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Two U of T alumnae selected Rhodes Scholars

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Jessica Lewis

Two alumnae from the University of Toronto's Innis College – Aliyyah Ahad and Chloe Walker – will pursue post-graduate studies at Oxford University next year after being named 2014 Rhodes Scholars.

The Rhodes Scholarships are among the world's most prestigious postgraduate awards, with only 83 students from universities around the world chosen each year. The scholarships support outstanding all-round students at Oxford as they develop into exceptional leaders who are motivated to fight for "the world's fight" and hold public duties in the highest regard, all while promoting international understanding and peace.

"On behalf of the U of T community, I congratulate our alumnae, Aliyyah Ahad and Chloe Walker, on being named 2014 Rhodes Scholars," said President Meric Gertler. "Their multi-faceted leadership and excellence are an inspiration to all of us, reflecting the highest ideals of the University of Toronto."

Ahad (pictured right), who graduated in 2012 with a bachelor of arts in political science and sociology, was the only recipient to be named from Bermuda. She has been working at the Bermuda Government Cabinet Office since her studies at U of T – first, in a year-long internship and then as a consultant for the Human Rights Commission. She is now in the Office of the Ombudsman.



Alumna Chloe Walker receives her Rhodes Scholarship from Governor General Sir Elliott Belgrave (left), while secretary of the Rhodes Scholarship for Jamaica and the Commonwealth Caribbean, Peter Goldson (second left) and Chief Justice Marston Gibson, a former Rhodes Scholar, look on (photo by Antonio Miller courtesy Barbados Government Information Service)

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Ahad is on the board of Bermuda's Emerging Professionals, the youth division of the Chamber of Commerce, which organizes events for young professionals focusing on their development. A skilled debater, she has represented Bermuda at international tournaments and is on the board of the Bermuda Debate Society.

Walker, the only Rhodes Scholar elected from Jamaica, also graduated from U of T in 2012, with a bachelor of arts in literary studies and African studies. During her time at U of T she was president of the U of T Swahili Conversation Club. Now pursuing a master's of philosophy in literatures in English at the University of West Indies, Walker is also serving as a member of their vice-chancellor's ambassador corps, teaching English, coaching the debating club at her former high school and volunteering for Read for Life.

"It's a mixture of pride, relief, I just don't know how to put into words how I feel," Walker told *The Barbados Advocate*.

Walker is the recipient of the University of the West Indies Graduate Scholarship, the Innis College Exceptional Achievement Award, the CAPE Award for Top Performance in Humanities and serves as a supervisor for the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award. She is also a founding member of global youth network AIESEC's Barbados chapter, a student-run not-for-profit organization focused on world issues, leadership and management.

"Innis College is thrilled to have two graduates chosen as Rhodes Scholars," said Janet Paterson, principal of Innis. "Both Aliyyah Ahad and Chloe Walker exemplify, in a striking manner, the values of Innis College: high academic excellence and unwavering commitment to social improvement. We are extremely proud of their achievement."

Jessica Lewis is a writer with the Faculty of Arts & Science at the University of Toronto.

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 The Coach House Institute (formerly known as the Centre for Culture and Technology under Professor Marshall Herbert McLuhan), celebrates 50 years with the launch of its year-long, public lecture series: Culture and Technology

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