

Laura Archer Inspiring Young Alumni Award 2018

Laura Archer from Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island graduated from UPEI in 2001 with her Bachelor of Science in Nursing. From 2001 to 2004 Laura honed her skill in emergency rooms and hospitals across North America. Realizing her limited global knowledge, in May of 2004, Laura sold all of her belongings, bought a backpack and a plane ticket and took off on a global adventure that would change the course of her life.

After visiting several countries in Asia, India, the Middle East, and Africa and experiencing a natural disaster in Thailand Laura knew she wanted to make a difference in some of the most devastated parts of the world. When she returned home in 2005, Laura applied and was accepted to work for Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF).

Her work with MSF took her around the world and back again. She provided emergency medical humanitarian services responding to natural disasters, epidemics, famine, conflict, and other complex health emergencies. Working in places like the Democratic Republic of Congo, North Darfur, Sudan, Niger, and many others, there was always danger present, whether from disease or local groups that didn't support the work of MSF. Despite the dangers she faced, Laura continued to work with MSF until 2012 when she was the Emergency Medical Team Leader in southeastern Chad.

Since 2016 she has been with the Global Health Unit of the Canadian Red Cross in Ottawa as the Health in Emergencies Advisor, providing operational and technical support to a wide variety of emergency medical humanitarian programs. She has been deployed to Haiti following Hurricane Matthew, Somalia during the recent cholera outbreak, Antigua and Barbuda following hurricane Irma and Uganda in response to the South Sudanese refugee crisis. Laura is an experienced keynote speaker and facilitator and is often found in the front of a room filled with people looking to learn from her experiences and expertise.

When Laura is not providing humanitarian services around the globe, she will most likely be found in her art studio. Laura uses her art as a medium to tell the stories of the people she meets through her work and travel. She has appeared in many solo art exhibitions as well as juried group art exhibitions. One of her works is permanently on display in the Applied Health Science building which is home to the Faculty of Nursing here at UPEI.

Laura is currently completing her Advanced Master of Science in Disaster Medicine. She lives in Ottawa with her husband Sjors and her two children Calvin and Adele.

The UPEI Alumni Association is pleased to present Laura Archer with a 2018 Inspiring Young Alumni Award for all of her contributions to the global community.