

Schulich leaders

First-year students awarded \$180,000 in STEM scholarships

Student Life

Sept. 7, 2017

B Y A U R A B A R R O N

Two first-year students at Memorial University have been named 2017 recipients of Schulich Leader Scholarships.

This year, there were more than 1,300 Schulich Leader Nominees from across Canada vying for 50 scholarships, valued at up to \$100,000 each. Created in 2011 by Canadian business leader and philanthropist Seymour Schulich, this annual scholarship program encourages promising high school graduates to embrace STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) disciplines in their studies and future careers.

Since its inception, 270 students have received this scholarship.

Zack Rooney

Zack Rooney is the recipient of an award valued at \$100,000. A graduate of Lockview High School in Fall River, N.S., Mr. Rooney comes to Memorial's Grenfell Campus with plans to achieve a bachelor of engineering degree and is thrilled to begin his studies at Memorial with the Schulich scholarship.



Zack Rooney

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"I'm attending Grenfell Campus for my first year because of the smaller class sizes and it is very close to my favourite ski hill, Marble Mountain," said Mr. Rooney.

"I've always had a soft spot for Newfoundland because my grandparents live in Twillingate. Every time I go to Newfoundland, I am always astounded by how nice the people are. I cannot wait to be able to live there this year! I am also looking forward to being challenged in my academics and to learn about a topic that I'm very interested in."

Mr. Rooney says it was difficult to believe the news that he won the scholarship at first.

"My first thought was that the email was a fake and my friends were playing a joke on me," said Mr. Rooney. "I had told my mom that I won the scholarship, but didn't tell my friends until I

had more proof."

Jessica Blatta

Jessica Blatta, the recipient of an award valued at \$80,000, also found the news surprising and unbelievable.

“I had to read the letter a couple times before it sunk in,” said Ms. Blatta. “After that, I felt extremely happy and grateful. I also feel like this scholarship has taken away a lot of stress.”



Jessica Blatta

PHOTO: SUBMITTED

Ms. Blatta is a graduate of Nelson McIntyre Collegiate in Winnipeg, Man., and comes to Memorial’s St. John’s campus with plans to pursue a bachelor of science degree with a focus on biochemistry and cell biology. Ms. Blatta says she chose Memorial because of her experience on campus when she was part of the 2016 [SHAD](#) program.

“I fell in love with the school and knew that I had to come back,” said Ms. Blatta. “I’m really looking forward to trying new things and meeting new people!”

For more information on the Schulich Leader Scholarship program, please visit [here](#).



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