

Description of the Munroe-Blum Award for Outstanding Contribution to Social Work

In recognition of Principal Munroe-Blum's outstanding contribution to social work education and research during her appointment as Principal of McGill University, the School has established an award in her name to be given to a graduate social work student who best demonstrates exceptional achievement in introducing innovative social work practice; academic excellence; and a positive record of mentorship. The applications for the award were reviewed by a committee comprised of three faculty members. Competition was intense as several candidates were involved in highly relevant projects and had meritorious academic record. The committee selected one of our PhD students, Ms Shawn-Renee Hordyk, for this award. The committee was impressed by the leadership she has demonstrated in the implementation of an innovative intervention in the community; by her high academic achievement; and by her outstanding record of mentorship at the School and beyond.

Shawn Renee initiated the program 'Familles en Nature' while a PhD candidate in the school of social work. Building on 18 years of practice experience and existing research, she invited four Montreal community organizations to develop an outdoor program enhancing family and community relationships. Recognizing that stigma or inadequate information concerning social services prevent many newcomer families from reaching out in times of need, this program was designed to overcome these barriers. 'Familles en Nature' facilitates caregiver-child interactions, provides a context for interfamilial role modelling, and builds community connection, by engaging fathers and mothers, children and adolescent in outdoor activities. Shawn Renee currently coordinates the program in a volunteer capacity and has initiated research engaging colleagues at UQAM. Her long-term goals include looking for a stable source of funding and disseminating knowledge in the academic community. Aside, Shawn-Renee has maintained an excellent CGPA in our program (3.9) and has been a very successful instructor for our undergraduate students as revealed by her outstanding course evaluations and the incredibly positive feedback shared by some of our faculty who co-taught with her. She has delivered an important number of talks to community-based workers and is involved in several roundtables and committees, which allow her to engage with local community organizations responsible for the care of immigrant families in Montreal.