

## Scholar to probe youth homelessness

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Difficulties faced by homeless young people will be studied by a student awarded a \$1,500 scholarship in the name of a Kitchener social activist.

Nadia Hausfather, 24, a second-year masters psychology student at Wilfrid Laurier University, will receive the Helmut Braun memorial award Oct. 2.

Braun struggled with schizophrenia before killing himself in 2001.

The award, which provides support for students in need of financial help, was created by Kitchener's Centre for Research and Education in Human Services and a Waterloo Region self-help group that helps people coping with mental-health problems.

The centre is a non-profit organization that does community-based research on social issues. The self-help group is operated by people who survived mental illness and now provide support for others.

Hausfather, who has worked with street youths in Nicaragua, said yesterday she will use the money to pay homeless youths to prepare questions and conduct interviews on the topic.

She said details of the project still have to be established but she hopes to work with young people living on the streets as well as those who share rooms rented by friends and are at risk of homelessness.

Hausfather also hopes to examine the issue of what happens when homeless youth become politically active by talking to young people who took part in Kitchener demonstrations this summer to protest a lack of safe and affordable housing for homeless youth.

Joanna Ochocka, research centre co-ordinator, said the Braun scholarships are awarded to students who work in social justice, peace and conflict resolution, cross-cultural issues or community development.

Braun, who was involved in groups that protested racism and the content of the Charlottetown accord in the early 1990s, was a local Marxist-Leninist candidate in the 1997 federal election. Two years later, he was an independent candidate in the provincial election.

An advocate for the rights of the mentally ill, Braun also worked as a researcher at the Centre for Research and Education.

His memorial fund is administered by the Mennonite Foundation of Canada. Find out how to donate by calling 745-7821 or visit website: [www.crehs.on.ca](http://www.crehs.on.ca).

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