

Ms Anne Green, Member of the Leslie C Green Scholarship Committee,

Professor and LCol Chris Penny, Member of the Leslie C Green Scholarship Committee,

Ms Adrienne Jarabek, CCIL President,

Mr Forcese, Chair of the Leslie C Green Veterans Scholarship Committee,

And to the Family of Professor and Maj (Ret'd) Leslie C Green, Order of Canada, CM; Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada; LLD (London, UK), LLD (Hon. University of Alberta),

I write to you today to convey my most heartfelt appreciation for selecting me to receive the Leslie C Green Scholarship.

When I first read about this award in 2014, I strongly doubted that I had any chance of receiving it. I knew from experience of the many brilliant veterans there are in our armed forces; I did not profess then, and still do not now, to count myself among them. As such, when I was notified of the contest for 2015-16 shortly after beginning my legal studies at McGill University, I hesitated to apply. Thankfully, my wonderful friends at the Faculty convinced me otherwise.

There is much in the spirit of this award and the man in whose honour it is named that deeply resonates with me. As a distinguished scholar, a veteran of arguably the most influential conflict in human history, and a decorated civil servant, I hold Professor Green as an example of the great things that can be achieved when we reach across boundaries and bridge disciplines. I humbly hope to be able to follow in his footsteps and advance the cause to which he devoted his life.

My own experiences have led me to believe that there can be no higher calling than to work towards preventing the scourge of war and alleviating the suffering of its victims. I applaud all who make it a part of their life's work, however they are able – whether through political mobilization, participation in organizations such as the CCIL, by choosing to place country before self, or by engaging with the field of international law. And while I would maintain that there is no single best way to advance the cause of humanity in the face of war, I confess that I am in complete agreement with the view that international humanitarian law holds a place of particular importance in this struggle.

International humanitarian law, perhaps more than any other legal field, is concerned directly with that which is most precious – life itself. Where the law errs in its judgements over private disputes or in crime and punishment, the results can be both costly and tragic. Yet in war, the scale of human anguish is measured not in dollars, or by the pain of one, or even of many, but by the fates of nations and peoples. I believe it is our obligation to ensure that we fight – when we must do so – with utmost respect for life, and on clear ground as to what is right and what is wrong.

I am honored and humbled by this award, and I am deeply grateful to all those who have expressed their confidence in me with this scholarship. I take to heart the solemn duty that comes with its reception, as I know that it represents the hopes of many Canadians who share Professor Green's devotion. I am equally indebted to those who have donated to the financing of this award. I know that I must now earn the trust they have placed in me, and will uphold this charge as best I can.

Thanking you again for this wonderful opportunity, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jan Dobrosielski". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jan Dobrosielski