



FORMER KSS STUDENT NAMED RHODES SCHOLAR

November 30, 2021

Kelowna, BC – Central Okanagan Public Schools congratulates Jesse Lafontaine, a Métis student, graduate of École Kelowna Secondary School, and current medical student, on being named a Rhodes Scholar. Lafontaine is one of 11 Canadians who will attend the esteemed Oxford University in 2022 with 100 scholars from around the world.

"Mr. Lafontaine's scholastic achievement and dedication to equitable health care for Indigenous people inspires our entire district, so we offer both our congratulations on this rare distinction and our gratitude," said Kevin Kaardal, Superintendent of Schools/CEO. "Our goal is to empower students to thrive as global citizens, and Jesse Lafontaine is a shining example of someone whose commitment and humanity will surely make a difference in our world."

The former Kelowna student is a member of both the Métis Nation B.C. and Kelowna Métis Association. Both of Lafontaine's parents work in education, and his mother Kathryn is a teacher in Central Okanagan Public Schools.

"Jesse has always had very high expectations of himself and he is one of the most driven, goal-oriented people I know," said Kathryn Lafontaine. "We are thrilled for his success and can't wait to see where he takes this new opportunity."

Lafontaine's path to leadership and higher education began at École Kelowna Secondary, where he was part of the Indigenous Leadership program.

"I am proud to be a graduate of Central Okanagan Public Schools. My education in Kelowna helped lay the foundation for success and inspired my passion for pursuing higher education," said Jesse Lafontaine. "I am truly grateful for all the people who have been part of my team along the way, and I am excited for the next steps in my journey."

Lafontaine currently attends the University of Alberta, where he is a second-year medical student, president of the U of A's Medical Students' Association, and vice-president of the Indigenous Medical and Dental Students' Association. Jesse Lafontaine also co-founded the Indigenous Medical Students' Association of Canada to increase Indigenous representation in medicine, a call to action from Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Lafontaine is the 76th Rhodes Scholar to come from the University of Alberta since the award's inception in 1903.

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For comments, please contact:

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