



University of  
Lethbridge

**NEWS RELEASE**

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## **Celebrating University of Lethbridge medal winners from 2022 Spring Convocation**

The University of Lethbridge is excited to share the achievements of its recent graduates from the 2022 Spring Convocation class.

Distinguishing themselves among the many outstanding graduates are the ULethbridge medal winners for 2022. They are as follows:

**Gold Medal of the Governor General — Jessica Hodson**

(Awarded to the student with the highest academic standing at the graduate level)

See write-up below.



**Silver Medal of the Governor General — Abigail Curle**

(Awarded to the student with the highest academic standing at the undergraduate level)

See write-up below.

### **Undergraduate Academic Medals**

**Faculty of Arts & Science Gold Medal (Arts) — Monica Lockett**

A sociology student, Monica Lockett recently completed her honours thesis, which examines professional identity of rural Albertan journalists as they navigate the expectations of journalistic objectivity and distance with those of interpersonal relationships in smaller, tight-knit communities, and in the broader context of challenges in the industry as a whole. She was awarded the Canadian Sociology

Association's Outstanding Student Award in addition to several other awards in support of her research, including a Chinook Summer Research Award, a Serving Communities in Partnership grant, and a grant from the Lethbridge Public Interest Research Group.

**Faculty of Arts & Science Gold Medal (Science) — Samuel Gerrand**

Sam Gerrand, a geography student, was inspired by a wildfire that burned near his childhood home to better understand the effects of wildfires on landscapes. This curiosity led to two original and creative research projects during his undergraduate career funded by NSERC grants: the first an exploration of carbon loss from tree roots and soils from the Kenow wildfire in Waterton; the second, which culminated in his honours thesis, studying the effects of seismic lines in the Oil Sands Region on peatland fragmentation contributing to heightened risk of wildfire. He has been accepted to two master's planning programs to continue his work on fire management through community planning.

**Faculty of Education Gold Medal — Abigail Curle**

Abigail Curle completed a combined Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and Bachelor of Education. Graduating with a perfect 4.0 GPA in both of her degrees, she recently won the School of Liberal Education volunteer award and the Myrtle Ruth Bodie Mathematics Scholarship. She completed her final internship at Chinook High School teaching grades 9 and 10 math.

**Alberta Teacher's Association William Aberhart Gold Medal in Education — Breanne Taylor**

Breanne Taylor, played with the Pronghorns women's rugby team and spent countless hours volunteering throughout southern Alberta. She completed a combined Bachelor of Management with a CTS Business focus and a Bachelor of Education. Her recent Professional Semester III culminating project investigated how teachers can best differentiate math and English language arts content in a multi-age classroom to meet the needs of all students.

**Faculty of Fine Arts Gold Medal — Samantha Newton**

Acknowledged five times on the Dean's Honour List, Samantha Newton was dedicated to scholarly study, creative excellence, community building, volunteerism, and professional development. She volunteered for the SAAG, the Niche Gallery, was President of the Student Art Society and led her colleagues in organizing art exhibitions, publications and supporting artist-run culture in Lethbridge. Newton also had two solo exhibitions at CASA. She will continue her studies in a master's program at York University, Toronto in Fall 2022.

**Faculty of Health Sciences Gold Medal — Caitlin MacGregor**

Caitlin MacGregor, a Bachelor of Therapeutic Recreation graduate, earned the highest graduation GPA in this academic year with an impressive 3.98. Regarded as an

intelligent, creative and insightful young woman committed to advancing her knowledge and skills, she is receptive to new information and always strives for a deeper understanding of novel topics and ideas. MacGregor has great respect and always shows professionalism in her work.

#### **Dhillon School of Business Gold Medal — Caitlin Whelpton**

Caitlin Whelpton earned a Bachelor of Management with a marketing major and socially responsible marketing concentration, a social responsibility minor, great distinction honors and a co-operative education designation. Her engaged campus experience also included a part-time employment position with one faculty member as a teaching/research assistant.

#### **Graduate Academic Medals**

##### **School of Graduate Studies Silver Medal of Merit, Master of Arts — Mariah Besplug**

Mariah Besplug's thesis, *Building Refuge: Narratives from the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program in the Lethbridge, Alberta Area*, underscores how local experiences of refugee resettlement help us better understand broader geopolitical issues. She received \$57,000 in scholarships and was a winner of the 2021 IRCC National Essay Contest, showcasing her research to over 125 policymakers. In future work, she aims to contribute to more socially just practices that build from the connections between people and places.

##### **School of Graduate Studies Silver Medal of Merit, Master of Music — Carmen Letourneau**

The breadth and depth of Carmen Letourneau's MMus research is Impressive. Her contributions to the Department of Music as a researcher, graduate teaching assistant, and performer are significant — and continue with her involvement in the performance life of the department. The intersections of pedagogy, interdisciplinary research and performance in Letourneau's work are profound, and point to an important, multi-pronged approach to piano studies, as reflected in her thesis, *Bridging Dualities: The Piano Pedagogy of Marie Jaëll*.

##### **School of Graduate Studies Silver Medal of Merit, Master of Science — Alicia Anderson**

Alicia Anderson's MSc concerns the development of a novel spectrometer, widely regarded by ESA and NASA as a critical next step in exploring the Universe. Few researchers have mastered the diverse range of skills she has acquired. Anderson, who's thesis was titled, *Development of the Dispersing Component for a Cryogenic Post-Dispersed Polarizing Fourier Transform Spectrometer*, will now undertake her PhD studies at Trinity College through a Gates Cambridge Scholarship.

##### **School of Graduate Studies Silver Medal of Merit, Master of Education — Teri Hartman**

Teri Hartman is an engaged, balanced, and passionate teacher who throughout her master's journey advocated for a better education for her students and their communities. Her thesis, *Writing as a Practice of Freedom*, is an authentic and honest autoethnographic exploration of the struggles for freedom, voice, and choice in schools. Her research and leadership have the potential to produce a meaningful impact in the field of writing education.

**School of Graduate Studies Silver Medal of Merit, Master of Counselling — Jessica Hodson**

Jessica Hodson completed an impressive final project on the ethical implications of releasing client records. This work resulted in a publication in the *Journal of Ethics in Mental Health*, an invited presentation — along with her project supervisor — to a national conference for lawyers, and a joint paper to be presented at a national psychology conference. Hodson plans on becoming a registered psychologist.

**School of Graduate Studies Silver Medal of Merit, Master of Science (Management) — Jasper Sonmor**

Jasper Sonmor was an exceptional student who demonstrated intelligence, hard work and originality in coursework, thesis and beyond. His thesis was titled, *Do You Mind the way I Mind? Mindfulness Contagion in Leader-Member Exchange Relationships*. Jasper demonstrated academic excellence, was extremely supportive of his peers and a valuable contributor to several research projects. He is currently considering pursuing a doctoral degree.

To view online: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/unews/article/celebrating-university-lethbridge-medal-winners-2022-spring-convocation>

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