

## 2017-2018 J.H. Stewart Reid Memorial Fellowship

Crystal Acosta, a PhD candidate at the University of Manitoba, has been awarded the 2017 J.H. Stewart Reid Memorial Fellowship. The fellowship, established by CAUT, recognizes and funds a graduate student from a Canadian university that has demonstrated academic excellence.

Crystal holds a bachelor's degree in microbiology and a master's degree in pharmaceutical sciences from the University of Manitoba. She has published her research in several peer-reviewed journals and delivered a number of presentations at international conferences. As a doctoral student, Crystal was fortunate to be supported by Research Manitoba, as well as the J.G. Fletcher PhD Fellowship from the University of Manitoba. Other awards and distinctions include the Smerchanski Endowed Studentship Grant from the St. Boniface Hospital Foundation and the Dr. Mark Nickerson Graduate Entrance Scholarship in Pharmacology and Therapeutics from the University of Manitoba, among others.

Crystal is investigating the physiological mechanisms that regulate the structure, mechanical properties and function of brain-penetrating arterioles in health and cardiovascular disease. "A large proportion of heart failure patients develop cognitive decline and dementia," she says. "The literature suggests there is indeed an association between heart failure and neurodegeneration, but more study is required to identify underlying mechanisms."

Crystal has been a fixture in student governance for the past three years at the University of Manitoba, serving on the executive of the Health Sciences Graduate Students' Association. She also has a continued interest in community outreach through her work with the Manitoba Neuroscience Network.