



**ELLA SAHLAS**, Class of 2029

Education: HonBSc (Neuroscience), McGill University

Supervisor(s): Boris Bernhardt, Birgit Frauscher

Dpt: Neurology and Neurosurgery

Work location: McConnell Brain Imaging Centre (BIC), The Neuro (Montreal Neurological Institute-Hospital)

Project: Towards non-invasive neurophysiology and neuroimaging biomarkers for epilepsy

Selected awards: Medical Student Research Scholarship from the American Academy of Neurology, Greville Smith Scholarship, NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Award

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

I decided to pursue both MDCM and PhD degrees to develop a combination of skills that will support navigating the interface of clinical practice and research. In my career, I hope to help advance the care of neurology patients and to contribute to research and its translation to patient care.

Why did you choose to study at McGill University?

Choosing to study at McGill was compelling because the program fosters an environment of excellence and support and because my intended graduate research uses a combination of neuroimaging and neurophysiology methods available at the Montreal Neurological Institute. Throughout my time at McGill, I have received exceptional mentorship and benefited from the expertise of leaders in my field of study. Montreal's history in neuroscience research and innovation also motivated my decision.

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

What I enjoy most about the program is the opportunity to integrate medical school and graduate research in neuroscience while surrounded by wonderful and supportive colleagues.

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

While I am still a junior student in the program, I would tell my younger self to continue nurturing my interest and enthusiasm towards neuroscience! I would also say that there is much to learn from listening to patients, classmates, professors, and mentors of different backgrounds.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

In my spare time, I like running long distances and cycling up hills. Music and rereading books by Oliver Sacks are also some of my favourite hobbies!