

# BACKGROUND: QUEEN ELIZABETH II CENTENNIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD RECIPIENTS

## Queen Elizabeth II Centennial **Aboriginal Scholarship**



Omeasoo Butt is from Saskatoon, SK, and is a member of the Saddle Lake Cree First Nation

### **Omeasoo Butt**

*PhD Student, Department of History, College of Arts and Science, University of Saskatchewan; Former President, University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association*

Omeasoo Butt is tracing the history of housing in two indigenous communities, and showing that homes speak volumes about the way people think, express their values, and live their lives. Butt's work will examine changing indigenous architecture and community planning through the history of colonization. She hopes her research will help people think seriously about their own houses—not only as homes, but as meaningful reflections of identity, culture, politics and place. Until now, historical scholarship about Aboriginal governance has focused on formal political systems and policies such as the Indian Act. Little has been written about how systems of governance relate to architectural space. Her study places the family at the centre, examining the effect of housing on how family members related to each other and their community.



Cassandra Opikokew is a member of the Canoe Lake Cree First Nation, SK

### **Cassandra J. Opikokew**

*MPA Student, Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, University of Regina campus; Research Associate, Knowledge Translation and Communications, Indigenous Peoples' Health Research Centre; President and Founder, Indigenous Students' Association at the U of R; and National Aboriginal Caucus Chairperson, Canadian Federation of Students*

Cassandra Opikokew will use comparative policy analysis to research methods and practices for supporting the success of Aboriginal students in post-secondary programs and examining what types of programs and supports are most effective at increasing recruitment and retention of Aboriginal students in post-secondary institutions. A key component of Opikokew's research will be to draw connections between early childhood, primary, secondary and post-secondary education policies to examine how and why the stream of potential post-secondary Aboriginal students continues to get smaller as one progresses through the educational system in the province due to systemic, financial and cultural barriers. The final goal of her research project is to develop policy recommendations for increasing the number of Aboriginal post-secondary students in Saskatchewan within the context of Canada's colonial history, residential schools, and First Nations treaty rights, while using expanded Indigenous definitions of success that include cultural identity.

## Queen Elizabeth II Centennial **Parliamentary Studies Scholarship**



Sara McPhee-Knowles is from Regina, SK

### **Sara McPhee-Knowles**

*PhD Student, Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, University of Saskatchewan campus; President, JSGS Students' Association, University of Saskatchewan campus*

Sara McPhee-Knowles' research will focus on understanding the contribution of systemic risk, as opposed to behavioural risk, to Type I and Type II errors in the food safety system. Risk is seen as inevitable in modern society – every action carried out by individuals, groups and systems exhibits some form of risk. The implications of this dichotomy for public policy are potential increases in the number of Type I and Type II errors, which can have significant impacts on public and environmental health as well as on innovation and economic development. Agriculture and food production have deep roots in Saskatchewan, and these areas are changing rapidly given advances in technology and science. McPhee-Knowles believes that a better understanding of how regulators make decisions under uncertainty is vital to advancing the economy, growth and prominence of Saskatchewan as an agricultural centre of excellence.