

SCHOLARS AT RISK

ANNUAL REPORT | 2018—2019

**DOING OUR PART TOGETHER, AS MEMBERS OF
THE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC COMMUNITY**



Carleton
UNIVERSITY

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2018 Scholars at Risk Mustafa Bahran and Rahim Surkhi

Opening remarks

Message from the Carleton University Scholars at Risk Committee Chair



Melanie Adrian, Law and
Legal Studies

Inspirational, insightful, brave. These are some of the words used to describe the scholars at risk who have been hosted by Carleton University over the last years. I would also add: shockingly productive. I add shockingly because these are colleagues who are continuing their research under conditions of discrimination and intimidation. These are colleagues that have been surveilled, imprisoned, and tortured. They are colleagues who have fled as they have become targets of policies and politics because of the ideas they are advancing - ideas that are the result of thoughtful consideration and study. These colleagues epitomize what it means to insist on the right to advance knowledge, knowing that they do so at their own peril. By embracing them in our community, Carleton reaffirms what lies at the core of our mission: the advancement of free, unimpeded thinking, research and teaching.

Message from the Carleton University Scholars at Risk Committee Communications Coordinator



Julie Garlen,
Interdisciplinary Studies
(Childhood and Youth Studies)

As a new member of the Carleton University community in 2018, I was not only eager to become involved in university service, but interested in seeking out opportunities that truly make a difference. When I learned about Scholars at Risk, I knew I wanted to be involved. Protecting scholars suffering grave threats to their lives, liberty and well-being is a cause worth supporting. I hope that this year's annual report, which I prepared with assistance from our SAR student intern, Alec Verch, and Carleton's Department of University Communications, will inspire you to become involved!

As you might imagine, our work requires considerable financial resources to ensure that our scholars' needs are met, so we rely on individual donations to supplement the institutional support we receive. We hope to expand our network of donors that we can increase the level of support and benefits we are able to offer our visiting scholars. If you'd like to know more about how you can contribute, I invite you to learn more about our Future Funder campaign at <https://futurefunder.carleton.ca>.

Message from the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

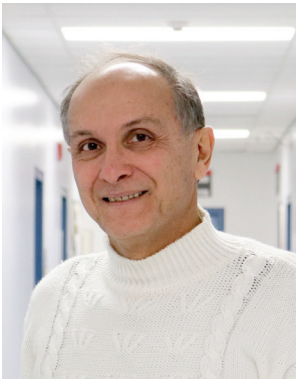


Jerry Tomberlin

Carleton University hosted its first at-risk scholar in 2014. This year, we welcomed our fifth scholar with support from the Scholars at Risk Network and Institute of International Education's Scholar Rescue Fund (IIE-SRF). Coming from countries that include Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Yemen, our scholars have become part of the fabric of our university and valued contributors to the Department of Law and Legal Studies; the School of Linguistics and Language Studies; the School of Journalism and Communication; the Institute of Political Economy; the Department of Physics; and the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Not only have they contributed to teaching and research in their academic units, they have become part of our community by engaging with students, staff, faculty, alumni and donors through presentations, panel discussions and other collaborations.

On behalf of our scholars and the Carleton community, thank you for supporting academic freedom and your generous welcome to these scholars. Carleton is committed to this important program as part of our larger academic mission to promote creative and critical inquiry and to enhance our capacity to have a positive influence locally and internationally.

Message from the External Relations Chair, Carleton University Academic Staff Association



Angelo Mingarelli,
Mathematics and Statistics

My personal interest in Scholars at Risk dates back to my years as a graduate student more than 40 years ago. At that time, there was growing concern for academics who had become prisoners of conscience, jailed or fired for their beliefs or actions against an oppressive government. I signed many, many petitions and continued to do so throughout my years as a young faculty member at the University of Ottawa and later at Carleton.

One might wonder how such letters of protest or concern can possibly make a difference. However, each had its own impact, sometimes in mysterious ways. In 2005, I attended a conference at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia and, while I was chatting with colleagues, a bus pulled up with a cohort of conference participants. One of them approached my group and introduced himself. When I said my name, he stopped, looked me in the eye and said, "From Ottawa?" I said, "Yes," unable to recall where we might have met before. He let go of my hand, gave me the biggest hug you could imagine and said, "Your letter got me out!" In 1986, I had written a letter to his government asking for his release from prison. He was let go and carried my name with him wherever he went.

It's worth it; please help us help others at risk.

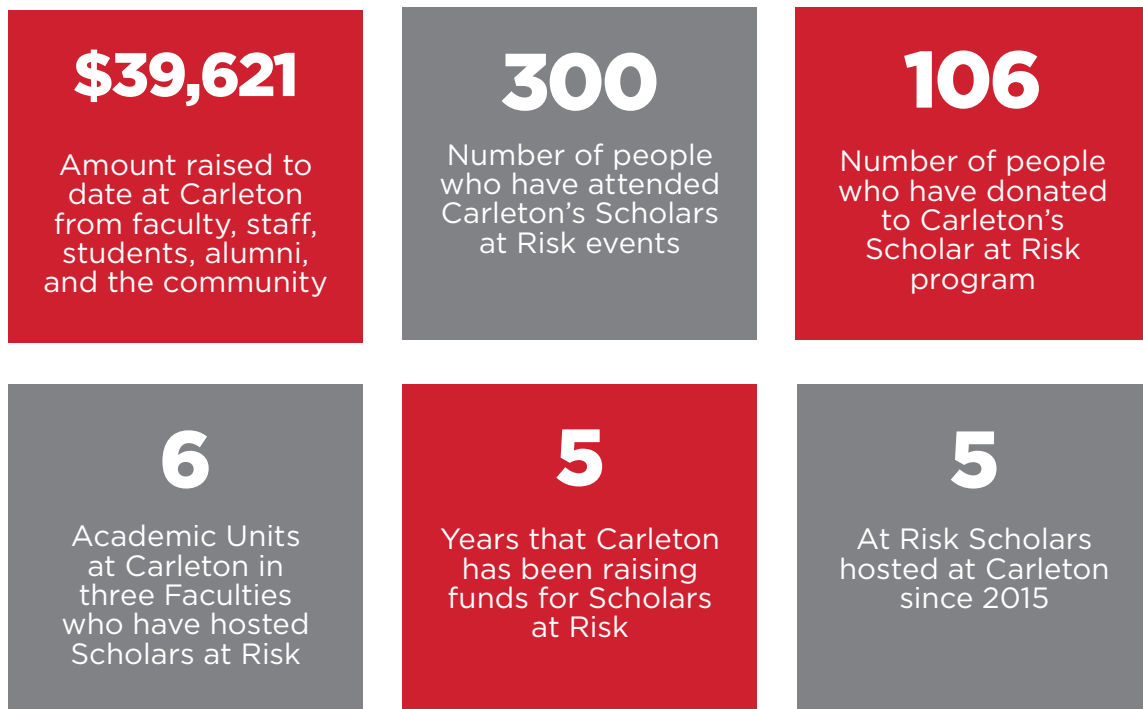
Scholars at Risk—At a glance

In the World



Illustration courtesy of: Scholars at Risk Network-Summary Report on activities 2016-2017

At Carleton



In Canada



- | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Carleton University | 8. Queen's University | 17. Université du Québec à Montréal |
| 2. Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) | 9. Simon Fraser University | 18. University of Toronto |
| 3. Centennial College | 10. St. Mary's University | 19. University of Victoria |
| 4. George Brown College | 11. Trent University | 20. University of Windsor |
| 5. McGill University | 12. University of Alberta | 21. University of Winnipeg |
| 6. McMaster University | 13. University of British Columbia | 22. Western University |
| 7. Memorial University of Newfoundland | 14. University of Guelph | 23. Vancouver Island University |
| | 15. University of Lethbridge | 24. York University |
| | 16. University of Ottawa | |

The Scholars at Risk Canada Chapter was formally launched in 2012. By 2016, there were seven member universities in Canada which has grown to 24 member universities today.

Carleton University's Scholars at Risk committee update

Carleton and the University of Ottawa joined the Scholars at Risk Network in 2014, and, worked to co-host an at-risk scholar in 2015-16. After a successful first year, both programs have grown, and our universities are now hosting scholars independently. Over the past five years, Carleton's Scholars at Risk committee has been able to have a significant impact on the local and international academic community. This would not have been possible without the help and support of the Carleton community.

Hosting Scholars

In 2018-19, we hosted two more at-risk scholars. Carleton welcomes scholars through three main pathways, including: providing one to two-year appointments recommended by the Scholars at Risk committee; offering financial support (in the form of a travel/research grant) for visiting professors hired through an academic unit; and inviting honorary ranks or guest lecturers as recommended by an academic unit.

Financial Support

Our current budget scheme is a three-year rolling budget updated annually. Our revenues include support from the Scholars Rescue Fund program, the Provost, Faculty Deans, community donations, and the Carleton University Academic Staff Association. Our expenses include scholar salaries, research grants, student salaries, events, conferences and membership fees. Our fundraising goal for 2018-19 was \$10,000. Over the year, we raised more than \$7,000. We are continuing to strive for our ambitious goal of \$10,000 and we have many exciting plans to engage with faculty, staff, students and the community.

Key Accomplishments

In 2018-19, we:

- Continued our support of two at-risk scholars;
- Defined new member roles for the Carleton Scholars at Risk committee;
- Received more than \$7,000 in fundraising;
- Hosted a welcome event for scholars funded by the Scholars Rescue Fund;
- Hired a student intern to support the work of the Carleton Scholars at Risk committee and the national program; and
- Hosted Canada's first student advocacy summit.

Looking Forward

In 2019-20, we will:

- Welcome one to two new at-risk scholars;
- Work towards achieving our \$10,000 fundraising goal;
- Host a second annual student advocacy summit (University: Uncensored); and
- Attend the SAR 2020 Global Congress in Washington, DC and Baltimore.

Scholars at Risk - Canada chapter meeting update

Scholars at Risk Canada is an umbrella organization that advances and facilitates the values, aims and activities of the Scholars at Risk network in Canadian universities by:

- Helping to prepare and carry out joint activities among its members,
- Supporting the efforts of the International Secretariat to encourage new academic institutions to join the Scholars at Risk Network,
- Developing relations with external partners who support the values and aims of the Scholars at Risk network, and
- Encouraging the work of student chapters of the Scholars at Risk network.

Over the past three years, the chapter has:

- Seen a 300%+ increase in membership from 2016 (seven member universities) to 2018 (23 member universities) and the Canadian Association for University Teachers (CAUT), which joined in 2019 as a sustaining member;
- Hosted two conference days organized in Canada's Parliament and sponsored by the Liberal Party, Conservative Party and New Democratic Party;
- Represented the Scholars at Risk network on seven panels/conferences;
- Established a communications infrastructure with member universities and the rest of the international network;
- Created a pro-bono lawyer immigration roster; and
- Published an op-ed in the the Globe and Mail on Canada's role in the protection of academic freedom globally.

SCHOLARS AT RISK

NETWORK CANADA SECTION



April 2018, SAR Canada meeting

Our scholars

Current Scholars



2019-2021

Scholars at Risk provides support to a wide range of scholars from many different social and cultural contexts. Some scholars face such grave dangers to their safety that they cannot risk publicly acknowledging their status. One such scholar, who must remain anonymous, shares how vital SAR support has been in escaping persecution:

My research on a subject prohibited by the government in my home country forced my family and me into exile. We left everything behind and found ourselves homeless in Canada. Without the support of the Scholars at Risk Program and the Scholar Rescue Fund, which gave me a placement as a visiting professor at Carleton University, my family and I would still be like other homeless refugees in Ottawa. I'm forever grateful for having a safe place to live and an opportunity to continue pursuing my passion for university teaching and research.



2018-19

PROFESSOR MUSTAFA BAHRAN, DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS

In 2015, the war in Yemen forced my family to flee to Saudi Arabia. Thanks to a sponsorship by the International Institute of Education Scholar Rescue Fund (IIE-SRF), my family and I were able to move to the United States, so I could work as a visiting professor in the University of Oklahoma's Department of Physics and Astronomy. Upon finishing my assignment, I moved to Ottawa to be with my family. With the help of the IIE-SRF, Carleton agreed to host me as a visiting professor in the Department of Physics; the IIE-SRF has had a positive impact on me as a scholar at risk.

In June, my wife and I visited the Carleton campus for the first time. Immediately upon arriving, we were taken aback by the beauty of the environment surrounding the campus, particularly the riverside. The first thing we noticed was the friendly and helpful people on campus. We were surprised that every time we would ask someone for directions, they would walk us to our destination while smiling and wishing us well; this made us

feel immensely welcome. Indeed, there is something unique about the level of kindness displayed here in Ottawa, specifically at Carleton. It has left a positive impression on us.

Former Scholars



**2017-19
PROFESSOR RAHIM SURKHI, SCHOOL OF LINGUISTICS
AND LANGUAGE STUDIES**

For me, coming to Carleton means enjoying academic freedom with access to scientific resources, conferences and meetings. This is especially true after living more than a decade of my life in a state of fear, anxiety and instability in Iraqi Kurdistan, where I was deprived of engaging in any academic events, conferences or meeting outside the region. I was not even able to visit my family and homeland - Rojhelat (Kurdistan of Iran). Being at Carleton is a valuable and unimaginable opportunity.

This incredible opportunity was a product of joint action taken by both the International Institute for Education and Scholar Rescue Fund and the Scholars at Risk network who saved my life in the true sense of the word. Carleton's School of Linguistics and Language Studies and the Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute at the University of Ottawa hosted and helped me to immerse myself into academic life through the course I taught on Kurdish language.

Coming to Canada was like reaching a safe shore after surviving a stormy sea, which gave me a feeling of stability, peace and appreciation.

DID YOU KNOW?

Across the world, Scholars at Risk provides sanctuary and assistance to more than 300 threatened scholars each year.

www.scholarsatrisk.org

UNIVERSITY: UNCENSORED

THE OTTAWA SUMMIT FOR ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Carleton University hosts Canada's first student advocacy summit

by Alec Verch, Senior Undergraduate SAR Student Intern

On September 27th and 28th, the Scholars at Risk (SAR) initiative and the Department of Law and Legal Studies at Carleton University hosted Canada's very first SAR student advocacy summit. "University: Uncensored - The Ottawa Summit for Academic Freedom" took place at MacOdrum Library and offered participants the opportunity to explore the concept of advocacy as it relates to academic freedom in a unique space within which they were able to engage activists, leading human rights experts, world-class scholars, and senior civil servants.



Over the course of the summit, registrants gained first-hand insights into the inner workings of advocacy platforms and human rights and its institutions. Through a series of practice-oriented workshops that were co-led by SAR scholars and other visiting SAR activists with extensive experience in advocacy, students focused on refining the skills that are required to be an effective advocate such as: presenting one's case to high-ranking officials, conducting research, and developing a strategy around one's advocacy work.

U:U

One of the many highlights of this event included a keynote lecture that was delivered by Carleton Alumna and Indigenous rights activist Waneek Horn-Miller on the meaning of reconciliation and the power of advocacy. In her lecture, Horn-Miller shared her experience as a Bear Clan woman of the Mohawk Nation, drawing on her journey as an Olympic athlete to orient her insight into human rights advocacy and activism group, were able to achieve.

Voices from the Summit

Izzidine El-Mufti, Law and Legal Studies Student

Having had the opportunity of enrolling in the Advanced Legal Topics Seminar entitled “Academia and Activism,” I had the privilege of working under Dr. Melanie Adrian on matters of human rights as they pertain to academic freedom. The process not only saw me develop a deeper understanding of existing literature on the topic, but it also allowed me, through this newly acquired understanding and knowledge, to amalgamate both theory and praxis in a way that has since allowed me to usher positive impact and change on both the local and global stages.

After having been connected with international organizations and academics the world around, I was invited to represent Carleton at NYU’s Student Advocacy Days, a 2-day conference held at the institution’s Washington D.C. campus that aimed at teaching the next generation of advocates how to build effective advocacy campaigns that would yield real-world impact.

Upon embarking on this profound journey, I had the privilege of working closely with Dr. Adrian on establishing “University: Uncensored - The Ottawa Summit for Academic Freedom,” Canada’s very first human rights and academic freedom conference of its kind and one that was meant to offer undergraduates from an array of different programs a unique space within which they are able to engage with activists, leading human rights experts, world-class scholars, and senior civil servants. This meant endless hours of brainstorming and research, opening and maintaining communication with potential esteemed invitees and guests, as well as developing the appropriate branding for the event to be as effective and that complements the message and goal it is intended to serve.

In retrospect, it is safe to say that registrants were able to gain first-hand insights into the inner workings of advocacy platforms and human rights and its institutions, a reality that had, at the very core, instilled the power student possess into them. I find myself extremely proud of what we, as a group, were able to achieve.



Waneek Horn-Miller, Keynote Speaker

Alec Verch, Senior Undergraduate SAR Student Intern

Through a series of interactive lectures and panel discussions hosted by an impressive range of activists, leading human rights experts, world-class scholars and senior civil servants, this summit created an intimate space that fostered meaningful conversations between students and advocates alike about the importance of using your voice to stand up for what you believe in. At the crux of this dialogue, however, was a deliberate attempt to unpack the meaning of academic freedom and how it is conceptualized from a human rights perspective.

In order to help guide participants through this discussion, the case of Dr. Hatoon Al-Fasi, an Associate Professor of women’s history at King Saud University and prominent women’s rights activist who was detained in apparent retaliation for her advocacy work in Saudi Arabia, was positioned at the centre of a series of workshops focused on developing important skills for maximizing one’s role as an advocate in a transnational context. Reflecting on my personal experience at this summit, it is more apparent to me than ever that we as scholars-in-training have a responsibility to use the platform that we are given as students to advocate for the protection of academic freedom. By using our voices to draw attention to the terrible injustices that are committed against scholars around the world, we have the ability to stand up for those within the academic community who no longer have a voice of their own.



Émilie Ovenden (Carleton alumna), Kyla Yates (Roger Williams University), and Alec Verch (Carleton University) welcome attendees at SAR's Student Advocacy Days event in Washington, D.C., March 2019..

How to get involved

Support

You can donate to Carleton University's Scholars at Risk initiative online at futurefunder.carleton.ca where you have the option of making a one-time donation or a monthly pledge. All donations have a tangible impact on the lives of SAR scholars in our community. Thank you!

Stay connected

Join our mailing list by contacting ScholarsatRisk@carleton.ca

Resources

Carleton's Scholar at Risk committee
<https://carleton.ca/scholars-at-risk/>

Scholars at Risk network
scholarsatrisk.org

Scholar Rescue Fund
scholarrescuefund.org

2019-2020 Carleton University Scholars at Risk Committee

Melanie Adrian (Chair), Law and Legal Studies
Ariq Alam, Purchasing Services
Mustafa Bahran, Physics
Aaron Doyle, Sociology and Anthropology
Christine Duff, French, Institute of African Studies
Julie Garlen, Institute of Interdisciplinary Studies
Patti Harper, MacOdrum Library
Andrew Johnston, History
Laura Madokoro, History
Angelo Mingarelli, Mathematics and Statistics
Rahim Surkhi, Linguistics and Language Studies
Alec Verch, Student Intern
Norah Vollmer, Faculty Affairs

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