NEW ZEALAND LAW FOUNDATION
2019 ETHEL BENJAMIN SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

Nichola Hodge
University of Canterbury

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.

Nichola Hodge gained a First Class Honors degree in Law in 2017 at the University of Canterbury School of Law, graduating as the Gold Medal Scholar, top of her year.

Nichola is currently working as a solicitor at the Wellington branch of Meredith Connell and was a former clerk to Justice Glazebrook at the Supreme Court. Wishing to contribute to New Zealand’s academic and public discourse on issues, Nichola intends to continue to write articles and publish them throughout her career.

Nichola has been awarded a W M Tapp Scholarship to the University of Cambridge to help fund her LLM. She intends to focus on issues of constitutional and human rights law, particularly litigation aspects, in order to broaden her understanding of contemporary issues of social justice.

She says, “Civil rights underpin our understanding of the individual and their role within the modern state. However, when the interests of the individual and state diverge, difficult legal and political problems emerge. How, for example, do we balance the competing interests of the individual and the state and ensure that any resulting compromise is justified or even practical? As encroachments on rights become less visible, especially in the digital age, questions arise as to how we can ensure that states act in a transparent and accountable manner while preserving the interests of both the state and the individual. In a time of heightened international tension and increased national scrutiny, these questions have never been as pressing as new technologies provide states with the ability to compromise citizens’ rights on an unprecedented scale.”

Information about Harriet Farquhar 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.