



2017 Schulich Leader: Shayna Timmerman

Past struggle with mental health motivates her to help others

SEPTEMBER 13, 2017 — There's usually a huge smile on Shayna Timmerman's face. It's hard to imagine why there wouldn't be. The graduate of Treherne Collegiate in Treherne, Manitoba is one of 50 Canadian students who received the prestigious Schulich Leader Scholarship in 2017. This fall, thanks to the Schulich Foundation, Timmerman is entering the Faculty of Science with \$80,000 to pursue her dream of becoming an optometrist.

"It was a little unbelievable at first. I was shocked I actually received it. I was also extremely honoured and super excited," says Timmerman.

Despite her modesty, Timmerman clearly embodies the promise of future success: she has been on the honour roll her entire life and has earned proficiency—top marks in her class—since the eighth grade.

"I work hard and I study a lot," says Timmerman, who also makes time for athletics. During her high school years she played hockey, badminton, was captain of the volleyball team and competed in track and field—she was named the track athlete of the year in 2017 at Treherne Collegiate.

Timmerman was also heavily involved in volunteer work in her home community. She initiated a Youth in Philanthropy program, raising funds to create a room in the local hospital, similar to Ronald McDonald House, so patients and their families can relax and spend time together. The long-term project has not been completed as of yet but has firm footing thanks to Timmerman's efforts.

But there are two sides to every story.

There was a time not long ago when smiling wasn't so easy for Timmerman. She once suffered from an eating disorder and was hospitalized because of it.

"I needed control of something so that's what I took control of," explains Timmerman. "It wasn't necessarily that I didn't like how I looked, it was just that eating was something I could control."

Battling the stigma associated with eating disorders and mental health issues has been a struggle to overcome, Timmerman says. With the help of friends and family she is moving forward and helping others has become a huge motivating factor.

"I think the inspiration to help others comes from my own struggles and knowing that if I could get through them I could use the experience to help others overcome their struggles."



With the Schulich Leader Scholarship, Timmerman is on the path to do just that. Her ultimate goal is to provide optometric services to

with the Schulich Leader Scholarship, Zimmerman is on the path to do just that. Her ultimate goal is to provide optic services to disadvantaged populations in Canada and abroad.

“Helping and giving back inspires me. There are people that have done really cool things to change the world. I want to be able to do that too. Even if it’s just one person. I want to help or change somebody’s life.”

JACK RACH

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