



YOUNG SCHOLAR SEMINAR

AUGUST 22ND, 2015

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MASTERING SCHOLARSHIP INTERVIEWS EBOOK

Mastering Scholarship Interviews

YOUNG SCHOLAR

SHERRY WONG
WWW.YOUNG-SCHOLAR.COM

I am excited to announce that my *Mastering Scholarship Interviews* step-by-step guide is now available! In this guide, I will show you how to...

- ✓ Prepare for your interview
- ✓ Tackle popular scholarship interview questions with **sample answers**
- ✓ Avoid **common interview mistakes**
- ✓ **Enhance** your interview skills and gain confidence
- ✓ Answer the interview questions I have encountered with my **actual responses**

**For a chance at winning one of three copies,
please fill out the questionnaire!**

FARIBA KAZEMI PARSA

Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre (KWMC) Settlement Counsellor

[TOPICS COVERED]

- The Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre (KWMC)
- Library Settlement Partnerships (LSP)
- Services and beneficial information sessions that the library has to offer



JOANNE STEWART

Zonta Club of Kitchener-Waterloo Service Committee Chair

[TOPICS COVERED]

- Overview of Zonta scholarships: Young Women in Public Affairs Award and Jane M. Klausman Women in Business Scholarship
- Applications from a scholarship selection committee member's perspective





ZONTA

**CLUB OF
KITCHENER-
WATERLOO**

MEMBER OF ZONTA INTERNATIONAL

**EMPOWERING WOMEN
THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY**



**Young Women in Public Affairs Scholarship
Award**

The Awards

- Club Award/Scholarship----- \$1,000
- District Award-----\$1,000 (US)
- 5 International Recipients-----\$4,000 (US)

Who is Eligible?

- Women – age 16 – 19
- Active commitment to volunteerism
- Experience in local or student government
- Volunteer leadership achievements
- Knowledge of Zonta International and its programs
- Advocating in Zonta International's mission of advancing the status of women worldwide.

Application Requirements

- Completed Official Application (www.zonta.org)
- Verification of current enrollment by school official
- Two confidential recommendations

Selection Criteria

- Student Activities and your leadership role.
- Community Service Activities / Student Government experience or interest
- International Awareness
- Status of Women in your Country and Worldwide



**SCHULICH
LEADER
SCHOLARSHIPS**

JESSICA LOISEAU

McMaster University Schulich Leader 2015 (Science)

[TOPICS COVERED]

- Essay writing tips
- Balancing school and everyday life
- What I learned from my process of applying
- Resources for success in applications

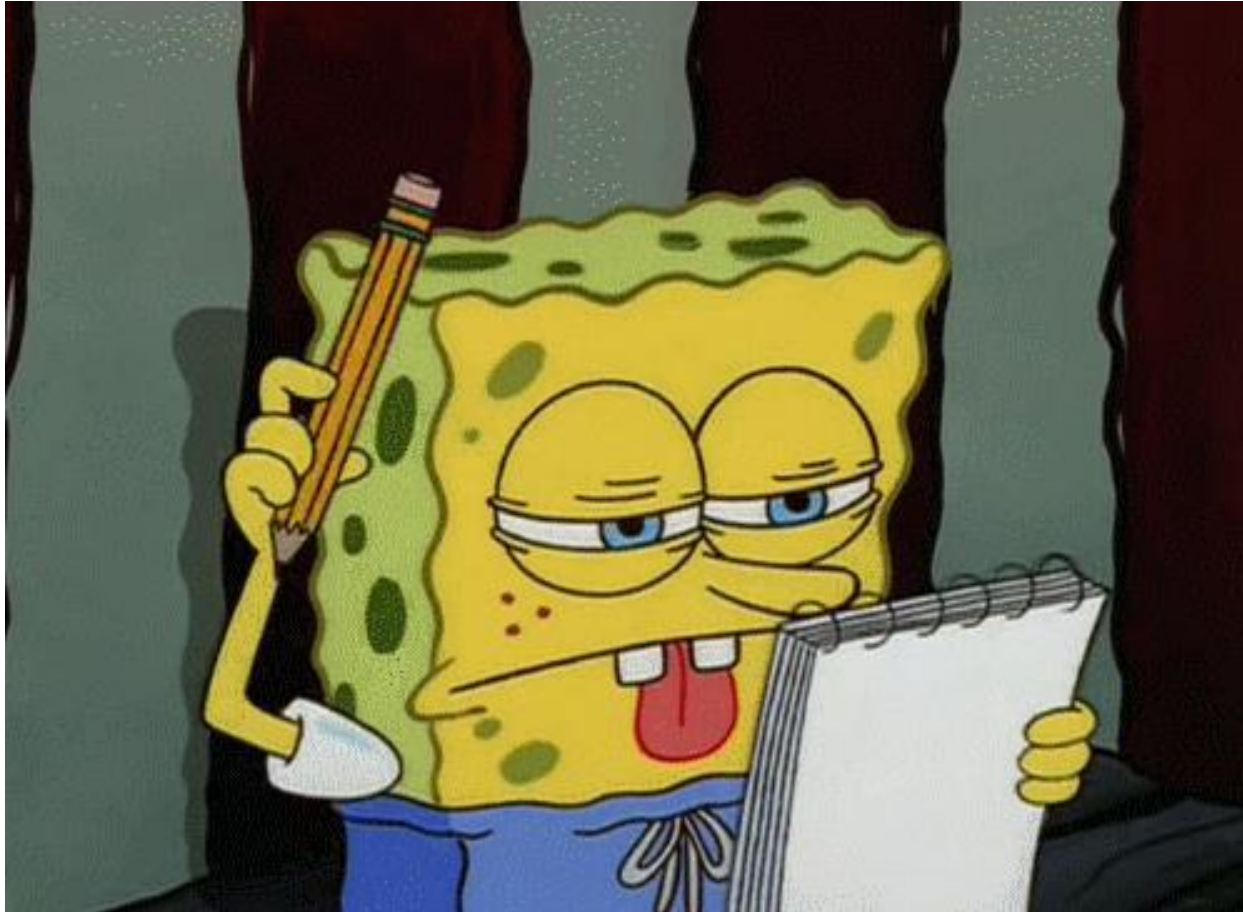


\$15 000 000

Nice to meet you!



How to ace the essay



Keep it simple!

I am also a member of Student Council, **where I work with a community of students much like myself in order to shape a school that is truly amazing.** To this day, we have raised thousands of dollars for ROCK, a local non-profit that provides free services for youth with mental health issues. I have been a leader within my student council to develop ideas that will encourage our school to be more inclusive, including planning a movie night out with our special education students so that they could have the opportunity to feel included, and to realize that their disability does not differentiate them from anyone else. I believe in celebrating our differences, because being unique is what will allow our world to become an amazing thing.

128 words

Additionally, I am a member of Student Council, **where I work with a team of incredibly bright and spirited students in order to shape a school whose reputation is one of excellence.** To date, we have raised thousands of dollars for ROCK, a local non-profit that provides free services for youth with mental health issues. I have led my student council to develop ideas that encourage our school to be more inclusive, including planning a movie night out with our special education students so that they could feel like a part of our school community. **It was so rewarding to see how happy these students felt to simply be involved.** I believe in celebrating our differences, and not judging people for them, because individuality makes our world amazing.

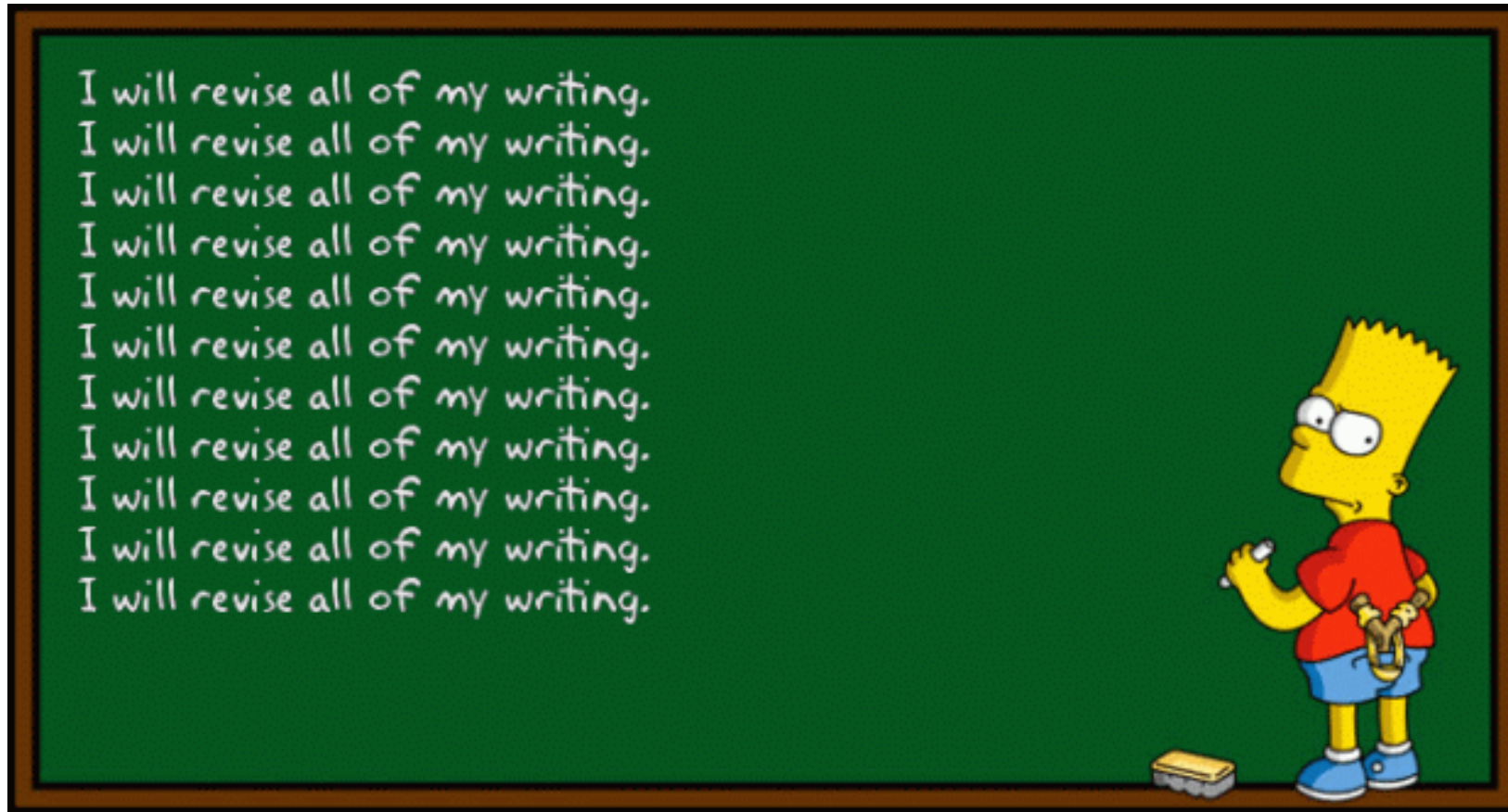
128 words

Be yourself!



- ▶ The essay is how the admissions committee will be “meeting you”, therefore make your writing like you!
- ▶ Talk about your passions, not just your successes
- ▶ You want your writing to be unique and memorable!

REVISE YOUR WORK



Ingenious Interview tips!



Plan to arrive at your interview at least
15 minutes early



DON'T SHOW UP TOO EARLY FOR YOUR
JOB INTERVIEW.

Be authentic and answer honestly - they want to know how *you* really feel!



BELIEVE IN YOURSELF!

- ▶ Look the interviewers in the eye
- ▶ Shake their hands
- ▶ Speak loud and clear!

Some things I learned...



START EARLY!

SCHOLARSHIP TITLE	VALUE	REQUIREMENTS	DEADLINE
Schulich Leader Scholarship	\$60 000 spread out over 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 1 essay on what makes me a leader- 1 essay on financial need- 1 academic transcript	February 20
Rotary Club of Burlington Academic Scholarship	\$ 3 500	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 1 letter introducing myself- 1 academic transcript	May 15

More things to consider...

- ▶ Your guidance counsellors and teachers are your greatest allies
 - ▶ Give them ample time to prepare references and transcripts
 - ▶ Work with them during the process so you can ensure they include the details you think will be useful!

Some things I want you all to know 😊

You don't have to do everything!	Create a support group	Don't be afraid to say no!
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Find the balance that works for you personally• Pick the things you are passionate about• Quality not Quantity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Friends and family are great listeners• They can help you balance your life• It's always nice to know someone is there to support you	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep your education your priority• Saying no doesn't mean "never", it means "next time"!

\$15 000 000

GRACE XU

McMaster University Bachelor of Health Sciences Candidate 2019

[TOPICS COVERED]

- Bachelor of Health Sciences (Honours) program information
- Why I chose the program
- Application process (requirements, short essays, tips, timeline, marking)





McMASTER HEALTH SCIENCES

FROM AN APPLICANT'S PERSPECTIVE

PRESENTER: GRACE XU

MYTHS AND FACTS

MYTHS:

- 1) BHSc is an automatic ticket to med school.
- 2) You have to be the best at almost everything to get into the program.

FACTS:

- 1) BHSc is incredibly diverse.
- 2) Anyone* can get into the program.

SEMI-MYTH/FACT:

Students in BHSc are vicious and over-competitive.

WHY APPLY?

1) Community

2) Group work skills

3) Balance

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

- 3 short essay questions; 1500 characters each
- Released early fall (August/September) and due in early February
 - This year:
 - 1) Use up to 1,500 characters for whatever you think is appropriate.
 - 2) If you were asked to pose a single question to a Canadian historical figure who has made a significant contribution to the welfare of Canadians whom would you choose, what question would you ask, and explain your thinking.
 - 3) Why? (Please note: This question is simply one word: Why? It is for you to interpret as you see fit.)

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Do:

- Start early.
- Edit viciously.
- Try to be original.
- Showcase unique thoughts/quirks.
- **ANSWER THE QUESTION!**

Don't:

- Wing it.
- Get attached to your writing.
- Plagiarize.
- Copy and paste your resume/humble brag/repeat things from their website.

THE MARKING PROCESS

- No rubric, only a score from 1-7
- 3 markers:
 - 2 fourth year students in BHSc
 - At least 1 faculty member

FAQs:

What if I tie with someone else?

What if my essays get marked like 6-6-3?

Are they seriously trusting fourth year students to do this?

How much of this is a 'lottery'?

JULIA WON

University of Toronto Schulich Leader 2015 (Science)

[TOPICS COVERED]

- Initial perspective of scholarships
- Deeper insight of scholarship realities
- T.I.M.B.E.R. skills
- The importance of individuality
- General advice



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO



Young Scholar Seminar



A little about me



Born in Toronto



Raised in Mississauga

A little about me



A little about me



**My new
view!**

A little about me



A little about me



My Perspective of Scholarships

Scholarship meant a full tuition:

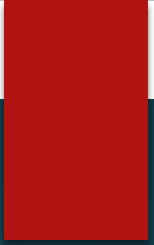
- a) Best grade in school**
- b) Gifted in sports**
- c) Something remarkable to get on the news**

Automatically granted



My Perspective of Scholarships

**“WASTE OF
TIME”**



**Don't be intimidated
or discouraged!
You can do it!**

Meaning of Scholarship

According to the Oxford Dictionary:

“A grant or payment made to support a student’s education, awarded on the basis of academic or other achievement”



Grants

Bursaries



When looking for scholarships...

**KEEP YOUR
EYES OPEN**

More information:

- Monetary values will differ
- Age requirements will vary
- Read requirements!
- Majority require you to apply
- Some are granted (entrance or graduation)

SO MUCH VAREITY

Is there a scholarship for...

- 1) Golf
- 2) Creating a dress out of tape
- 3) Creative sandwich
- 4) Taking a selfie

ALL OF THEM!



Find what suits you!

The Importance of Individuality

Apply, BUT for what
is best for you

We are all different;
YOUR STRENGTHS

Knowing your strengths

Rafael Flora - Artist



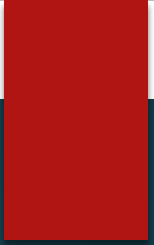
Won \$150 of scholarship funds for creating art work to reflect Remembrance Day

Knowing your strengths

Stefano Unlayao- Video Editing

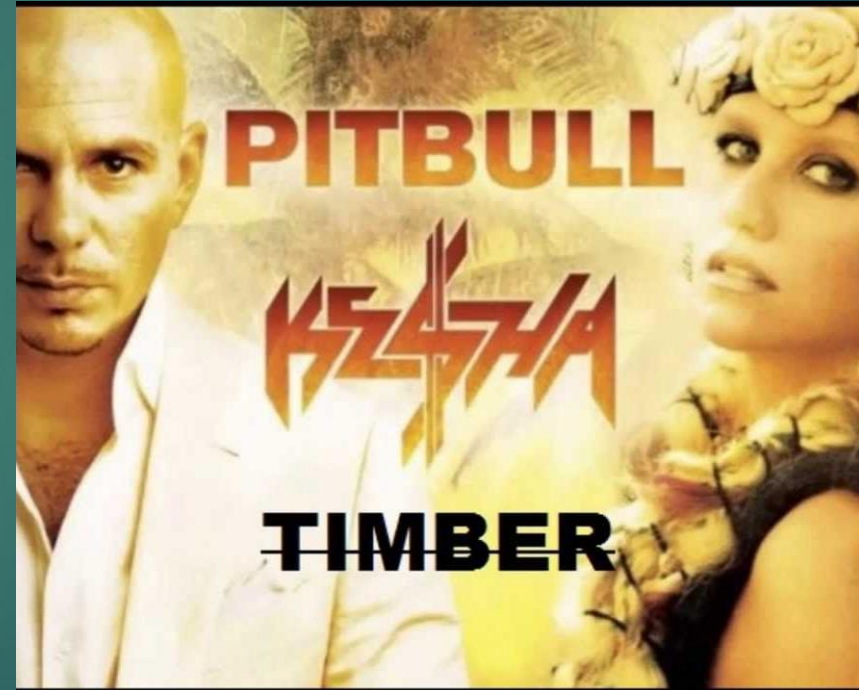


Won a \$3000 scholarship for creating a video about bollards in the community



You are
Unique!!!

T.I.M.B.E.R.



Time Management

Time is Golden!!

- Learn how to prioritize
- Sacrifices could be made
- Deadlines!

Initiative

Take the chance

- Ask questions, request references, apply for scholarships
- Independence
- Challenge yourself -> Learn about yourself
- Individuality

Maintain

Keep it up!

- Show dedication and commitment
- Continue good habits!
- Avoid “Senioritis”

Balance

“you just gotta find that balance”
-Matthew McConaughey

- Social life and school
- Happiness goes a long way
- Develop as a person
- It's ok to have fun (TIME MANAGEMENT)
- It's more important than you think

Effort

“a little effort goes a long way”

- It's makes the difference
- More rewarding than you thought
- Put your heart into applications
They can tell!
- Connected with balance

Realization

Learn to appreciate yourself

- What is best for you, what isn't
- Realize your strength and weaknesses
- Realize your limits and capabilities
- Make a meaningful difference

Other Tips

- Keep record: **START NOW**
- Make copies
- Why not try?
- Don't be discouraged
- Ask others

Time Management

Initiative

Maintain

Balance

Effort

Realization



INTERMISSION

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ANDREA WONG

Doctor of Pharmacy Candidate 2017 and Founder of Jumping Beans Program

[TOPICS COVERED]

- Accelerated Programs into Professional schools (requirements, tips and tricks)
- How to get relevant work and volunteer experience



UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO



The Big Picture

- What is the purpose of getting a scholarship?

Introduction

- Andrea Wong
- Doctor of Pharmacy Candidate at University of Waterloo (3rd year pharmacy student)
- Previously admitted into the Conditional Acceptance into Pharmacy (CAP) program
- Founder of the Jumping Beans Program
- President of the University of Waterloo Naturopathic Medicine Club
- Internal Director for the University of Waterloo Women's Centre

Accelerated Programs

- Pre-admittance to professional schools for high school students that guarantees you a spot as long as you maintain all the requirements
- Usually a limited number of students are admitted into this program
- Eg. Conditional Acceptance to Pharmacy (CAP) Program

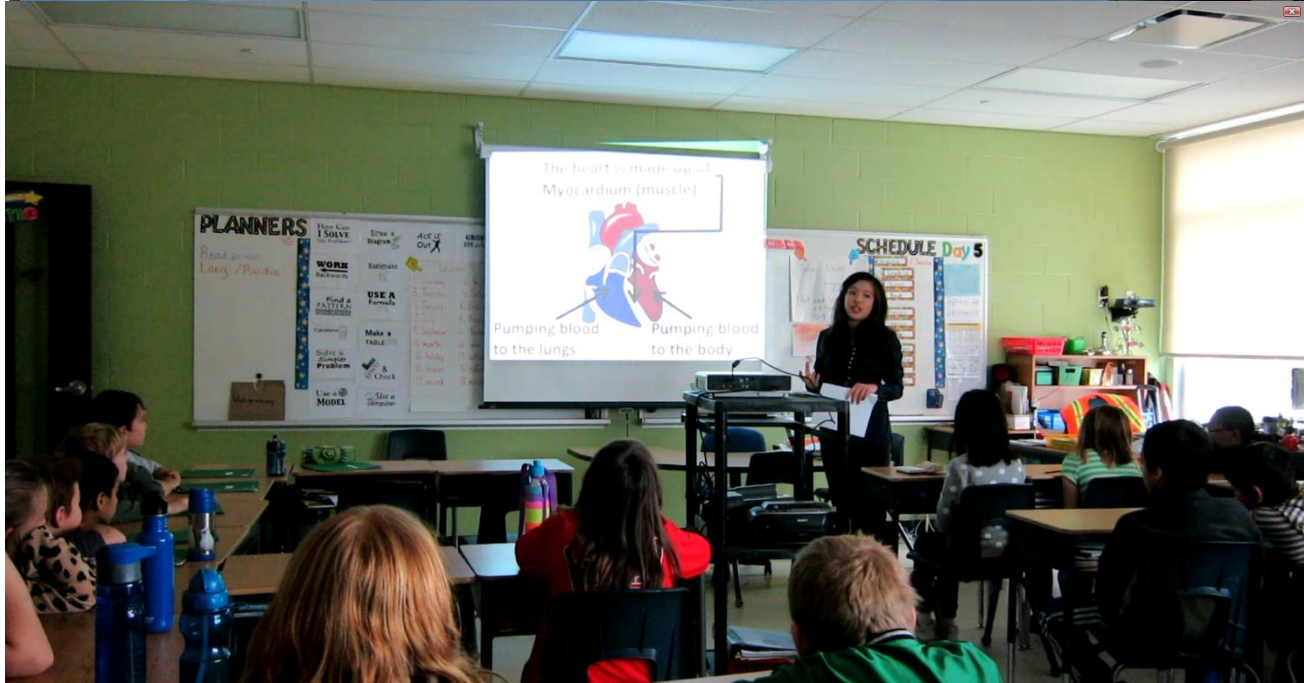
Requirements

- $\geq 90.0\%$ high school admission average, as calculated for the Faculty of Science
- Fulfill all entry requirements for admission to the Faculty of Science
- Demonstrated leadership, community involvement, and work experience
- Expression of interest in the profession of Pharmacy, via personal statement in the CAP Admission Information Form
- Two letters of reference: one academic (teacher, principal, guidance counselor); one from employer or volunteer agency
- One-on-one (or small group) interview with representative(s) of the School of Pharmacy
- Have already achieved, or are willing to pursue, 200 hours of pharmacy-related work or volunteer experience by the middle of second year of undergraduate studies at Waterloo

Jumping Beans Program

- www.jumpingbeansprogram.com
- Public health initiative designed to improve children's health by having students teach elementary students about childhood obesity and promote healthy and active lifestyles





POOJA SRIKANTH

McMaster University Schulich Leader 2014 (Engineering)

[TOPICS COVERED]

- Ingredients for success and how to be in an optimal position before grade 12
- Tips on approaching scholarship essay questions
- Effectively preparing for a scholarship interview
- What I would do differently





Young Scholar Seminar

Pooja Srikanth

August 22, 2015



Ingredients for success

How to be in an optimal position before grade 12

Keep your grades up

- *You* are the focus of your own academic success
- Foster a love of *learning*, not grades

Extra-Curricular Activities

- Join what sounds interesting to you in grades 9 and 10
- Reorganize your time in grades 11 and 12
- It's never too late!



Work and Volunteer Experience

- What interests you?
- Focus on networking



A secret ingredient

Your social life

INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESS

So why this recipe?

- Shows you are:
 - Well-rounded
 - Can manage your time
 - Driven and hardworking
 - Have **passions** that can be used to shape the world for the better



Grade 12

A More Focused Strategy

Stay Organized

- Save time during what will be a busy year
- Sign up for **yconic.ca** and set up a profile
- Set up a timeline

A Numbers Game

- Get lots of practice!
- **Young Scholar Award**
 - **\$500** scholarship
 - **October 5th** deadline – before things get busy!
 - Can request **judge feedback**

Applying for Scholarships

- References
 - Allow for lots of time
 - Provide them with the scholarship criteria
- Give yourself plenty of time
 - Answer each question to the best of your abilities

Applying for Scholarships

- Authenticity
 - How?
 - What are you passionate about?
 - Break down the question
 - Why is this important?
 - Set yourself apart from other applicants

Preparing for Scholarship Interviews

- Similar to a job interview
 - Scholarship criteria → job description
 - Your application → resume
- Ask yourself:
 - What parts of your application were intriguing?
 - What would they want to know more about?
 - Why do you feel that you deserve this scholarship?
 - Why this specific university and/or program?
- Practice answering these questions and talking about yourself

Preparing for Scholarship Interviews

- Review things that are important to you
- Dress professionally
 - What about a phone interview?
- Don't be afraid to clarify what they're asking you
- Ask your own questions
 - About the institution
 - About your interviewers
- You won't think of every question in advance – this is okay



What I Would Do Differently

Miscellaneous Tips and Tricks

Better Use of Time

- Start earlier
 - Scholarships offered to students younger than grade 12
 - Young Scholar Award
- Use summers wisely
 - More free time
 - Get yourself organized

Frequently Update Your Resume

- Save time
- Practice writing short blurbs about:
 - Activities
 - Accomplishments

Scholarship Opportunities

- Look for scholarships offered specifically to your:
 - University or college
 - Degree, faculty, or program
 - Gender
 - Ethnic minority

Other Tips

- Talk to and learn from previous scholarship winners
- Don't stop applying once you graduate!

Final Thoughts

- Stay organized and search for opportunities
- Don't procrastinate!
 - Writing answers
 - Asking for references
- Get lots of practice
- Break down each question
- Get comfortable talking about yourself

SHERRY WONG

York University Schulich Leader 2014 (Science) and Founder of Young Scholar

[TOPICS COVERED]

- Personal experience and real-life stories
- Practical tips
- Handling rejection and set-backs



Jun 11, 2014

Having qualified for \$130,000 in scholarships, Wong shares her secret to success

By Lisa Rutledge

CAMBRIDGE - Stellar grades are required to be considered for a scholarship, but it takes a different kind of smarts to actually snag one, says a local scholarship winner.

That's the sage advice of Sherry Wong, who was awarded a prestigious Schulich Leader Scholarship to use toward her science studies at York University starting this September, an academic prize worth a hefty \$60,000.

In fact, the Grade 12 Monsignor Doyle Catholic Secondary student applied to and qualified for a whopping \$130,000 in national, provincial and local scholarships. She's just 17 years old.

Wong did not end up accepting all of the scholarships – having to forfeit several when she received the Schulich Leader prize – but considers herself richer for the experience. And the enthusiastic teen hopes to share the profits of her new-found knowledge to help other students become schooled in the art of writing scholarship applications and essays.

Wong is organizing a Young Scholar fundraising lunch and learn on Saturday, June 21 to offer advice on how to hunt down available scholarships, identify selection criteria being sought on each application and how to craft an essay so people sell themselves on paper.

In some cases, it's not just students who achieve the highest marks who win scholarships, explained Wong.

Youths who can paint an extraordinary self-portrait of their extra-curricular and leadership experiences become standouts compared against those who can only point to perfect test scores.

"How can you write your essay in a way that reflects your leadership experience?" she said, citing an example of what sets a good essay apart from the pack.

The Young Scholar information event will be led by Wong and a group of up to 10 advisers who will share tips on everything from how to write a standout essay to how to best manage time to avoid squeezing applications into a short time period.

Among the
Women
Richards
Mark
An



CBC

radio one



FM 98.5
CKWR
Canada's First Community Radio Station

Jun 25, 2014

Students get a lesson on scholarships

Waterloo Region Record
by Liz Monteiro

CAMBRIDGE — Graduating high school students wanting to get scholarships should talk to Sherry Wong.

The Cambridge student secured \$130,000 in scholarship money and chose to accept a \$60,000 Schulich Leader Scholarship from York University where she will attend in the fall.

The graduate of Monsignor Doyle Catholic Secondary School plans to go to medical school to become a dermatologist.



secure scholarships.

parents. At the luncheon, graduating students and where to find them.

for Academic Fund. She plans to attend 18 to receive \$500 each.

the 40 volunteer hours needed to

" said Wong, who leaves for Hong

Puffs, which hosted workshops, events recycled tissue paper rolls and Bridge Libraries.

“You won’t go Wong, with Sherry Wong!”

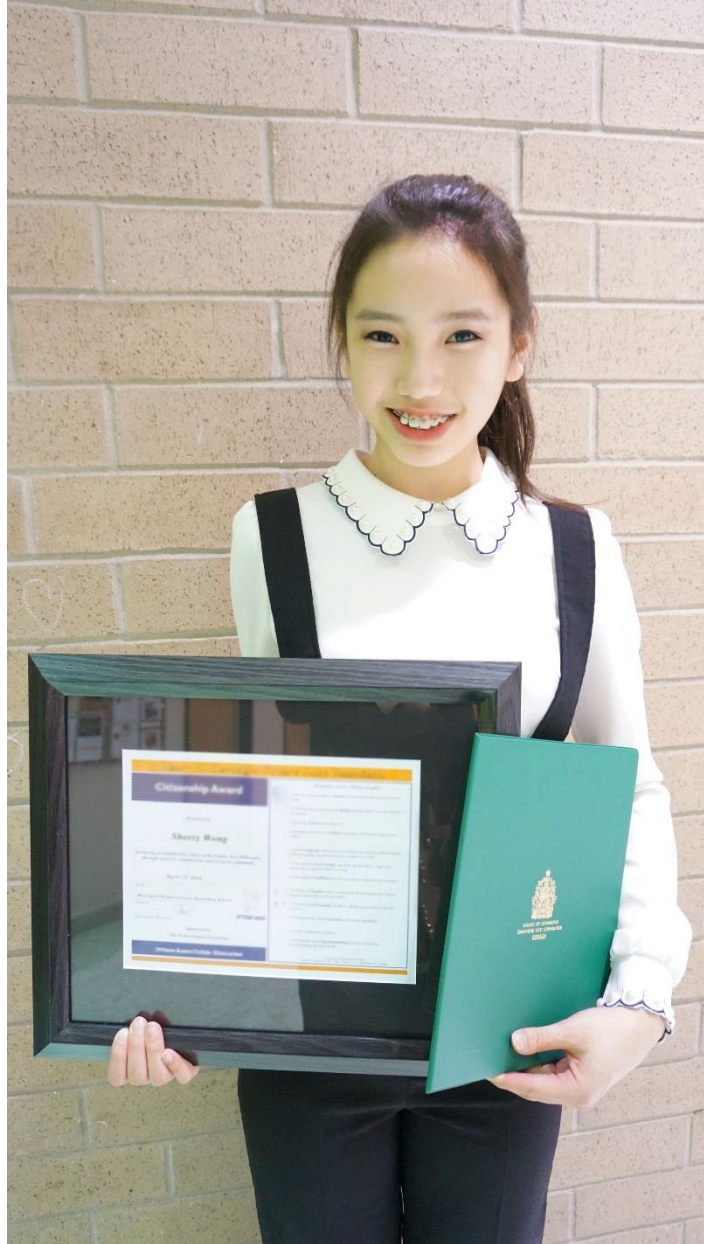


Grade 11 Student Council Co-President Campaign

WHEN ONE DOOR CLOSES



Another One Opens



PICK YOURSELF BACK UP!



Upcycling Competition

ONTARIO
ecoschools



\$11,000 in grants!

Extra-curriculars



Be flexible

Try something new

New perspective

Change gears



Scholarships



Don't let temporary losses hold you back!

Don't just sit there

I'm really passionate about starting a club. Would you like to support me?

NO

*Would you like to write a reference
letter for me to get a scholarship?*

NO



Could you support this movement I am
trying to spread throughout the community?

NO



Handling rejection and set-backs



I AM THANKFUL TO ALL
THOSE WHO SAID NO,
IT'S BECAUSE OF THEM,
I DID IT MYSELF.

- Albert Einstein

Q&A

Do you have any other questions for the guest speakers?

- If so, you can send your questions to info@young-scholar.com and we will pass along your questions to the guest speakers.
- All the questions and answers will be posted on our website at www.young-scholar.com in order to benefit other students as well. If you would like to remain anonymous, please let us know in your email.

2015 YOUNG SCHOLAR AWARD

- \$500 scholarship open to Ontario high school students
- October 5th deadline
- How requesting for judge feedback can help:
 - Provide insight on which areas were done well or poorly
 - Indicate areas of improvement
 - Offer tips on how to further highlight your achievements
 - Maximize success with future scholarship applications



Nicholas Ermeta (City of Cambridge Councilor Ward 8), **Donna Reid** (City of Cambridge Councilor Ward 1), **Julia Mogus** (2014 Young Scholar Award Recipient), **Sherry Wong** (Founder of Young Scholar)

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