



The O'Brien Foundation *News*



The Leonard & Kathleen O'Brien Humanitarian Trust — Spring/Summer 2012

What's new?

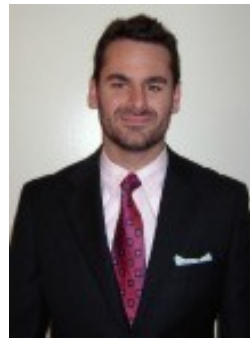
We are! With this inaugural issue of the O'Brien Foundation News, we celebrate the evolution of our organization and its members, a group of people who exemplify and actively support advanced education. Our thanks go out to those who are stepping down after giving the Foundation many years of their time and talent, and we welcome new Board members, committee members, and—not least—new Fellowship recipients. For future issues, we'd love to hear from you, the O'Brien Alumni Fellows. Share your stories or photos from the past, or tell us what's new with you! (See page 4 for details.)

Read about changes to

- The Board of Directors
- The Selection Committee

... Meet new Fellows and learn how you can contribute to the Foundation's mission.

See pages 3-4



NEW FACES — Look inside this issue to learn more about the latest O'Brien Foundation Fellows

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Lieutenant Governor's Reception to be held on August 23

Mark this date on your calendar: Thursday, August 23, 2012, from 4pm to 6pm. Each year, New Brunswick's Lieutenant Governor and Honorary President of the O'Brien Foundation hosts a reception at Government House, Fredericton, for Alumni and new recipients of the O'Brien Foundation Fellowships. The event provides a wonderful chance for Alumni to gather in the provincial capital, share stories, and catch up with other Fellowship recipients. We hope to see you in August!

Board of Directors welcomes new members

The O'Brien Foundation is governed by a 9-member Board of Directors. Honorary President is Graydon Nicholas, Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick. In 2011, the Foundation welcomed new directors Dr. Ed Biden (Dean of Graduate Studies and Professor of Mechanical Engineering at the

University of New Brunswick) and Mr. Gary Stairs (Chairman and CEO, Stellar and Red Hot Learning). This year, 2012, has seen the addition of another new director, Ms. Deborah Robichaud, Special Advisor, Organizational Development, Canadian Heritage. Currently serving on

the Board in addition to the new directors are Dr. Carmen Poulin (Chair), J. Gordon Thomson, C.A., Brian Trenholm, C.A., Dr. John Tivendell, Mr. Richard Hornsby, and Dr. Catherine Gidney.

Meet the newest O'Brien Fellows

Barret L. Kurylyk

Barret grew up on the north shore of Prince Edward Island and attended UPEI before completing his undergraduate degree in Civil Engineering at UNB, where he received the Lieutenant Governor's Silver Medal for highest graduating average in the Engineering Faculty. His research interests were sparked by summer employment in the Construction Engineering and Management research group at UNB.



In 2009, he enrolled in the Master's

program in Civil Engineering and a year later transferred into the accelerated PhD program.

Barret's PhD research involves simulating the projected impacts of climate change on groundwater temperature and flow rates and investigating the vulnerability of groundwater-sourced Atlantic salmon and brook trout habitat in the Miramichi region. He is also interested in the numerical mod-

eling of groundwater in permafrost systems and examining how they respond to climatic change. His research has been supported by the NSERC and other awards, including the Alexander Graham Bell Canada Graduate Scholarship.

Barret enjoys spending summertime outdoors, learning everything he can about earth sciences. He plans to make a career in New Brunswick looking at ways to sustainably develop local resources while protecting the province's aquifers and rivers.

Between 1975 and 2012, the Foundation received over 2,169 applications and granted 280 fellowships, including 58 renewals.

The total value of the awards granted in these years was \$1,382,000.

Michel Thibodeau

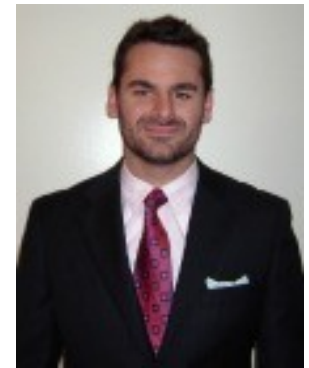
Michel hails from Tabusintac, a bilingual community in northeastern New Brunswick. His interest in human behaviour began at C.S.C. La Fontaine, a francophone community high school in nearby Neguac, and eventually led him to the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton, where he received his B.A. (Honours) in Psychology in 2009.

Michel earned his M.A. in Clinical Psychology at the University of Regina, Saskatchewan, with the support of a Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Master's award that allowed him to focus on his

research interests in anxiety-related mental disorders and chronic pain. Immediately after completing his M.A. in 2011, he began his Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology at the University of Regina with a further doctoral award from the CIHR.

Michel's dissertation will explore the nature of predispositions that may underlie anxiety-related mental disorders. Upon completion of his Ph.D., he hopes to work as a clinical psychologist, therapist, and professor of psychology.

Michel's broader goal is to have a



positive impact on the health of Canadians by informing the treatment of mental disorders through clinically-oriented research.

Laura McFarlane Tranquilla

Laura grew up first in Dalhousie and later in Boiestown, New Brunswick. Her research interests in avian ecology and conservation began during her BSc program at the University of New Brunswick, which involved studying songbird territories in the province's blackfly-infested forests and also, fortunately, seabird colonies in the Bay of Fundy. Captivated by the lives of seabirds such as puffins and storm-petrels, she has since done field research on remote coastlines and islands of Canada's east and west coasts. For Laura, no place beats a seabird colony for testing scientific

hypotheses.

After completing her MSc at Simon Fraser University (B.C.) with a specialty in the breeding physiology of seabirds, Laura worked as a research associate and consultant. Her work's unremitting schedule and pure joy of accomplishment was remarkably relevant training for parenthood, she discovered. In 2008, as a mother of two children, Laura became a PhD



candidate at Memorial University (NL), where she studies Atlantic seabirds' use of the marine habitat during winter. Her collaborative and work experiences to date have resulted in over 30 publications and dozens of presentations. Laura is enthusiastically supported in all things by her husband Jim and two young children.

In 2012, the O'Brien Foundation Alumni are presenting their first Fellowship. And the Alumni Award goes to . . . Terri Croft

Terri Croft of Riverview, NB, holds a Bachelor of Music in Performance from Dalhousie University and is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Performance at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Starting with music lessons at age four, Terri quickly established herself as a prodigious talent in fiddling when she became a three-time winner of the Canadian Open Fiddle Contest (12 and under category) and won the first of four



Maritime Open Class Fiddle Championships (all ages) by the age of 13. Almost a decade later, she still holds the record for both contests.

Terri's focus shifted in her mid-teens toward classical violin repertory. She is now a six-time NB Provincial Music Festival winner who has earned national awards and accolades. As a cham-

ber musician, she has performed in concert series throughout the Maritimes and with several orchestras and chamber ensembles. In 2011, her "Trio Benterria" won the chamber music category at the National Music Festival. Terri has served as concertmaster of several orchestras, completed an apprenticeship with Symphony Nova Scotia, and has volunteered her musical gifts to seniors' residences, hospitals, fundraisers, and the Cleveland School of the Arts.

This year's Selection Committee

The Selection Committee, which is responsible for ranking and recommending candidates for awards, has seen its workload increase substantially in recent years because of the growing number of applicants for O'Brien Foundation fellowships. The Committee welcomed four new

members between 2011 and 2012: Dr. Christl Verduyn (Director, Centre for Canadian Studies at Mount Allison University), Dr. Diana J. Hamilton (Associate Professor of Biology, Mount Allison University), Dr. Loretta Secco (Assistant Dean of Nursing, Uni-

versity of New Brunswick), and Dr. Enrico DiTomasso (Professor of Psychology, UNBSJ). They join existing Committee members Dr. Catherine Gidney (Chair) and Mr. Richard Hornsby in taking on this challenging work.

Application deadline for O'Brien Fellowships is November 1.

Donations to the O'Brien Foundation support promising scholars or artists and receive tax-deductible receipts.



The Leonard & Kathleen O'Brien Humanitarian Trust

Building New Brunswick's future by encouraging advanced study

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Established in 1971, The Leonard and Kathleen O'Brien Humanitarian Trust provides postgraduate fellowships for deserving students who wish to pursue advanced study or research in any academic, artistic, or professional field at any recognized university or research establishment. The fellowships are administered by a Committee known as The O'Brien Foundation.

The Honourable J. Leonard O'Brien was a life-long resident of Nelson-Miramichi who made distinguished contributions to the forest industry and the public service of New Brunswick. Mr. O'Brien was a lumber merchant, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, 1925-1930, Member of Parliament 1940-45, and Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick, 1958-65.

Kathleen (O'Leary) O'Brien was born in Richibucto and attended Mount Saint Vincent's College in Halifax before graduating in Nursing from the Roosevelt Hospital School in New York. Her extensive charitable work was recognized by Pope Paul VI in 1963 when Mrs. O'Brien was made a Dame of Magistral Grace of the Order of Malta. She died in 1971 and Mr. O'Brien in 1973.

As a final memorial to himself and his wife, Mr. O'Brien made two bequests which reflect their deep concern for the natural resources of New Brunswick and for the

education of its people.

The first bequest was the grant of Beaubear's Island to the Crown as a national Historic Park to be preserved "in its primeval state where citizens of New Brunswick and others may relax and enjoy peace, quiet and solitude in the place where the first settlers sought the same."

The second bequest provided for the establishment of the O'Brien Foundation to grant fellowships to students, scholars, and artists wishing to pursue postgraduate study and research. O'Brien Foundation fellowships are awarded through an annual competition. In its first twenty-eight years of operation, academic years 1975-76 to 2008-09, the Foundation received over 1,950 applications and granted 259 fellowships, including 58 renewals. The total value of the awards granted in these years was \$1,224,000.

The O'Brien Foundation is a humanitarian trust, operated exclusively for educational purposes. Donations are welcome from any persons or organizations wishing to assist promising students and artists to develop their knowledge and skills through advanced study. Donations to the O'Brien Foundation qualify for tax-exempt receipts.

We're on the Web! We invite you to share stories, photos, where you are and what you've been doing. Stay in touch with your Fellow alumni: visit us at
[http:// www.obrienfoundation.ca/](http://www.obrienfoundation.ca/)

Or e-mail

information@obrienfoundation.ca

If you'd prefer to receive this newsletter electronically, simply send us an e-mail.

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