



ALEX KITT, SCHULICH LEADER SCHOLAR

## Player 1, Schulich Leader Alex Kitt

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Alex Kitt won't admit how much time he spends playing video games, but it's a lot, and it's paid off.

"Ever since I got my first Lego set as a little kid, I've been interested in taking things apart to figure out how they work, and ever since I got a Game Boy Advance I've loved to play video games. I've wanted to put these passions together and make video games for as long as I can remember," he says.

In Grade 4 he tried to make a video game but quickly realized it required more math skills than he had. But now, wiser, armed with a calculator and supported by a Schulich Leader Scholarship, the first-year computer science student is about to embark on his dream journey.

Kitt is one of two first-year University of Manitoba students who received [Schulich Leader Scholarship in 2018](#). A graduate of Dakota Collegiate, Kitt began his studies this fall in the Faculty of Science and was awarded an \$80,000 entrance scholarship from the Schulich Foundation. It's a remarkable achievement considering how much of his free time has been spent volunteering. Kitt volunteered for a lot of activities throughout high school, such as assembling care packages during the winter holidays. And when he wasn't volunteering, he was playing video games, of course.

"In high school I joined a whole bunch of clubs ... I just joined initiatives for the fun of doing it, not for any reward. Then I realized when I applied for this scholarship that I had this past record of volunteerism," the Faculty of Science student says.

Not only is Kitt generous with his time, he is also gifted academically. When he was a student at Dakota Collegiate his computer science teacher, Mr. Scott, recognized Kitt's passion and talents and guided Kitt to something tangible.

"Mr. Scott took my interest in computers, which was a passing thing, and turned it into something I could do full time and make a living off of. It was eye-opening."

In 2017, Kitt and three others created an original video game. Now, Kitt wants to mature his passion by developing assistive technologies to help others. Perhaps he'll one day help Zahra Moussavi's lab [further develop](#) a virtual world that helps detect early-onset dementia.

"What I really appreciate about the Schulich Leader Scholarship is the freedom it gives. It represents freedom to choose my path without worrying about finances. I don't have to worry about my tuition. If computer science isn't for me, I can still change paths. It's freedom to do what I love," he says.

"Many of the people who get these scholarships have big plans. And so this scholarship is actively making the world a better place because it's allowing these ambitious kids to pursue their dreams."

**ABOUT SCHULICH LEADER SCHOLARSHIPS CANADA**

*Schulich Leader Scholarships are prestigious entrance scholarships awarded to 50 high school graduates enrolling in a Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM) undergraduate program at 20 partner universities in Canada. Each year, every high school in Canada can submit one Schulich Leader Nominee based on academic excellence in STEM, entrepreneurial leadership and financial need.*

*Recognizing the increasing importance and impact that STEM disciplines will have on the prosperity of future generations, businessman and philanthropist Seymour Schulich established this \$100 million scholarship fund in 2012 to encourage our best and brightest students to become the next pioneers of global scientific research and innovation.*

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