

Community

An MBA Through the Lens of a Medical Laboratory Technologist

Thank you to Becton Dickinson (BD) and the CSMLS Grants, Scholarships and Awards Committee for awarding me the BD Young Leaders Scholarship (Journey to Greatness Award) for 2020. I am honoured to have received this financial award, which is offered to certified members who have been employed as a medical laboratory technologist (MLT) or assistant (MLA) for two to five years and have their eye on leadership. With the help of this funding, I am completing a Master of Business Administration (MBA).

When I tell people that I am pursuing a Master of Business Administration, the question I am often asked is, “Why an MBA?” Admittedly, when I first started the program, I had trouble answering this question myself and figuring out how I would reconcile my role as a registered MLT with a business degree. However, enrolling in the three-year part-time MBA program at the Lazaridis School of Business and Economics at Wilfrid Laurier University has been a transformative journey, both personally and professionally.

The courses in this program helped me become a well-rounded individual. Fuelled by my insatiable curiosity for learning, I absorbed information and developed new skills in courses on strategic management, marketing, financial management, organizational behaviour, operations management, economics, accounting and business analytics. I gained not only technical knowledge, but also the ability to think critically and to engage in meaningful discussions with classmates and professionals who brought a wealth of knowledge and experience from industries that were unfamiliar to me.

The program has encouraged me to think more broadly about the medical laboratory science industry. This ranges from the importance of accessibility, diversity and inclusion in the lab, to the future of technology and its impact on the way laboratory professionals work and deliver patient care. In my first year, I wrote a business report analyzing how to improve the operations and efficiency of a medical laboratory in Latin America. My current research focuses on how managers can use mindfulness interventions to enhance organizational commitment among employees.

The program has also allowed me to reflect on how to best use the lessons from other industries to tackle challenges within clinical



Tran (second from left) and her teammates at the John Molson MBA International Case Competition, January 2020. Photo courtesy Judy Tran.

laboratories. By working with one of Canada’s largest chemical distributors to better manage their inventory and relationship with an international supplier, I was able to better understand the challenges that suppliers who provide products and reagents to medical laboratories face while predicting and anticipating demand. I was also able to make recommendations on how to overcome these challenges.

When I started my MBA three years ago, I would not have imagined that I could have access to opportunities and resources that led to such tremendous personal and professional growth. I never thought that I would go to Montreal in January 2020 to

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represent my school and compete against 35 other schools from 18 countries in the John Molson MBA International Case Competition, one of the largest case competitions in the world. With three hours of preparation time and no internet access, my team used the skills and knowledge from our MBA and our work experiences to analyze and evaluate unpublished business cases from a variety of industries. We developed and presented a solution and action plan to a panel of judges comprised of business executives. The competition allowed me to develop a large professional network around the world, as well as appreciate the value of having diverse perspectives that are deeply tied to one's culture, background and unique experiences.

Lastly, my experience in the MBA program has helped deepen my understanding of health care. My applied business research consulting project led me to work with the largest medical imaging department in Canada over a six-month period to assist them with developing an education strategic plan, as well as a plan to better support medical radiation technologist (MRT) staff education. The world of health today requires us to innovate and improve continuously, as

evidenced by the COVID-19 pandemic. I hope to continue to use my knowledge and skills to positively impact Canada's health care system.

This scholarship not only helps fund my post-secondary education, but is, more importantly, a wonderful encouragement for me to take on new challenges, stay committed to personal growth and pursue intellectual inquiry and discovery, while being an active and contributing member of the community. As the first health care professional in my family, I am forever grateful for the sacrifices my mother made, and I am very thankful to my professors, colleagues and mentors who have inspired me with their dedication and kindness. 🙏



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