

THE PATRON

Julie Ann Elizabeth O'Rourke was one of those rare people who loved life and could make you love yours, was pre-eminently successful as a scholar and an artist, provided deep insight into any challenge of the heart, and brought together diverse friends and family all at once.

She was a professional photographer and fine artist, received her BFA from York University, and, after backpacking through Europe, Australia, and Southeast Asia, pursued a MFA from Ryerson University, doing major projects in New York City and the George Eastman House in Rochester. The focus of her Master's work was on the restoration and conservation of photographs, particularly those from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Julie worked an entire summer with VHS, matching fine art and photography to short stories. By analyzing both for the human experience and explicating how one related to the other, Julie enhanced VHS English courses with her interpretations.

Artistically, Julie was especially interested in the avant-garde and the synthesis of old and new forms. She had an exacting aesthetic that at once reflected Victorian, Art Deco, Industrial, and Post-Modern sensibilities. These themes recurred in her photography and in her other artistic endeavours. She had hoped to pursue a second Master's degree in the field of art therapy.

Julie had a deep love of travel and adventure. She hiked in Thailand, dived at the Great Barrier Reef, surfed in Portugal, jogged in Central Park, and moved within the artistic community of Paris. She frequently admonished her friends by saying, "Don't talk about doing something — do it."

Her friends were both numerous and diverse, and she was equally at ease at an academic discussion in a fine restaurant or in a random gathering in rural Ontario. The common thread was her great love of people; she had an intuitive way of understanding people and usually liking what she saw. For Julie, there was never any question that her friends and family would be compatible, and she never missed an opportunity to bring the people she loved together.

After a three-year battle with a rare cancer called adenoid cystic carcinoma and two months after celebrating her thirtieth birthday, Julie passed away in March of 2011. Her love of life, people, and adventure never diminished through that fight, in spite of extraordinary pain and persistent bad news—all of these challenges testifying to her extraordinary strength of character.

THE SCHOLARSHIP

The Julie O'Rourke Memorial Scholarship, which is worth \$1000, is designed to offset expenses for a student pursuing post-secondary studies in a Fine Arts or Design program (variously defined). The purpose of the scholarship is to perpetuate Julie's talents and the light that she brought to the world by seeing and encouraging this light in others.

[The Successful Candidate](#)

The successful candidate will receive \$1000 from the Julie O'Rourke Memorial Scholarship fund in August of each year. Virtual High School requests the pleasure of correspondence with the winner.

After the first year of post-secondary, Virtual High School will reach out to the winner to inquire about how things are going. Specifically, the winner will describe his or her growth through the study of the arts over the past 12 months, lessons learned in the past year, interesting people the recipient has met, and information relating to future plans. Virtual High School will publish this information in a featured blog post in the Student Spotlight category

REQUIREMENTS

The deadline for applications is **August 1** of each year. There are five required sections.

1. Application Form

Instructions: The application form is a fillable PDF. You may complete an electronic copy and save it to your computer, or print a hard copy to include with your portfolio.

2. Education

You must provide proof that you have been accepted, or conditionally accepted, to a program in Fine Arts or Design (variously defined) at the post-secondary level. The school that you are planning to attend must be accredited in its jurisdiction, but otherwise, there are no restrictions on where or the type of Design or Fine Arts program you choose to pursue.

You must be a current student with Virtual High School or have successfully completed a course with VHS within the past three (3) years from the date you apply for the scholarship.

Instructions: Please submit a copy of your acceptance letter or other proof with your application.

3. Portfolio

Please provide us with photographs, an audio clip, or video of some of your work, in any medium. The scope of the work we review in the portfolio is wide, and we are not expecting you to have already acquired the skills and insights that your post-secondary studies will provide. However, we do need to see evidence that you are a practicing artist in your own right.

Instructions: You may submit an electronic portfolio or hard-copy portfolio of your work.



APPLICATION PROCESS

Please complete the 3 **requirements**:

1. PDF Scholarship Form
2. Copy of Acceptance Letter to Post-Secondary Fine Arts or Design Program
3. Portfolio

Provide *all 3* requirements using the application method of your choice:

By email: VHS.Awards@vhs.ucourses.com

By mail: *Virtual High School Awards Team
Julie O'Rourke Memorial Scholarship
c/o Virtual High School
27 Main St. North, Box 402
Bayfield, Ontario, Canada
N0M 1G0*

All information collected is **CONFIDENTIAL**. The selection committee will be composed of members of the VHS Awards Team who will treat all submitted information in a confidential manner. Results will be released only to the recipient.

Section One
A. Student Information

Surname		Given Name(s)		Date of Birth (yyyy/mm/dd)	
Street Address		City	Province	Postal Code	
Country	Email Address		Telephone Number		

B. Virtual High School (VHS) Courses

Course Name	Course Code	Date of registration

C. Post-Secondary

Name of post-secondary institution to which you have accepted an offer of admission:

Location	Program	Start Date
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D. Area of Study

Why did you choose the program listed in Part C? What attracted you to this area of study?

E. Career Plans

What are your career plans? What are your long-term goals?

Section Two

Make sure you have submitted all 3 elements of this application. Below you will find a checklist to help.

- Julie O'Rourke Scholarship Application Form (this form)
- Copy of Acceptance Letter to Post-Secondary Design or Fine Arts Program
- Portfolio

Signatures

I certify that to the best of my knowledge, the information included in this application is correct.

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian's
Signature: _____ Date: _____
(If student is under the age of 18)
