Diversity and Inclusion
by Adriana Lopez-Villalobos

Human beings possess a fundamental need for inclusion and a sense of belonging. An inclusive environment is one in which all people feel valued, respected, and where they have access to equal opportunities. Working towards inclusivity requires intention and policy to include people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized, such as minorities based on abilities, race or sexual orientation. Both, diversity and inclusivity can bring many benefits. When people are truly being included, they are more likely to share information and participate in decision-making; there is greater altruism and team engagement, intercultural exchange, physiological safety and intent to remain in an institution. Critical thinking also comes from inclusion, that is, from the diversity of perspective. Queen’s University is working hard to create diversity among their alumni and workforce. Here at the BRC, we aim to create a safe and welcoming space and the women who use Ban Righ Centre services tell us they feel included.

Above: Registered Ban Righ Centre students and their self-reported identities.

Student Research Profile by Alex Pedersen
Alexandra’s research focuses on the lived experiences of communities who peacefully oppose Canadian mining operations in Guatemala. Between 2012 and 2014 she collected the testimonies of men, women, and children from a community resistance known as La Puya, whose members have successfully blockaded the entrance of an open-pit gold mine.

Above: Surveyed students rated the BRC for inclusivity
The Ban Righ foundation once again celebrated the determination of women students who return to formal education after a time away. The following named awards were presented to each of these dedicated students.

**Elizabeth Wallace Bursary:**
Alison Quinn

**Carole Kinnear Award:**
Zoya Islam

**Troup-Ballantyne Award:**
Lacey Cann

**Diane McKenzie Awards:**
Hazel Ramirez & Jodie Gervais

**Dorothy Matheson Parnell Bursary:**
Midori Ogasawara & Kaziwa Salih Dylan

**Marian C. Webb Bursary:**
Alka Sood

**Mildred Blackadder/Zonta Club Award:**
Shannon Kimewon

**Barbara Schlafer Book Prize:**
Vinothini Varnarajan

**Janet Bilton-Holst Citation:**
Sanober Umar

**Helen Richards Campbell Award:**
Nasreen Sultana

**Barbara Paul Memorial Award:**
Geneve Say

**Barbara Paul Prize:**
Shannon Kimewon

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Community members hold concerns over the use of water, environmental contamination, and long-term future for their children. As a result of their opposition, participants relayed experiences of direct violence, social conflict, and criminalization from the Guatemalan state, company, and proponents of the mine. Alexandra additionally focuses on structural violence operationalized in Canada where the pursuit of profits over people has spatial consequences in post-conflict Guatemala. Her thesis aims to amplify the voices of marginalized peoples in the hopes they will be better heard in Canada.

**Winter Bazaar**

**Save the Date**

While it is still far too early to think of snowflakes, we want student families to save the date: **Friday, December 1, 2017** for another fun evening where children can “shop” for donated gifts. This is a great opportunity for moms and kids to meet up, enjoy some treats and make friends. If you have gift items you wish to donate, please call the Ban Righ Centre.

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2017 Spring Award Celebration 2017

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Photo of student recipients with Ban Righ Foundation board members and presenters on Saturday, April 29, 2017.
A Student Experience by Thandiwe Phiri

I have always been interested in health care, disease prevention and quality improvement. My undergraduate program was a BSc in Biology with a focus in Parasitology, which is the study of parasites, their hosts, their relationship and the diseases they cause. Getting accepted into a graduate program that would allow me to connect my interest with understanding healthcare related problems and risk, improvement projects and policy implementation was exciting.

It feels just like yesterday...I remember packing my suitcase to attend the opening session of my program: a one week intensive course, and bringing along my baby bag because I was just a few days away from my expected delivery date. I was excited about the course but also preoccupied by my physical condition. I’m sure most people may have wondered why I couldn’t have just waited for next year or the year after. I knew I had to do it then, it was my best shot at pursuing my goal, I had it all planned out, or at least I thought: Worst case scenario, Kingston General Hospital (KGH) was just down the road.

Fast forward, I stand today half way through my program, just three courses and a project away from walking the graduation stage! It’s been a journey, interesting, enlightening, challenging and at times stressful. My son is now 11 months and my little girl is turning 6. I’m so thankful for all the support I continue to receive from my family, friends, my school--Queens’s School of Nursing and the encouragement and bursary support through the Ban Righ Centre, a foundation whose focus is to cheer on mature female students like myself. It’s so easy to hold back due to the many competing responsibilities but I’ve come to learn that what makes students aspire and excel is not only their ability but a combination of their dreams, effort and the support system surrounding them.

Once I complete my program, my desire is to use the skills and the knowledge I have acquired to influence change and improvement in how health care and disease prevention is delivered locally and globally, especially in low income communities. There is a saying that “one is not able to appreciate the original from a counterfeit if they have an incorrect concept of the characteristics of the original”, I feel the same is true for healthcare. Only when we all understand that we are entitled to a safe, timely, equitable and accessible health care will we be able to demand and aspire towards it. I think it is so vital to start the conversation at that level. As a health care quality professional to-be, I look forward to working to ensure my community and clients understand what quality health care is and how together we can attain and sustain it.

At a recent referendum the Society of Graduate and Professional Students voted “yes” to continue supporting the Ban Righ Centre with a student interest fee. Thanks SGPS!
Thanks to Fly FM for giving $1000 from the Fly Fund to the Ban Righ Centre in support of programs and services. It was fun being on the radio with Susan Amos and Brian Scott!

Thank you to Mary Ballantyne, a long-time BRC supporter, for her desire to spread joy. At university we interrogate injustice, we advocate for social change, and we facilitate cognitive leaps for ourselves and for students. Equally important is the cultivation and sharing of joy. Joy nourishes the spirit in the same way food nourishes the body. We need both to have energy for cognition and action. So when Mary suggested we host a knitting circle and offered to buy some supplies, we all thought it was a productive and joyful idea. Mary Rita Holland held the friendship-building knitting sessions on Fridays at lunch.

The 2017-18 Ban Righ Foundation Board
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Asha Varadharajan | Lisa Webb

You are invited to the Ban Righ Foundation’s 2017, Inspiring Women, an evening at the Isabel

We will celebrate achievements by women at the university and in the community through two awards for mentoring and leadership.

Please join us on
Friday
October 20th, 2017
7:30 p.m.—10:00 p.m.
Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts

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http://banrighcentre.queensu.ca
Open 9:00 am - 4:00 p.m. Monday - Friday