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## 2018 Schulich Leader Scholarships awarded to promising UCalgary students

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### Maria Baclig and Rylan Marianchuk awarded for excellence in academics and STEM leadership

By **Travis Dickie, Leadership and Student Engagement**

June 14, 2018

Recognized for outstanding academic performance, volunteer work and community leadership, Maria Baclig and Rylan Marianchuk have been named as the 2018 Schulich Leader Scholarship recipients for the University of Calgary.

For seven years, the \$100 million program fund has enabled the most promising high school students to thrive in their university studies, encouraging them to become change-makers in science, technology, engineering or mathematics.

"Schulich Leader Scholarship recipients are the best and brightest STEM students in Canada," says Seymour Schulich, Hon. LLD, the founder of the program. "I truly believe that many of these students will make great contributions to society, both on a national and global scale."

Showing that she has already risen to the occasion, Maria Baclig demonstrated her aptitude for excellence in a presentation on fruit fly genotypes during a highly competitive summer research program at the University of Alberta. Dr. Sarah Hughes, PhD, recognized Baclig's work as achieving "a higher level than some third- or fourth-year undergraduate students," and was quick to recommend Baclig for this scholarship. In her recommendation letter, Hughes, professor and program facilitator, praised Baclig's careful and meticulous work ethic, trustworthy nature, and clarity of thought.

In addition to academic accolades, Baclig's role as the junior girls basketball coach and captain of the varsity women's volleyball team positions her as an important figure at Louis St. Laurent Catholic School in Edmonton, both as a team leader and as a mentor to younger students. Her teacher Carole Carby attributes her maturity, organization, and problem-solving skills as key ways she inspires and mentors those in her community. Baclig has been accepted to the Schulich School of Engineering.

As a Schulich leader, Baclig's motivation to pursue an engineering education builds on her desire to develop innovative solutions to problems that help people and their communities directly. Baclig will receive a scholarship package valued at \$100,000.

Despite entering his first official year of study in computer sciences in the University of Calgary's Faculty of Science in 2018, Rylan Marianchuk is no stranger to university-level academics. A self-taught computer programmer and app builder, Marianchuk enrolled in an undergraduate-level coding course at the University of Saskatchewan, where within the first two weeks, lecturer Ed Pokraka knew that Marianchuk would be a high achiever. Scoring 97 per cent — the highest mark in the course — Marianchuk's keen interest in coding and his in-depth questions about related topics demonstrated his extra-curricular study of challenging STEM concepts, says Pokraka.

Marianchuk is a top achiever at Humbolt Collegiate Institute in Saskatchewan, and routinely wins gold or silver medals for holding the highest average in his school year. Outside of academic performance, Marianchuk's accomplishments as a peer leader and team member on the HCI volleyball team were critical in helping the team with this year's provincial championship. In his recommendation letter, volleyball coach and vice-principal David Millette describes Marianchuk as a person who aims for excellence in all areas of his life.

Accepted to the Faculty of Science, a scholarship package valued at \$80,000 will enable Marianchuk to further pursue the study of artificial intelligence and bioinformatics — two fields poised to impact and benefit society in the near future.

To learn more about Schulich Leader Scholarships at the University of Calgary, visit the [UCalgary Awards website](#).



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