

Natalie Linklater awarded Adrian D.C. Chan Award for Volunteer and Community Service

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It was a discussion about ethics in engineering that got Natalie Linklater thinking about her obligation to her community. She hasn't stopped since.

"I've learned that I strongly believe in education and engaging primary and high school students with fun, hands-on activities," she says. "Hands-on science and engineering activities can instill curiosity in a child."

Linklater's work on a number of youth outreach initiatives including Go Eng Girl, which engages girls in grades 7 to 10 to explore their potential in engineering as well as Girl Guide Engineering Badge and Pathfinders STEM Badge days is now being recognized. She has been named the third recipient of the Adrian D.C. Chan Award for Volunteer and Community Service.

The award was created by Chan, an associate professor in the Department of Systems and Computer Engineering, to recognize community contributions by Carleton engineering students. Besides maintaining high marks, recipients must display excellent volunteerism outside the classroom.

Natalie has also made significant contribution to the engineering community through her role as the co-chair of CU-WISE (Women in Science and Engineering). Under her leadership, the program has delivered new initiatives as well as revamped old ones. These include programs like: Women in Research which allows high school girls to meet Carleton female researchers in science and engineering and Discover WISE event which brings in high school girls to explore the science and engineering labs around the Carleton campus.

She has also volunteered for recruitment events (March Break, CU Day, Parents' Evening, etc.) organized by the Faculty of Engineering & Design and the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department and spent many weekends and evenings setting up and running lab demonstrations and showcasing teaching and research to future students and parents.

"I've learnt that providing strong female role models to elementary and high school age girls can give them the confidence to stick with math and science and hopefully lead to closing the gender disparity in engineering."

Throughout her time at Carleton, Natalie has spent many hours trying to ensure that what she does now leaves a lasting impact.

"Volunteering has taught me to stop lamenting about the problems I see and take action towards making positive changes in society," she says.

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