

A Journey of Empowerment: Transforming Leadership and Advocacy through the Laidlaw Scholarship

Individual Growth Through the Laidlaw Scholarship

My journey with the Laidlaw Scholarship was a deeply personal one, propelled by my upbringing in Jordan as the child of a single mother, where systemic gender biases in nationality rights challenged my identity. This ignited my resolve to understand and confront legal injustices. This scholarship allowed me to delve into Jordanian nationality laws, where my research debunked historical inaccuracies and uncovered a colonial legacy. The rigorous academic training sharpened my critical thinking and research skills, empowering me to dissect complex legal texts and advocate for change. The mentorship component was invaluable, guiding my transformation into an ethical leader who is not only aware of human rights issues but is also equipped to address them effectively.

Teamwork and Collaboration

The residential program and my LIA project with IntoUniversity were crucibles for collaborative work. Engaging with fellow scholars, I honed my communication and teamwork skills, learning to navigate and incorporate diverse perspectives. A key moment was presenting at the Laidlaw Conference in Boston, where I connected with a global network of scholars. This not only allowed me to contribute to our collective knowledge but also served as an ambassadorial role, where I represented and promoted the values of our York cohort on an international stage. Moreover, this international experience significantly broadened my worldview, exposing me to a multitude of leadership styles and cultural nuances that have enriched my approach to both academic and practical problem-solving. The insights and friendships I gained continue to be a source of ongoing learning and inspiration. Similarly, my work with IntoUniversity was not just a practical application of leadership but also an extension of these ambassadorial duties, demonstrating the principles and skills honed through the Laidlaw Scholarship in real-world challenges. In working with IntoUniversity, I applied strategic leadership in real-world contexts, directly contributing to the organization's growth strategies and enhancing its outreach capabilities.

Community Impact and Lifelong Learning

Though still in the early stages, my community impact has been substantial. Presenting my research at the conference not only amplified the reach of my work but also allowed me to communicate the struggles of millions to a room full of future world leaders, further cementing my commitment to championing legal reform. My research, which calls for the disposal of patriarchal values in post-colonial territories' laws that lead to the legal and social exclusion of native women, aims to shift the focus towards a system that balances indigenous culture with the need for democratization and the advancement of human rights. Drawing on the work of on-ground activists, my work emphasizes extending the feminist movement to recognize native women in their diversity, challenging the notion that only Western women are deserving of tolerance. This approach advocates for a feminism that acknowledges the heterogeneity of women worldwide, underlining that despite differing characteristics, beliefs, values, and practices, all women are deserving of inclusivity, equality, and tolerance.

By sharing these findings and collaborating with organizations like Haqi, I aim to continue contributing to a societal shift towards more equitable nationality laws. Similarly, my involvement with IntoUniversity has allowed me to impact the lives of many young

individuals, shaping a more inclusive society that supports the growth and education of disadvantaged youth.

The network of Laidlaw Scholars, offering a wealth of knowledge and diverse experiences, remains an invaluable asset. My future endeavours will build upon these relationships and the comprehensive leadership framework fostered by the Laidlaw Scholarship. Moving forward, I carry with me the resolve to enact social change – advocating for and implementing legal reforms that affirm the rights and dignity of all individuals, informed by a rich tapestry of global perspectives. The scholarship has been more than a journey of personal or academic growth; it has been an integration into a vibrant community committed to creating a ripple effect of positive change across the world.