

Alterna supports women students at Ryerson University motivated to make social change

Women students fostering self-love and self-sufficiency in the community are recipients of the 2021 Alterna Prize for Women Social Change Leaders.

Toronto, Ont. – May 19, 2021 – The Alterna Prize for Women Social Change Leaders has supported Ryerson University (Ryerson) students seeking solutions to social problems since 2018. This award helps to better position women for leadership roles by rewarding individuals who have vision, creativity, determination, and are motivated by public rather than personal gain.

Annually, two prizes are awarded to women students who demonstrate social change leadership at Ryerson or within their community. We are pleased to announce that Faculty of Arts students Sariena Luy (Arts and Contemporary Studies) and Emily Wilson (Public Administration and Governance) are the 2021 recipients of the Alterna Prize for Women Social Change Leaders.

“Supporting young women leaders is crucial. It positions them to provide community-focused solutions to current and future challenges that affect us all,” explains Rob Paterson, President and CEO of Alterna. “Giving back, and fostering the growth of young leaders, is at the heart of our commitment to the communities where we live and work. I am so pleased that through the Alterna Prize for Women Social Change Leaders, we can help more women continue their work to make a difference in the world. We are encouraged by and applaud the scholarship recipients for their outstanding work.”

Sariena Luy is a Second-Generation Cambodian-Canadian studying Diversity and Equity with a minor in Communications Design and Disability Studies. Through Ryerson’s curriculums and courses, and with the financial support of Alterna, she has explored her identity and built her capacity to serve marginalized people across her home city. As Executive Artistic Director of the youth-led social enterprise, The Flaunt It Movement, she has helped create community projects that foster self-love and highly-esteemed representation for women, mainly from priority neighbourhoods.

“It is an honour to be chosen for the Alterna Prize for Women Social Change Leaders,” said Sariena. “Thank you so much for offering this scholarship to Ryerson University and believing in our talented student body.”

Emily Wilson, a mother of two, began her post-secondary journey with Ryerson following a career as a program coordinator in a community food bank. Dissatisfied with the charity cycle's futility, she began to seek policy-based solutions. This search led Emily to enrol in the Public Administration and Governance undergraduate program at Ryerson. She also started the Ryerson Food Security Certificate and joined the CanStudyUS Fellowship program through the Ryerson Leadership Lab.

In the summer of 2020, Emily began to work with residents of a low-income neighbourhood to revitalize an underused community garden site. They produced abundant crops and created a new platform for community building that is leading them to incorporate as a non-profit. Emily is also a leader for Girl Guides of Canada, helping to empower girls.



"I am honoured and thank Alterna for making it possible for women to be recognized with the Alterna Prize for Women Social Change Leaders," said Emily. "This award has funded an entire semester of full-time tuition, allowing me to focus on my family, studies, and leadership work instead of taking on a part-time job."

Alterna Savings has been serving the Ryerson community and providing students, faculty, and staff valuable financial services since 1960.

To find out how you can support students like Sariena Luy and Emily Wilson, please visit [Giving to Ryerson](#).

About Alterna Savings

Alterna Savings and Credit Union Limited (Alterna) has been the good in banking for 112 years and, based on assets under management, is the 9th largest credit union in Canada. Alterna is made up of Alterna Savings and Credit Union Limited and its wholly-owned subsidiary, Alterna Bank. Together, we have \$10 billion in assets under management.

As the first full-service, member-owned co-operative financial institution outside Quebec, Alterna Savings shares its expertise with more than 186,000 members through a network of 36 branches across Ontario, including partner Peterborough Community Savings, as well as call centre and digital channels. Members and customers also benefit from an industry-leading online brokerage, investment management services, and have access to over 43,000 surcharge-free ATMs in North America with THE EXCHANGE Network in Canada and the Allpoint Network in the US.