Louise Odette Brown was an academically gifted young woman with a strong sense of ethics and social purpose and a promising future. In her third year of a combined Bachelor of Law/Bachelor of International Studies degree at UNSW, and on exchange at the elite SciencesPo University in Paris, Louise died tragically in an apartment fire in Paris on April 14, 2011.

Louise was awarded the NSW Premier’s Award for All Round Excellence for her achievements in the Higher School Certificate. At UNSW, in her Law/International studies degree, Louise again distinguished herself as a gifted student, gaining High Distinctions in 8 of her subjects and Distinctions in 5 subjects. She won a place on the prestigious Dean’s List for academic excellence in Law in 2009, and on the Dean’s List for academic excellence in Arts and Social Sciences in 2008. Louise was also excelling in her studies at the SciencesPo University in Paris, and as a French linguist.

While at university, Louise was a dedicated advocate for social justice. She was co-president of UNSW’s branch of Amnesty International, and in this role Louise developed new campaign initiatives and organised two major forums that addressed the state of human rights in Australia and poverty as a violation of human rights.

Her commitment to using law for humanitarian causes was demonstrated by her work as an intern at Amnesty NSW Headquarters Action Centre. Louise was highly regarded as a refugee caseworker, assisting asylum seekers with client representation and advocacy and preparing country information reports. She also devoted time to volunteer at The Shack Youth Services – the UNSW school tutoring program, providing educational assistance to local disadvantaged students.

Louise undertook an internship with UNSW’s Centre for Refugee Research and in 2010 attended the United Nations Annual Consultations with NGOs in Geneva, where she was recognized for the excellent contribution she made to a report on refugees, on behalf of the Asian Women’s Human Rights Council and the Australian Refugee Rights Alliance.

Louise was an enthusiastic traveller, having travelled extensively throughout Europe, Asia and North and Central America. While travelling Louise devoted her time as a volunteer English tutor, such as with Tibetan refugees at the Charitable Trust in Dharamsala India, in 2007. Louise was also a talented artist, whose work often depicted women and children from Third World countries. She had exhibited her work in Sydney in 2010 before travelling to Paris to study.

Her legacy as an advocate for social justice, with a passion for making a difference, will live on through this award by assisting other students to become involved in social justice advocacy.

The Louise Brown Memorial Award will provide financial support to one UNSW Law student each year, to undertake an internship with an organisation outside of Australia which actively promotes or protects human rights.

The amount of student support provided each year depends upon how much we can raise in funds for the Award.

Please help us remember Louise: click here to make a donation online or print a donation form to post

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