

York Centre for Asian Research offers four awards to graduate students at York University to support their language training and research fieldwork in Asia and the Diaspora.

2011 Award Winners



Conely de Leon is the recipient of the 2011 Vivienne Poy Asian Research Award. Conely de Leon is a doctoral candidate in the School of Women's Studies at York University. She received her Master's of Arts in Sociology and Equity Studies in Education, and Women and Gender Studies at the University of Toronto, and her Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Women's Studies, and English Language and Literature at Queen's University. Her research interests focus on critical race theory, transnational feminist praxis, gender and migration, and the development of Critical Filipino Studies in Canada.

The award funds will assist de Leon in her dissertation fieldwork in Manila, Philippines during the 2011-2012 academic year. de Leon's research explores whether long-term family separation (for example, as an outcome of Canada's Live-In Caregiver Programme), results in enduring and pervasive adverse effects on the socioeconomic, cultural and political engagement of children of Filipina migrant domestic workers as adults. Specifically, de Leon's research in Manila will focus on the relationships that adult children now in Canada have to extended kin, often identified as grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and close family friends, who acted as their 'primary' caregivers in the Philippines while separated from their mothers. By exploring these relationship dynamics through one-on-one, in-depth interviews, de Leon hopes to offer some insight into the complexities of long-term family separation and its impact on the socioeconomic, cultural, and political development of children of Filipina migrant domestic workers into adulthood.

The award is named for the Honourable Vivienne Poy and assists a graduate student in fulfilling the fieldwork requirement for the Graduate Diploma in Asian Studies. YCAR is grateful for Senator Poy's support for this award.

For more information: www.yorku.ca/ycar/Awards/Vivienne_Poy_Asian_Research_Award.html.

YCAR Language Award

Colin McGuire and **Chad Walasek** are the 2011 recipients of the YCAR Language Award. Mr. McGuire, a Doctoral Candidate in Music, will continue his Cantonese studies during a year abroad in Hong Kong. Mr. Walasek, a Master's Candidate in Dance, will use the award funding to build on his Urdu language skills in a Fall 2011 course in India.



Colin McGuire will be going on exchange to the Chinese University of Hong Kong in the 2011.2012 academic year. The YCAR Language Award will help to fund his language studies and advance his abilities in Cantonese. He plans to study at the Yale-China Chinese Language Centre for two semesters starting in September 2011.

His research is on the music of the martial arts and his doctoral dissertation will focus on the percussion repertoire performed by Chinese-Canadian kung fu clubs. His approach is interdisciplinary and draws from ethnomusicology, hopology, phenomenology, semiotics and Asian studies.

Of particular importance to the intersection of music and martial arts are the processes of transmission, identity formation, creation of space, claiming of place and construction of meaning. Mr. McGuire is currently performing ethnographic fieldwork through participant observation at the Hong Luck Kung Fu Club in Toronto's Spadina/Dundas Chinatown.

Before entering the PhD programme, Colin earned a MA in composition (2003) from York University, was a course director for York's computer music classes, and received transmission of the complete Sum Nung Wing Chun Kuen system of Chinese kung fu under Lo Kuen-Hung Sifu. His music has been featured on the award winning TV show "Departures" and also in the Little Pear Garden Collective's production of "The Four Beauties of China." He is the recipient of a 2010 Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Doctoral Award.

Chad Walasek is both a professional *kathak* dancer and a graduate student. After participation in an exchange program with India and subsequent work in Pakistan as part of a BSc in International Development Studies at the University of Toronto, he began training in the Hindustani performing arts (dance, percussion and vocal). He has studied *tabla* for the last several years and made his debut with the *Toronto Tabla Ensemble* in 2007. A senior *kathak* student of Joanna de Souza and disciple of Pandit Chitresh Das, Mr. Walasek tours internationally with *Chhandam Dance Company* and regularly participates in independent productions. He performed his first formal full-length classical solo in March 2008.

YCAR Language Award



A recipient of an Ontario Graduate Scholarship, Chad is currently enrolled in the Masters programme in dance studies at York University where his research focus the development of kathak dance in post-Partition Pakistan and the ambivalent relationship between kathak dance and Pakistani identity.

The main phase of his fieldwork was conducted in Lahore, Pakistan, in February and March 2011. A combination of research methods was employed, including participant observation, oral history collection, English and Urdu language archival material collection and a series of semi-structured interviews conducted in both English and Urdu with local dancers, dance students, musicians and members of the performing arts community.

From September through December 2011, building on his knowledge of intermediate-level Urdu, Chad will participate in an intensive immersion-based Urdu language programme in Lucknow, India, through the American Institute of India Studies. Following this programme, follow-up research in Lahore will be conducted, if necessary, and Urdu language materials will be analyzed in detail.

The YCAR Language Award was created to support graduate students in fulfilling the language requirement for the Graduate Diploma in Asian Studies (GDAS) and to facilitate awardees master's or doctoral-level research.

For more information: www.yorku.ca/ycar/Awards/YCAR_Language_Award.html.

David Wurfel Award



Veronica Javier will graduate from York University with a Master of Social Work from the School of Social Work in June 2011. She also holds an Honours Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in Sociology and minor in Religious Studies.

Ms. Javier is currently a Research Assistant for the Filipino Youth Transitions in Canada (FYTiC) research project with Professor Philip F. Kelly. In addition, she is also a writer for the first Filipino-Canadian family and lifestyle magazine called *TAHANAN*, and has a regular section entitled, "Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives; featuring astonishing and inspiring stories of everyday heroes".

Ms. Javier's Practise Research Paper (PRP) brought to light the lived-experiences of 1.5 and 2nd generation Filipino-Canadian youth in Canada. Her research demonstrated how youth are challenging ideas around the role of religion in the construction of their "ethnic" identity within a Eurocentric and neoliberal Canadian context. The youth see themselves as active agents in negotiating how they could continue to fit in while being a pro-active Catholic in contrast to the secular Canadian norm.

During their process of re-negotiation, the youth's Filipino identity moved to the background, and their Canadian and Catholic identity became more important. Their re-positioning of their "ethnic" and religious identity is reflective of the ways in which the youth's subject position intersects within the whiteness that operates in Canadian society. For these youth, their re-negotiation utilizes a personal and experiential language that individualizes experiences and therefore also enables them to negotiate the imperfections within Catholicism.

She hopes that her research will contribute to the creation and implementation of more culturally sensitive social services programs that will better assist and take into consideration the lived, post-settlement experiences of Filipino-Canadians.

Veronica's PRP was generously supported by the David Wurfel award. The award enabled her to bring to light not just the voices of the youth, but also a fuller picture of their lives. The financial assistance allowed her to travel to various Filipino youth events within the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) as well as to meet her research participants in different points in the GTA. Doing so enabled her to gain a better understanding of the environments of which the youth were a part. She was also able to give an honorarium for their participation and cover any expenses that her research participants incurred during the interview, such as meals and transportation. Finally, the award gave her freedom to network within the Filipino-Canadian community through community events, symposiums and conferences in order to better understand the issues the Filipino community is facing, especially the youth, and how she can ultimately be of service to them in the near future.

The Award was established in 2006 by Senior YCAR Research Associate Dr. David Wurfel. He wanted to contribute to the emergence of a new generation of Filipino leadership that is grounded in the country's history, culture and public affairs. Dr. Wurfel is a Philippine specialist who received his PhD from Cornell University's Southeast Asia Program.

For more information: www.yorku.ca/ycar/Awards/David_Wurfel.html

Albert C.W. Chan Foundation Fellowship

Sara L. Jackson is the 2011 recipient of the Albert C.W. Chan Foundation Fellowship.

She has a BA in International Studies from the University of Washington and an MA in Geography from the University of British Columbia. She began her PhD at York Geography in Fall 2009, after lecturing at the Metropolitan State College of Denver and the National University of Mongolia. Last summer, Ms. Jackson was a language fellow at the American Center for Mongolian Studies in Ulaanbaatar.

Her dissertation research looks at the political and cultural impacts of mining-related infrastructure development in Mongolia's South Gobi province. She will conduct ethnographic research in Ulaanbaatar and the regions surrounding the Oyu Tolgoi gold-copper mine beginning in fall 2011. Sara is also working on a graphic novel with an illustrator that draws from her research experiences. It will be translated and distributed in Mongolia.

The working title of Ms. Jackson's dissertation is *Building a Gold Rush: Imagining New Territory in Mongolia's South Gobi*.



The Albert C.W. Chan Foundation Fellowship was established by the Albert C.W. Chan Foundation to encourage and assist York University graduate students to conduct field research in East and/or Southeast Asia. YCAR would like to thank the Albert C. W. Chan family for their support of York graduate students.