

SFU CONVOCATION JUNE 2019

# Community commitment shapes academic path for aspiring SFU changemaker

BY CINDY LI | October 17, 2019

**W**hen Jasleen Bains isn't working to strengthen SFU's civic engagement or representing Canada in international youth forums, she's trying to figure out ways she can make a positive impact on her community.

Inspired by her immigrant father's passion for political events, Bains has always gravitated toward socio-political topics. At SFU she majored in international studies and minored in communication. She graduates this June with a BA.

"My experience as an international studies student has been incredible," says Bains. "The professors and students with whom I've worked have really shaped my future career goals."

Currently on a co-op education placement as a communication assistant at SFU's Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, she also volunteers tirelessly to make her community a better place.

She strives to create a culture of zero tolerance

for sexual violence at SFU through her work with the Active Bystander Network, a peer network of students that forms part of the university's Sexual Violence Support and Prevention Office (SVSPO).

And since high school, she has been helping the City of Surrey to create recreational programming for children and youth through Surrey's Future Leaders program.

In 2018, she represented Canada at the Youth Trends Forum in Taipei, Taiwan, where she presented on political outreach and how to remove social barriers to political participation among youth.

Grateful for the guidance she has received from mentors, she plans to also mentor children and youth.

"Growing up I didn't see a lot of young women in leadership roles or in professional roles, especial-

ly not young Punjabi women from my neighbourhood," says Bains. "I love that I'm seeing more and more individuals smash the glass ceiling."

This April, Bains attended the Daughters of the Vote initiative in Ottawa, where she represented her riding of Surrey-Newton in the House of Parliament and gave a statement along with 30 other delegates—an experience she says she'll never forget.

In September, she will begin MA studies at SFU's School of Communication, where she plans to explore the role of dialogue and media during election periods.

"Everyone's path is unique," says Bains. "Seize the opportunities that SFU has to offer. My time at SFU has been better than what I could have imagined."