NEW ZEALAND LAW FOUNDATION
2019 ETHEL BENJAMIN SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

Harriet Farquhar
Victoria, University of Wellington

There are three winners of the 2019 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 Nichola Hodge, Harriet Farquhar and Rosalind Kós.

Harriet Farquhar gained a First Class Honors degree in Law in 2015 at the Law Faculty at Victoria University of Wellington, graduating with the Medal for Academic Excellence as the top scholar in her year. Harriet is currently working as an Assistant Crown Counsel in the Constitutional and Human Rights Team at Crown Law and was a former clerk to Justice Arnold at the Supreme Court.

In addition to this scholarship, Harriet has been awarded a William Georgetti Scholarship to help fund her LLM studies at New York University Law School. She intends to focus on human rights, constitutional and international law, in particular on issues of climate change-related displacement and migration in the Pacific region.

She says, “The Pacific faces an impending displacement crisis. The region’s low-lying island states are acutely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and are, generally speaking, poorly resourced to respond to them effectively. As a result, climate change is almost certain to result in significant movements of people in the region over the coming decades.”

“I intend to focus my research in two key areas. First, I want to explore the ways in which a regional agreement might offer a politically viable and effective response to an issue, that while a global phenomenon, is likely to be best managed by the harmonisation of state practice at a regional level. Second, I am particularly interested in what shape such an agreement should take; how it could codify and progressively develop the norms of international law relevant to averting, mitigating and addressing climate change-related displacement and migration, so as to ensure comprehensive and human rights-centric protection for those who are affected.”

Information about Nichola Hodge and Rosalind Kós, the other 2019 winners 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. Details of the award and previous winners can be found on the Ethel Benjamin Scholarship page of the Foundation’s website.