

The Sophia Michelle McMillan Crestani Memorial Scholarship

Established in 2020 in memory of Sophia Michelle McMillan Crestani, a second year Bachelor of Science student studying mathematics and statistics. Sophia passed away in tragic circumstances at a student party in North Dunedin on 6 October 2019.

Sophia, the youngest of 3 children and a twin, grew up in Wellington. She demonstrated her innate ability in mathematics at an early age, winning the St Benedict's School Mathematics cup and an academic scholarship to Queen Margaret College. Sophia was a caring and enthusiastic spirit with a creative flair, having her Year 13 wearable art work "The Fallen" displayed at the National War Memorial, Hall of Memories as part of the centennial commemoration of the Passchendaele campaign. Sophia was a people person with an engaging and sparkly personality who could light up any space. She was also a sporty young woman, competing in a number of sports including netball, dragon boating and gymnastics. Through her love of working with children she gave back to the community as a gymnastics coach and recreation co-ordinator. Sophia would want other young women to have the educational and career opportunities that she will not.

Eligibility

Applicants must be:

- a New Zealand citizen or residence class visa holder
- a female second-year student studying Mathematics or Statistics.

Application Process

Every application for the Scholarship must be submitted to Student Administration (Scholarships) at the University of Otago by the specified closing date.

Every applicant must submit:

- a completed application form
- a copy of all academic transcripts for study undertaken at other tertiary institutions
- a letter of reference addressing the applicant's community activities, and, where relevant
- a statement of financial need (max 500 words), written by the applicant.

Selection Process

The selection panel will include a representative of the Crestani family, the Head of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, the Director of the Development and Alumni Relations Office and the Manager, Postgraduate Scholarships, Prizes and Awards, or their nominees.

The following factors shall be considered in selecting the Scholarship:

- a demonstrated focus by the applicant on being community minded and exhibiting community involvement
- financial need due to personal/family circumstances.

The panel may require an interview with short-listed applicants for the Scholarship.

Financial

- The Scholarship will normally have a value of \$4,500 for living costs, comprising two equal payments made at the start of each academic semester.
- The selection panel shall determine the number of scholarships available each year and their value.

Tenure

- The Scholarship may be held for the equivalent of one full-time year, with full-time tenure.
- The Scholarship must be taken up within one year of being awarded.
- The Scholarship may be held concurrently with any other University of Otago scholarship where its regulations also allow co-tenure.

Other Requirements

- Award of the scholarship is dependent on the recipient being admitted to the University of Otago.
- The University of Otago reserves the right to use the names, photographs, and details of successful applicants for advertising and publicity. The award holders must agree to be reasonably available to participate in interviews and promotional activities if requested by the University of Otago.
- The Scholarship holder must submit a report on the progress of her studies and community involvement to Student Administration (Scholarships) by 1 December of the year they hold the Scholarship.