There are three winners of the 2018 New Zealand Law Foundation Ethel Benjamin Scholarship, an award that supports postgraduate research in law that will protect and promote the legal interests of the New Zealand public.

This year’s recipients are Kate Stone, Rez Gardi and Taylor Burgess.

Kate Stone gained a BA (Hons) in political science, before completing her LLB at Victoria University of Wellington, then went on to complete an LLM (Hons), specialising in human rights law, at Auckland University in 2015.

Kate has also been awarded a Fulbright General Graduate Award to help fund her LLM at Columbia University. She intends to study law and social change, focusing on criminal justice system reform.

Kate is currently working as Crown Counsel for the constitutional and human rights, and Treaty of Waitangi and Māori legal issues teams in the Crown law Office. Kate has advocated extensively for criminal justice reform, including co-founding the NGO JustSpeak.

She says “I intend to study the conditions necessary to support civil society to organise and mobilise in pursuit of social change and the effective use of legal tools in this area.”

“The heritage of the civil rights and other social justice movements in the US provide a unique environment within which to develop my understanding of the opportunities for, and barriers to, using the law as a tool for social change.”

Information about Taylor Burgess and Rez Gardi, the other 2018 winners of this scholarship, is available on the LawFoundation’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.