

## 2018 CFN Summer Student Award Recipients



Canadian  
Frailty  
Network

Réseau canadien  
des soins aux  
personnes fragilisées

A crucial part of our Canadian Frailty Network's mandate is to develop the next generation of Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP) – the scientists, clinicians and health and social services professionals that will improve care for older adults living with frailty. [CFN's Training Program](#) has been designed to meet this mandate, and for undergraduate students offers an interdisciplinary, experiential program in partnership with member institutions and partners across the country. In New Brunswick, the competition was presented in collaboration with the [New Brunswick Health Research Foundation \(NBHRF\)](#), who funded two students from New Brunswick (NB). The 13 students in our sixth annual cohort represent seven disciplines at nine Host Institutions in five provinces.



**Gauhar Ali**  
**Supervisor: Vickie Baracos**  
**University of Alberta**

Gauhar Ali is pursuing a BSc Honors in Immunology and Infection at the University of Alberta.

He is passionate about research, particularly in the field of oncology and serves as a volunteer at the Cross Cancer Institute where he has one-on-one conversations with in-patients of various socio-economic backgrounds, many of whom are frail and elderly. Gauhar's community involvement include the Palliative Unit at the Edmonton General Continuing Care Centre, Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation and Canadian Blood Services. Gauhar has been involved with organizations including Free the Children and Hope for Malawi, which strive to improve the quality of life of individuals living in parts of Rural China, Sierra Leone and Ghana. Gauhar is an advocate for the betterment of the quality of life of vulnerable populations, including elderly individuals suffering from sarcopenia. He believes that this can be accomplished through research and identification of underlying mechanisms which contribute to muscle wasting through innovation, advancement and implementation of medical technologies.



**Giulia Coletta**  
**Supervisor: Janet Pritchard**  
**McMaster University**

Giulia Coletta has just completed her final year of the Honours Life Sciences program at McMaster University.

During her undergraduate studies, Giulia volunteered with many organizations including McMasters Physical Activity Center of Excellence (PACE) where she assisted older community members with their workout programs. Giulia then pursued her undergraduate thesis in her fourth year of the program. Under the supervision of Dr. Janet Pritchard, she assessed the impact of muscle health nutrients on the aging population. Giulia aspires to continue her education and complete a master's degree conducting research on aging to improve health care for older adults.



**Michael Connolly**  
**Supervisor: Keith Brunt**  
**Dalhousie University**

Michael Connolly is a third-year student currently pursuing his Bachelor of Science, Medical Science, at Dalhousie University, and intends to enter the Honours program in his fourth year.

In 2017, Michael began his research career at Dalhousie Medical School New Brunswick under the supervision of Dr. Keith Brunt, investigating heart attack conditions in cardiac cells. He was later able to take this research and present the project and its results at a New Brunswick Health Research Conference poster competition. At the competition,

Michael won the undergraduate division while competing against senior Honours students. Michael is a young aspiring researcher who has displayed an aptitude for research during his short time in the realm of academia and will continue to develop skills in the lab. Supported by the Canadian Frailty Network, Michael is excited to work towards improving patient outcomes for those experiencing frailty as well as, advancing quality during end-of-life care.



**Tim D'Aoust**  
**Supervisor: Ana Johnson**  
**Queen's University**

Tim D'Aoust has just completed his four-year undergraduate degree from Queen's University with a major in Life science and minor in Economics.

During his 4<sup>th</sup> year he worked closely with Dr. Ana Johnson evaluating the Health Links program in Ontario. This work has inspired him to continue work with Dr. Johnson in developing a comorbidity and frailty index for cardiac surgery patients to predict resource utilization and health expenditures. He is eager to contribute to improving health care for the elderly through this project. In the following year, Tim plans to gain enriching experiences through health research and traveling abroad before pursuing graduate studies.



**Michael Elfassy**  
**Supervisor: Laveena Munshi**  
**Sinai Health System**

Michael Elfassy has completed his second-year as a medical student at the University of Toronto.

Prior to medical school, he completed his Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Kinesiology and Health Science at York University, followed by a Master of Science in Global Health at McMaster University. Ultimately, he is working towards becoming an academic physician combining his interests in patient care with medical research and education. Michael's research focuses on frailty and critical care outcomes, medical education and global health. He is passionate about integrative geriatric care and using holistic approaches to solve complex medical problems. His CFN research aims to elucidate a practical tool to objectively quantify an aspect of frailty to prognosticate and inform treatment in oncologic patients with critical illness. In his spare time, he enjoys spending time with his friends and family, and cheering on his beloved Blue Jays.



**Anna Eufemia**  
**Supervisor: Jonathan Afilalo**  
**Jewish General Hospital**

Anna Eufemia is a second-year undergraduate student at McGill University pursuing a Bachelor of Science in the Department of Pharmacology and Therapeutics.

Since she began volunteering at a centre d'hébergement et de soins de longue durée (CHSLD), she has become passionate about caring for frail and elderly people and would like to translate this passion to a medical career. When she is not busy with her studies, Anna can be found going for walks around her neighborhood, swimming at a local pool, or sitting under a tree with her nose in a book.



**Karl Grewal**  
**Supervisor: Stuart MacDonald**  
**University of Victoria**

Karl Grewal is a 5th year undergraduate student pursuing a combined major in Biology and Psychology at the University of Victoria.

He is also a research assistant at the Voices in Motion Data Collection Site in Victoria, having the opportunity to work closely with older adults in varying stages of Alzheimer's disease (AD) to better understand the disease's impact using a comprehensive set of surveys, physical measurements and cognitive testing. He also volunteers as a research assistant in various biology and psychology labs where he has aided investigations pertaining to the understanding of risk and reward, as well as retinal circuitry. He recently presented a poster at this year's International Neuropsychological Society meeting and has published a manuscript in the Journal of Intelligence, both investigating a new way to examine risk of AD using gait. Karl is dedicated and passionate about research that improves the lives of people, wishing to build skills that can be used to better understand and address frailty.



**Hannah Leaker**  
**Supervisor: Jayna Holroyd-Leduc**  
**University of Calgary**

Hannah Leaker has completed her second year of a bachelor's degree in nursing at the University of Calgary.

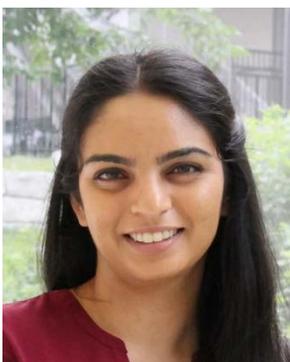
Through her studies and volunteer work, Hannah has developed an interest in senior's health and plans to pursue a career in gerontological nursing once she completes her undergraduate studies. Hannah is passionate about nursing and looks forward to becoming a registered nurse.



**Shyane McKay**  
**Supervisor: Rose McCloskey**  
**University of New Brunswick**

Shyane McKay is a third-year nursing student who has also achieved her Bachelor of Science with a major in psychology at the University of New Brunswick (UNB).

Medical research is one of her interests, and she is currently working as a research assistant for both UNB and Horizon Health Network. Shyane is passionate about improving the lives of geriatric patients through continued research in the field of geriatric medicine. Shyane is an active participant in the nursing society at UNB and has been class representative for the past three years. Shyane enjoys volunteering in the community and spending time with friends and family.



**Nishila Mehta**  
**Supervisor: Sangeeta Mehta**  
**Sinai Health System**

Nishila Mehta is a third-year Global Health student at York University.

She is interested in health equity, aging, and healthcare technology. Her interest in aging began in grade 12, when she had the opportunity to conduct Alzheimer's disease research at the University of Toronto. Since then, she has furthered her interest through research conducted in both hospital and university settings in areas including dance therapy for Parkinson's disease, optimizing medication use in the elderly, and most recently using machine-learning methods to detect patterns of adverse drug effects from social media. In the future, Nishila hopes to bridge the worlds of health technology and healthy aging in a career as a clinician-investigator. She looks forward to applying her work on optimizing prescribing in a clinical setting at Mount Sinai Hospital this summer.



**Danielle O'Reilly**  
**Supervisor: Emily Read**  
**University of New Brunswick**

Danielle O'Reilly is a third-year Bachelor of Nursing student at the University of New Brunswick.

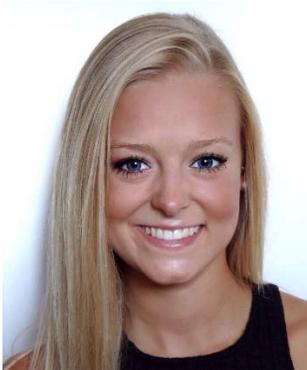
She became passionate about the geriatric field since her acceptance into the nursing program. From working with the elderly at two different nursing homes, Danielle's interest in this population has only grown. Danielle is committed to becoming a nurse that will improve the quality of life for the elderly population. Danielle values the importance of caring for the caregivers involved in geriatric care, and how best practice reflects best outcomes. She is motivated and inspired to continue on her path in becoming a Registered Nurse.



**Karen Rees-Milton**  
**Supervisor: Rachel Holden**  
**Queen's University**

Karen Rees-Milton is a third-year student in the Computer Programmer Analyst course at St. Lawrence College.

Karen recently returned to school because she felt that medical research needed skilled computer programmers to deal with the collection and analysis of medical research data. She began her post-secondary studies at the University of Wales College of Cardiff, UK, where she obtained a First Class Honours degree in Biochemistry, followed by a PhD in Biochemistry from the University of Southampton, UK, and post-doctoral studies in enzyme kinetics in the Department of Biochemistry at Queen's University. She undertook preclinical laboratory Research Associate positions in the Departments of Pharmacology and the School of Medicine at Queen's studying hypertension then osteoporosis, before transitioning to clinical research with CaMos (Canadian Multicentre Osteoporosis Study).



**Grace Werner**  
**Supervisor: Carole Estabrooks**  
**University of Alberta**

Grace Werner will enter the third year of her Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

She has a heart for all age groups and populations and is thinking of pursuing a career as a Nurse Practitioner. This is her first experience with research and she is very excited about the opportunity to gain skills and understanding in the field. She is a varsity athlete for the University of Alberta on the Panda's Track and Field Team and is passionate about learning and people.



**Canadian  
Frailty  
Network**



**NCE RCE**