



Laura Montour is a member of the bear clan and is a Delaware from Six Nations.

Laura graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Waterloo in 2003. She studied science because she knew it would give her the background needed to enter a career in health. She loved biological science in high school and her love grew even more throughout university. She is currently studying medicine at McMaster University. Laura hopes that having a **career in medicine** will allow her to **help improve** the current health status of

Aboriginal people. In the future, Laura plans to return to Six Nations to practice medicine.

Aside from being accepted into medical school, Laura graduated on the Dean's Honours list from the University of Waterloo. Also, in 2003 she published a paper in the Journal of Clinical Microbiology titled "**Isolation of Candida dubliniensis in an aboriginal community in Ontario, Canada**". The paper was based on the research she did at McMaster University during the summer of 2002.

One of the **challenges** Laura dealt with throughout her post secondary education was **financial in nature**. Science text books were always above and beyond what was funded and medical school is very expensive. There are many books to buy, hospital parking is \$10/day, there

are equipment costs (stethoscope, ophthalmoscope, otoscope), and there is a lot of travel to different hospitals which means gas, car insurance and car maintenance expenses.

Another **major challenge** that Laura faces while studying medicine at McMaster is group learning. Laura is soft-spoken and it has been very hard for her to adjust to learning in these small groups. Other students are much more aggressive in the groups and some may talk over others who are not as aggressive.

Laura would like to contribute to her community and society by being a role model to youth. Laura feels that one barrier facing aboriginal youth is the mindset that certain careers are impossible or unattainable. To overcome this barrier she believes that the youth

need to be encouraged early on that any career is attainable. Laura hopes her accomplishments will motivate other aboriginal youth to consider a career in medicine.

Laura's advice and encouragement to young people is to "**work hard and set goals. Your hard work will pay off and you will achieve your goals; I am living proof of that**".

Laura thanks everyone for their support. She has really been **motivated** by all the kind words of support and congratulations that members of the community have given her. Whenever she is feeling frustrated about school she just has to think about **how proud** her family and her community are and how lucky she is to have that support.