



**AYDEN WATT**, Class of 2030

Education: HonBSc (Physiology), MSc (Concentration in Surgical Innovation), McGill University

Supervisor(s): To be determined

Dpt: To be determined

Work location: To be determined

Project: To be determined

Selected Award(s): Mitacs Accelerate (x2)

Research Description:

My work generally focuses on the integration and application of technology into medicine. Over the years, this has most notably taken the form of clinical validation studies for AI diagnostic tools, development of novel AI tools and development of a high-fidelity laparoscopic surgical simulator. As a first-year student the subject of my PhD is yet to be decided but will follow in the footsteps of my previous work.

Why did you decide to pursue both MDCM and PhD degrees? What are your career aspirations?

I decided to pursue the joint program to both satisfy my childhood dream to pursue a career in medicine and a recently developed passion for research and innovation. I firmly believe that the future of medicine lies in the careful integration of technology into our daily practices, and the McGill MDCM/PhD program offered a fantastic opportunity to place myself at the cutting edge of medical research in Canada. There will be a strong need in the future for jointly trained individuals to serve as the interface between technology, research, and medicine; with the combined MDCM/PhD program, I believe I will be uniquely positioned to contribute to the “next generation” of medical practices and tools. Ultimately, my goal as a physician-scientist will be to make a lasting contribution to the evolution of medical practice.

Why did you choose to study at McGill University?

As the number one ranked Canadian University, there is no better place to study! I was born and raised in Montreal and maintain that it's an amazing city to live and study in. McGill also fosters a culture of excellence, with many internationally recognized researchers and clinicians, making it a perfect place to pursue the joint MDCM/PhD program!

What aspect of the MD-PhD program do you enjoy the most or are looking forward to?

I am looking forward to the whole experience! The MDCM/PhD program is a unique and challenging adventure, and I'm very excited to watch myself and my fellow students as we navigate our way through the 8 years. I also think that there will be some fascinating and unexpected opportunities and collaborations throughout our time here, so I can't wait to see what happens!

What advice do you have for incoming MDCM-PhD students?

As an incoming student, the best advice I have is to follow your passion! Particularly in research and medicine, some of the most interesting collaborations come from hobbies or passion projects.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I love to stay active and go to the gym or spend time biking around Mount Royal! Conversely, sometimes I just want to stay home and play video games with friends or practice drone racing on a simulator.