spaces during the COVID-19 pandemic. This recent work explores opportunities for the public acquisition of privately held hotels and their conversion to non-market housing. Mark grew up in the Winnipeg north-end and calls Toronto home.

**Matthew
W.F. Hanson
Scholarship
in Planning**

Neve Adams



Neve's research is focused on community development and social planning. She is interested in the role social infrastructure, and particularly public libraries, play in building resilient communities. She is also interested in policies and practices that help realize the right to housing. Lastly, Neve is becoming increasingly interested in community wealth building models and community land trusts, particularly for equity-seeking groups who have been systematically excluded from and marginalized by planning. She is grateful to be constantly learning from and being challenged by her instructors and peers in the planning program, and she hopes her research interests continue to evolve.

Matthew W.F. Hanson Scholarship in Planning

Chiyi Tam



Chiyi is a second-generation Canadian-Chinese settler raised on unceded Coast Salish lands and waters called Vancouver. Just as the shore translates between water and land, she was raised in the translation between places and culture. A descendant of political refugees, she strives to bring this lens into her planning practice and community research work. Through her MScPl at the University of Toronto, she is researching democratic processes in economic development with a focus on social enterprises and anti-displacement strategies. Her planning thesis will be dedicated to reporting on the planning implications for Canada's first legal incorporation structure for social enterprises - Community Contribution Companies. She is currently also involved in building a planning rationale towards Toronto's Downtown Chinatown Community Land Trust. She aims to reciprocate this knowledge into community.

Matthew W.F. Hanson Scholarship in Planning

Hannelore Yager



Hannelore is a second-year MScPl student whose research interests involve exploring how sustainable food systems contribute to community resiliency, with a particular interest in food security. She enjoys exploring issues in food justice and sovereignty through the lens of political ecology, social-ecological systems, and decoloniality. Her planning thesis will explore the impact of COVID-19 on the resiliency of food relief organizations operating in Toronto.

**Mitchell
Goldhar
Award for
Excellent
Achievement**

Nida-Baig Mirza



Nida-Baig Mirza is a first-year MScPI candidate. Her research interests include Indigenous/settler relations, anti-colonial planning, and sustainable urban design. She hopes to contribute to the work of social justice-oriented planning informed by anti-racist, anti-imperialist, and equity-based place-making. She is currently researching the impacts of COVID-19 on our food systems with the Feeding the City research team: <https://feedingcity.org/>.

**Peter R.
Walker
Master of
Science in
Planning
Fellowship**

Yuelin Ge



Yuelin has a B.A. in Geography and Certificate in Business from Queen's University. As an MScPI student she hopes to build on her undergraduate work and continue to research the connection between physical/mental health, planning, and housing affordability. She was previously a co-founder of KS Connect Hub and a semi-finalist for UTTAN's Student Competition: New Frontiers in Transportation. She is currently a LEED Green Associate and student member of OPPI and ULI.

**Peter R.
Walker
Master of
Science in
Planning
Fellowship**

Brooke Fleming



Brooke's prior education in Psychology and GIS, and her love of travelling and experiencing new cultures, informs her people-centered approach to planning. She is interested in understanding how physical and social urban environments can produce happy, healthy, and equitable communities. Her research focuses broadly on affordable housing, community-based planning and development, and public spaces. As such, she plans to concentrate her studies on urban planning and development, as well as social planning and policy.

**Peter R.
Walker
Master of
Science in
Planning
Fellowship**

Demetra Barbacuta



With a background in public health and understanding of the social determinants of health, Demetra's research interests center on the interaction between urban characteristics – for example, the physical and social environment – and health. With rapid urban growth, it is increasingly apparent that good planning is needed for optimal health and greater social inclusion. As such, she is interested in how planning can create healthy environments and how health can be integrated throughout the planning process, specifically in areas of land-use planning, urban design, transportation, and accessibility.

**Peter R.
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**Peter R.
Walker
Master of
Science in
Planning
Fellowship
& Planning
Scholarship**

Kayla Greenberg



Kayla Greenberg is a second-year MScPI student specializing in environmental planning. Kayla's graduate research is focused on identifying best practices for using air rights development for planning parks and public spaces in dense urban centers. In her free time, Kayla enjoys volunteering and is an advocate for access to bicycling for minority groups and improving children's literacy.

**Peter R.
Walker
Planning
Scholarship**

Anne James



Anne is a second-year MScPI student studying Urban Design and Social Planning. She is interested in tactical urbanism, arts & cultural planning, and creating more opportunities for community-centered engagement in the planning process. Anne is writing her planning thesis on the importance of integrating tactical urbanism and other forms of bottom-up processes into the current planning framework, to create more equitable and inclusive spaces which meet the needs of the communities they are serving. Anne is currently living in Toronto, where she enjoys shopping locally, making jewellery in her free time and going for walks in High Park.

**The U of T
Planning
Alumni
Graduate
Scholarship**

Joanna Ilunga-Kapinga



Joanna Ilunga-Kapinga is a second-year MScPl student in the Department of Geography and Planning at the University of Toronto. In 2019, Joanna completed her undergrad degree at the U of T and double majored in Peace, Conflict, and Justice Studies, and Political Science. Her research focuses on transit-oriented development, vertical housing, mixed-use buildings, and city accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Joanna is also very interested in the Belt and Road Initiative happening in the Global South. This interest influenced and pushed her to pursue a degree in planning. When she's not in class, Joanna is serving as the 2020-2021 Urban Land Institute Representative for the second-year cohort and as a Compliance Director for the G7 Research Group at the U of T. Joanna enjoys curating playlists on Spotify, reading, watching foreign films, interior designing, and exploring the city for the best pastries.

Thomas
Luther
Panton
Scholarship

Thank

You!
