

The 2017 Award Recipients

Postgraduate Psychology Student Social Justice Research Scholarship: Gloria Fraser and Rebekah Graham



For the first time, the NZPsS offered the social justice scholarship for postgraduate psychology students. This scholarship was established to support the research by NZPsS student subscribers on a significant social justice issue e.g. poverty, social inequality, discrimination etc. as part of a recognized post-graduate degree in psychology at a New Zealand university.

The scholarship was jointly awarded to Gloria Fraser and Rebekah Graham.

The first phase of **Gloria Fraser's** PhD research involves exploring the experiences of queer and trans young adults who have accessed mental health support in Aotearoa. The next phase will be to conduct an online survey, to find out if the experiences of queer and trans young adult across New Zealand reflect those of the group she is currently interviewing. After she has analysed her data Gloria intends to use the findings from these first two studies to create a resource for use by current and future mental health professionals.

In awarding this scholarship to Gloria Fraser the New Zealand Psychological Society is recognising the significance of this research and the impact it may have to reduce the stigma and discrimination faced by LGBTQIA+ New Zealanders (lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual, as well as other New Zealanders of diverse genders and sexualities).



Rebekah Graham's research project considers the lived experience of food insecurity within the context of poverty in Hamilton. As part of Rebekah's PhD research, she has attended a local community meal for 15 months. During that period, she talked and ate with meal attendees, and from there she engaged in a series of in-depth interviews with seven families. Rebekah has taken an ethnographic emplaced approach while working with vulnerable groups in the context of the welfare state.

Rebekah has recently submitted her PhD. Her PhD with publication means that Rebekah has already written pieces for peer reviewed articles. In addition to peer-reviewed articles, Rebekah has co-authored a chapter in the newly released Precarity book¹ highlighting the relevance of this issue for New Zealanders.

In awarding this scholarship to Rebekah Graham the New Zealand Psychological Society recognises the significance of Rebekah's research, which highlights access to food in socially appropriate ways as a human right. Food insecurity is a product of inequity and injustices and Rebekah's research contributes to the social justice arena by challenging neoliberal narratives of blame embedded within penal welfare.

The G.V. Goddard Early Career Award – Research and Scholarship: Dr Damian Scarf



The G V Goddard Early Career Award commemorates the contributions Professor Graham V Goddard, Head of Department of Psychology, University of Otago, made to psychology. Professor Goddard had an international reputation for his research in behavioural neuroscience, notably in the brain phenomenon of kindling. This award was made to Dr Damian Scarf.

The award recognises early career achievement and excellence in research and scholarship in basic psychological science the judgement being based on the originality, independence, relevance, impact and quality of published work from the nominee's postgraduate research. In support of his nomination Dr Damian Scarf presented three articles from the more than thirty he already has to his name: Scarf, Boy, et al. (2016); Scarf, Hayne & Colombo (2011); Scarf, Moradi, et al. (2016) that, in the Society's assessment, fully justified this award.

The journals in which these articles have been published are held in high regard by our discipline speaking to the quality and

originality of these articles. Two articles report studies of neural processing in a non-human species, while the third examines causal relationships between social identity and enhanced resilience of adolescents who successfully completed an adventure education programme. Together they hint at the breadth of Dr Scarf's research interests and expertise. As first and corresponding or co-corresponding author of each article Damian wrote the first draft, made major contributions to design, data collection and analysis of the reported studies.

In making this award the Society concurs with those who nominated Damian that has achieved and displays excellence in his early career research and scholarship.

Karahipi Tumuaki –President's Scholarship- Miriama Ketu-McKenzie



The Society offers the Karahipi Tumuaki President's Scholarship which recognises research that is Māori centred and of value to the Māori community.

This scholarship was awarded to Miriama Ketu-McKenzie.

Miriama is enrolled in a PhD degree, having already completed clinical training. She is a registered psychologist, working at Dunedin hospital. Miriama's research is focussed on exploring the applicability of a mindfulness- based intervention on the cortisol levels of Māori women who experience chronic stress and have had adverse life events in childhood. Her aim is to explore the relationship between childhood trauma and health problems in adulthood.

Miriama's research offers a unique opportunity to consider how a culturally adapted mindfulness-based stress reduction programme can be used to alleviate chronic health problems. It is noted that Māori experience high levels of health problems, and this research could assist in providing alternative to cognitive behavioural therapies.