

The King's Medal

Remarks by President and Vice-Chancellor William Lahey

The King's Medal is awarded to the graduating student who stands highest in an honours program in an arts or science subject.

The winner of the King's Medal for 2024 is Anna Dugandzic.

Unfortunately, Anna could not join us for Encaenia, but I am delighted to tell you about her accomplishments today. And Anna will be able to see the film later.

Anna Dugandzic is the recipient of the King's Medal. Anna has graduated with a Bachelor of Science with first class honours in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, and an undergraduate certificate in Genetics.

Anna is a clear example of a student who brings with her to King's a unique set of personal academic and athletic skills that are matched by very few over the years. Since beginning her studies at King's, Anna has been the recipient of various scholarships, awards, accolades and has maintained an incredibly strong academic record. Anna's honours supervisor remarks that, "Anna carries herself with both humility and confidence and is a joy to supervise and work with as a partner. Her contribution to scientific knowledge through her honours research has been significant, outstanding, and at a level that can only be expected of a graduate student."

Anna's research during her honours term focused on the mechanisms facilitating the absorption of viruses to granular activated carbon, and the impact of environmental factors such as rainfall turbidity and pH on viral detection. That's the kind of sentence that makes you tired just reading it. Notably, she evaluated the water quality and occurrence of Covid-19 and influenza A in selected lakes in Nova Scotia. Her findings revealed variations in viral loads across sample sites with notable patterns and viral presence related to physiochemical parameters such as lake turbidity and pH.

Approaching her work with exceptional attention to detail, both in her writing, which is crisp and concise, and through her technical analysis, Anna has truly embodied the integration of science and the arts through her research.

Throughout her time at King's, Anna has successfully balanced the rigours of a demanding academic program with the passion, energy and commitment required for achieving success in athletics. She's a decorated athlete in badminton, where Anna won two straight ACAA women's double championships. In her two trips to badminton nationals, she finished fourth in 2023 and then won a bronze medal in 2024. Additionally, Anna was also a valued member of the King's women's soccer team, where Anna was selected as a conference all-star and went to nationals this year. She was also named to the King's athletic honour role every year and won the National Scholar Athlete Award each of the three years she represented King's. She also won an Athlete of the Year Award this past year.

In addition to this, Anna also spent her spare time volunteering with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind in the vision mate program and worked as part of Dalhousie's medical

campus responder team. We know that this prestigious award is only a mere indicator of the great things that Anna will continue to achieve in her future.

And so, we are excited to celebrate Anna's contributions to King's and Dalhousie, the scientific community and more. It gives me great pleasure to present the King's Medal to Anna Dugandzic.