ORDER OF
THE WHITE ROSE
POLYTECHNIQUE MONTRÉAL

THE FUTURE BLOOMS
IN OUR HANDS

Viviane Aubin, recipient of the 2018 Order of the White Rose scholarship

A passionate environmentalist, 2018 Order of the White Rose scholarship recipient Viviane Aubin has tremendous (renewable!) energy. In addition to her excellent academic record—she obtained an almost-perfect average in her bachelor's degree—and an impressive number of scholarships, the Polytechnique Montréal student has always been very active outside the institution, both in sports and within her community. Her admirable journey began when she went green at a very young age, after she became aware of climate change and its irreversible impacts. "When I was a child, my father used to tell me that when he was young, it didn't rain in January," she recalls. "I thought it was terrible to destroy the planet and not be able to fix it!"

Combined with a sharp scientific mind, her environmental concerns were soon reflected in her choices. During her bachelor's studies in mechanical engineering, she became very interested in mathematical modelling, to the point of developing an algorithm that could be applied to study soil liquefaction, a phenomenon that gives rise to especially destructive effects all over the world. Now a graduate student in energy engineering, Viviane will continue to put her math skills at the service of sustainable development through research aimed at optimizing the production of hydroelectric dams with a view to integrating solar and wind energies.

This 23-year-old's appetite for science and great concern for the environment are also reflected in her extracurricular activities. As soon as she enrolled at Polytechnique Montréal, she was actively involved at all levels in Esteban, a solar-car building project that culminates every year with an international competition in the United States. "In 2015, I was the driver and we won second place!" Her interest in green energy sources also led her to promote them among youth in presentations at elementary and high schools. She also adores leading science workshops for the Scientifines, an organization whose goal is to introduce young girls from disadvantaged backgrounds to science. "It may not be a constant struggle, but there is still a lot of work to be done so that girls feel they have their place in the sciences."

Viviane not only wants to save the planet, she is also a competitive lifesaver! A great swimmer, she trains several times a week with the Sea Devils and has taken part in lifesaving championships in Québec and in the rest of Canada. Nothing stops this vivacious young woman who has been living with juvenile arthritis since the age of 15. "I know the feeling of being blocked by my own body, so by remaining active, I successfully manage the symptoms and continue to do what I love."

Curious and open-minded, she has also done some educational and humanitarian trips, including to Bolivia and India, with the Poly-Monde committee. During her stays, she learned a lot about people and cultures and realized that not everyone has the same sensitivity to environmental issues. Today, this fact only further motivates her in her career aspirations, which revolve around project management in renewable energy. "What I want is to make as big a difference as possible for the environment."