

Two Students Recognized with Adrian Chan Award for Volunteer and Community Service

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It is a first in its eight-year history that more than one deserving student from the research-intensive Faculty of Engineering and Design has been recognized with the Adrian D.C. Chan Award for Volunteer and Community Service.

“This is the first time we have two recipients, which speaks highly of the number of outstanding engineering students we have at Carleton,” says Chan, professor in the Department of Systems and Computer Engineering. “These students have demonstrated leadership and high levels of engagement, actively helping to build and sustain strong and thriving communities.”

Created by Chan in 2012, the award looks beyond the classroom to recognize voluntary involvement and community engagement at Carleton and in the community. The award is open to undergraduate and graduate engineering students. Winners receive a letter of congratulations and a \$500 prize.

“Establishing this award is my small way of demonstrating my appreciation for the service they have done already and the incredible things they will do in their future,” says Chan.

Lifting Up the Next Generation of Engineering Innovators

One of this year’s winners is Kyra Bloomfield, a fourth-year undergraduate student studying Biomedical and Electrical Engineering. Her recent roles have included serving as the president of the Carleton University Biomedical Engineering Society (CUBES), as well as the general manager for Leonardo’s Lounge – a social spot and convenience store for Carleton engineering students.

Bloomfield has been engaged in the engineering community since her early days at Carleton.

“In my first year, I took on the role of first-year rep to try and get my fellow first-years involved in all the activities that CUBES was planning,” says Bloomfield. “I soon saw how amazing this society was and ran for vice-president social the following two years.”

“With this role, I got to learn how to run events and got to connect with many students in biomedical engineering.”



Kyra Bloomfield.

Helping to lift up the next generation of engineering innovators is important to Bloomfield. She volunteered with [Go ENG Girl](#) and spent her co-op term as an instructor with [Virtual Ventures](#). Following the four-month co-op, she continued as the program co-ordinator for the award-winning engineering outreach program.

Bloomfield is dedicated to promoting STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) fields to young students.

“Starting from a young age, children get to choose if they want to take extra science courses or not,” she says. “We want girls and boys to want to take them.”

She is cognizant of her ability to be a role model to young girls interested in pursuing an education in STEM.

“When I was younger, I never pictured myself in engineering since I never saw a female in the field,” says Bloomfield. “I love getting to showcase STEM to the younger generation so they have someone to look up to.”

Going Beyond Technical Classroom Training

The second award recipient, Rafid Dewan, was also committed to service from the start. While still in his first year, Dewan served as the student ambassador for the faculty, as well as director of the Global Engineering Youth Summit for [Engineers Without Borders Carleton](#).

It was in his first year that he joined the Carleton IEEE Carleton Student Branch– a pivotal choice.

Once he got involved in campus activities, Dewan says he realized that his university experience could go beyond technical classroom training and presented an opportunity to grow as a person and build leadership experience.

“I realized I really enjoyed doing everything I did,” says Dewan, reflecting on his choice to become engaged in the community early on in his education. “I think this is the best decision I ever made.”

The second-year undergraduate Software Engineering student has served as a team member for the Integrated Autonomous Vehicle (IAV) design team, social director of the IEEE Carleton Student Branch and patronage lead for IEEE Student Professional Awareness Conference (SPAC) committee.



Rafid Dewan. Photo by Aarthi Ganesh Photography

As director of logistics for cuHacking, Dewan was responsible for ensuring everything from venue organizations to day-of activities were managed and delegated properly. No small task, but well worth the effort.

“I’m really happy about the turnout this year because we had about 400 people at one point,” says Dewan. “I’m really proud to say that we are actually one of the largest hackathons in Ontario right now.”

Being involved allowed Dewan to learn from upper-year students. He especially credits

mentors Joyce Ibrahim, chair of the IEEE's Carleton student branch; Irusha Vidanamadura, former chair; and Federico Naranjo, co-lead of cuHacking, for helping to guide him in his early years at Carleton.

With a few more years ahead of him, Dewan looks forward to assuming more leadership roles at Carleton and paying forward the mentorship that he received.

"I am really motivated by helping out the whole community," says Dewan. "I love to see when students learn about different new technologies and helping them get the most out of university."

For engineering students who might want to become more involved on campus, but not know where to start, the award winners stressed the importance of checking in and engaging with the community.

"Ask around about the amazing opportunities the engineering community has to offer," says Bloomfield. "There are so many different things to be a part of, including stream societies, Leo's Lounge or design teams.

"At the start of each semester, there are usually EXPOs so take a look around and see what interests you."