

2008 Torchia Scholarship Winner Announced

Toronto, Ontario, September 30, 2008 – Diala Homaidan, Toronto, Ontario, is the winner of the second Torchia Scholarship in Public Relations Relations/Communications, awarded by the Communications + Public Relations Foundation. The \$1,500 Scholarship was established to recognize a student who best exemplifies the spirit and practice of bilingualism in the Canadian communications and public relations profession.

A student at the University of Victoria in British Columbia, Homaidan is studying in the public relations certificate program through the Division of Continuing Studies. She holds a Bachelor of Arts (Hon.) Psychology and Linguistics from Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario and is fluent in English, French and Arabic.

“The public relations field is continuously evolving, becoming more global and more culturally diverse,” said Homaidan. She points out that public relations practitioners need to recognize cultural differences, adapt to local customs and understand verbal and non-verbal communication in order to be efficient at their jobs on an international and intercultural level.

In addition to her studies, Homaidan has served as public relations manager, Markham Stouffville Hospital, a junior account executive at Levine Communications, Los Angeles, as well as a French liaison between the City of Toronto's Social Services division and Francophone partners such as le Centre francophone de Toronto. She also handled French language media outreach during two public relations internships in Los Angeles.

“Diala Homaidan was a tremendous asset to the public relations team at Markham Stouffville Hospital,” said Julia Scott, Vice President, Organizational Effectiveness. “Her excellent communication and writing skills were complemented by her energetic and enthusiastic personality. Her professional demeanor and 'can-do' attitude made a significant impact on staff and her contribution to the hospital was recognized by leaders throughout the organization.”

The Torchia Scholarship is awarded to a communications student who has chosen to study public relations/communications in one of Canada's two official languages that is not his/her first language or mother tongue, and who is entering the second year of study in a Canadian university degree program or multi-year certificate or diploma program that meets recognized standards of education.

“Speaking multiple languages gives students a greater appreciation for other cultures and ways of thinking, and often leads to exciting career opportunities,” said Jean-Claude Torchia, CEO and co-founder of Torchia Communications. “Daila’s track record demonstrates this clearly, and she’s just starting her career. We’re excited about her future and the contribution she will surely have on our profession and society.”

The Torchia Scholarship monies are managed by the Communications and Public Relations Foundation. The Foundation promotes the advancement of communications and public relations as vital functions in society, is dedicated to the public interest, and is committed to increasing public knowledge and awareness of the role of communications and public relations in daily life. The Foundation accepts individual and corporate contributions towards research and educational initiatives nationwide.

For more information about the Foundation and its public relations educational initiatives, contact Barbara Sheffield, Chair, Communications and Public Relations Foundation, Suite 1515, 73 Widdicombe Hill Blvd., Toronto, Ontario, M9R 4B3, or phone 416 242-6146 or e-mail foundation@prmediacconnection.com.

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