



**QUEEN'S  
UNIVERSITY  
BELFAST**

SCHOOL OF  
MATHEMATICS  
AND PHYSICS

# The Catherine Buchanan SCHOLARSHIPS



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These Scholarships were established in 2019 in memory of Catherine Buchanan to both inspire and support female physics students in the School of Mathematics and Physics. The Scholarships aim to advance the representation of women in science and enable progression to either MSci or PhD Physics.

Catherine Buchanan was a student at Strathearn School (Belfast), where she excelled at her A Level studies. Inspired by a visit to Armagh Observatory, she was planning to embark on a career as a scientist in the fields of physics and astronomy. However, just as she had finished her university application, Catherine developed a very rare and aggressive form of blood cancer and only one week after her diagnosis she sadly passed away on 21 September 2013, with her family by her side.

Catherine had a tremendous passion for science and wanted to make a difference in life. She was an outstanding individual just setting out in the world, and it is fitting that this scholarship has been established in her memory to encourage other young women to fulfil their potential and to pursue studies in physics and astronomy.

A degree in physics requires a huge amount of hard work and perseverance to complete. The award aims to relieve the financial pressure that some female students have, and thereby encourage them to pursue their studies. It also aims to reward those female students who, despite financial pressure, are able to excel in their studies.

**Three scholarships of £2,000 will be awarded to the top ranked full-time BSc / MSci (female) Physics students in each stage 1, 2 and 3.**

Through this partnership with Mr and Mrs Buchanan, we are honoured to be able to offer these scholarships and assist with the advancement of females within Physics.

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## RECIPIENTS AND TESTIMONIALS

### 2022/23

Abbey McNally  
Leah Donnelly  
Amy Davis

### 2021/22

Leah Donnelly  
Laura McWilliams  
Ciara Ward

### 2020/21

Hannah Jager  
Amy Davis  
Ciara Ward  
Lindsey Lynch

### 2019/20

Alicia Kerr  
Lindsey Lynch  
Sarah Gregg

### 2018/19

Sarah Gregg  
Lindsey Lynch  
Lydia Gardiner

I am so honoured and grateful to have been awarded the Catherine Buchanan scholarship this year for my first year at Queen's University.

I have always been passionate about physics and am excited about my future in a career in STEM. I would like to thank Catherine's family for their generosity and for honouring her in such a positive way.

**Abbey McNally**



I am so grateful to receive the Catherine Buchanan scholarship for the second year in a row and express my deepest gratitude to Mr and Mrs Buchanan for their immense generosity. Their support has played

a pivotal role in helping me achieve my academic aspirations, especially through financial support which is appreciated now more than ever with the increasing costs of rent in Belfast.

This gesture has also empowered me to aim higher, set ambitious goals, and aspire to make meaningful contributions to the field of physics, a continuously male dominated area of work. I have highly enjoyed my University experience so far and plan to continue my studies by switching to the Masters pathway next year, an option I had not considered without the help of this scholarship.

**Leah Donnelly**



I am extremely honoured to have been awarded the Catherine Buchanan Scholarship in both 2021 and 2023.

This award has been a welcome boost of confidence as I enter

my final year. It inspires me to continue working hard and allows me to focus on my studies without the distraction of financial worries.

I would like to thank the Buchanan family for their generosity and for their support to me and other women in STEM.

**Amy Davis**



I feel both honoured and humbled to receive the Catherine Buchanan award this year and send my deepest thanks to the Buchanan family for providing me and other women in STEM with this support and recognition

in memory of their talented daughter. This award will be a significant help during my Erasmus year, especially in the current climate of escalating prices, and will enable me to progress in my studies with less of the financial concerns that can arise when living in another country.

I am immensely grateful to Richard and Julie Buchanan for this generous gift that will give me and other women the motivation to pursue a future in STEM.

**Laura McWilliams**

I am honoured to have been awarded the Catherine Buchanan Scholarship in 2021 and 2022. I have really enjoyed my course so far and being awarded this scholarship has given me more confidence throughout my studies. It has encouraged me to stay motivated and to put my best effort into my work.

The scholarship has reduced any financial stress at university making it easier to focus on and enjoy my studies. I would like to thank Mr and Mrs Buchanan for their generosity, which has greatly helped me in achieving my academic goals.

**Ciara Ward**

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Words can't describe how honoured I was receiving the Catherine Buchanan scholarship in 2021, especially after learning about the amazing young woman it is in memory of. The scholarship has

helped to alleviate many of my financial worries- it has allowed me put some money away for my future and invest in a new laptop for my university work. Alongside this, I was able to reduce my hours at my part-time job, allowing me to dedicate more time to my studies. It has inspired me to continue to put my best foot forward and work hard at all of my assignments and exams, boosting my confidence in abilities and my passion for physics.

It has also made me aware of the support for women and girls in physics and has encouraged me to further pursue my education -earlier this year I accepted an offer to transfer from the Physics BSc to the MSci. All going well, I am considering studying for PhD in quantum or particle physics in the future. I am forever grateful to the Buchanan family for their generosity in honouring their daughter. Catherine's story will continue to inspire young women in STEM for years to come.

**Hannah Jager**



It was an honour and privilege to accept the Catherine Buchanan scholarship for the third time in 2021. Facing the workload and pressure of my final year was daunting but receiving this

scholarship was a tremendous encouragement. The financial relief I was given allowed me to focus wholly on my master's project, where, through my time in the lab and during the process of writing my thesis and analysing results, I found a new appreciation for my subject and the current advancements being made.

I really hope to make my own mark on academia as I pursue a PhD in solid state physics this year. I want to extend my sincere thanks to Catherine's family for their generosity and kindness.

**Lindsay Lynch**

Being in a woman in STEM brings unique challenges not faced by men in the field. Throughout my life I have always been interested in physics and studying it further. This past year has been particularly difficult for me, and this scholarship has allowed me to afford to spend my time focussing on studies and my own health.

Thanks to this I have been able to continue to achieve my academic goals and prepare for the rest of my degree life. I am very grateful to the Buchanan family and their generous donation that has helped me tremendously.

**Alicia Kerr**



I feel very blessed and honoured to have been awarded the Catherine Buchanan Scholarship in 2019 and 2020. This award has had a great impact on my confidence and motivation throughout

the final two years of my undergraduate degree. It has inspired me to work towards my academic goals and having completed my degree, I now plan to pursue a PhD in quantum physics. Furthermore, this generous investment has been a massive relief from the financial pressures of university. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Richard and Julie Buchanan for their incredible generosity, which has left a lasting impression on my career.

**Sarah Gregg**



I am honoured to have received one of the first Catherine Buchanan Scholarships, and I am deeply appreciative of the support which it provided in my final year of study. Throughout my degree I had to balance

my studies with working part time to support myself financially. This Scholarship helped to reduce the financial pressure during my final year, allowing me to work fewer hours and focus on my studies, which was a significant help during such an important time in my education.

Being awarded this Scholarship also encouraged me to pursue further study and research after completing my undergraduate studies. I have always been passionate about applying physics to medicine, in particular to cancer research, and I am looking forward to starting a PhD later this year where I will be focusing on radiation therapy research.

I would like to thank Richard and Julie Buchanan for their thoughtful and generous support, which has helped me reach my academic goals.

**Lydia Gardner**

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