

2017 YWCA TORONTO WOMAN OF DISTINCTION

TRANSFORMING LIVES



ISHITA AGGARWAL

Young Woman of Distinction – Advocate, Writer and Human Rights Champion

Ishita Aggarwal's interests and activist work are richly varied, but all have one thing in common: creating opportunities and sharing stories to advance girls' rights.

Ishita has been encouraging girls' participation in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics programs since she started Science4Girls – a high school club – where she encouraged girls' to learn about the work and lives of prominent women scientists. Ishita's personal experiences and Honours Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Toronto (U of T) has spurred on her passion to get other girls involved in the sciences.

During her time at U of T she was instrumental in the creation of the first national Women In Science and Engineering (WISE) conference which raised over \$300,000 and attracted 1,500 delegates, 200 industry professionals and went on to host keynote addresses from staff at Google, WIND Mobile and Hydro One. She was also an avid student blogger, covering stories of access and equity and reaching over 80,000 readers across U of T's three campuses and beyond.

Ishita is constantly looking for new ways to tell women's stories. She uses her role as an on air reporter at VIBE 105FM at York University to profile women's human rights stories. In 2015, she launched BEHIND-THE-SCENES Magazine, a global e-zine that aims to identify gender-based issues. Ishita accepts and anonymously publishes prose, poetry, art and photography that detail contributors' lived experiences with gender prejudice and discrimination.

Ishita is currently a Research Associate at the International Women's Rights Project and is immersed in writing impact reports and blog posts on topics important to women around the world. Ishita also serves low-income pregnant women through Mom's The Word, a travelling workshop she founded in an effort to support and educate pregnant women and mothers with newborn babies.

Ishita has received a Volunteer Recognition Award from the City of Vaughan for her outstanding contribution and dedication to the community.

No matter what Ishita takes on next, it is certain that girls' and women's rights will be at the heart of each action and accomplishment.



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