There are two Ethel Benjamin Scholarship winners in 2015. The recipients of this year’s New Zealand Law Foundation award are Stephanie Thompson and Rebecca Thomson.

**Stephanie Thompson** graduated from Auckland University with an LLB (Hons) and a BA, obtaining the Dean’s Academic Excellence Award for Law and a Senior Scholar Award from the Faculty of Arts.

At the time of this award she was working as a junior barrister at Bankside Chambers in Auckland, and tutoring at the Auckland University Law Faculty, teaching law and society, legal method and equity. In 2014 Stephanie was the Junior Barrister Representative on the New Zealand Bar Association Council.

Stephanie plans to study towards an LLM at Cambridge University in 2016. Her courses will focus on international trade and foreign direct investment. Her dissertation will be entitled *Taking Account of Investor Fault in International Treaty Arbitration*.

Stephanie explains that investment treaties originated as instruments to protect investors, but increasingly states are questioning whether the balance has moved too far in favour of investors. The issue is particularly relevant to New Zealand, as we have witnessed widespread public protests against entering the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a proposed investment treaty with 11 states, including Australia, Canada, Japan, Singapore and the United States.

In her research, Stephanie plans to investigate the theoretical principles underpinning investor fault doctrines such as contributory negligence, and demonstrate why at a normative level it is appropriate for tribunals to apply them. She plans to draw together instances in which tribunals have already applied these doctrines. The final stage of her research will be to develop a clear framework for addressing investor fault.

Information about **Rebecca Thomson**, the other 2015 winner of this scholarship, is available on the Law Foundation’s web site.

The Ethel Benjamin scholarship honours New Zealand’s first woman barrister and solicitor, who was admitted to the bar in 1897. Since the centenary of this event, the Law Foundation has awarded this scholarship annually to outstanding New Zealand women law graduates for post-graduate study. The award is worth up to $50,000 and details of the award and previous winners can be found on the Ethel Benjamin Scholarship page of the Foundation’s website.