



*I hope to deepen my appreciation for the possibilities that exist within community and collective efforts, harnessing this optimism and hope for social change, and bringing it with me into future projects.*

# Odessa Sherbaniuk

*McGill University*

*Chimaltenango Region, Guatemala*

The women's groups in the villages are already doing amazing work to improve their families' economic conditions and the vitality of their community. Many women participate in microcredit projects with local organizations. There have been collective farming initiatives and various independent business ideas. My idea for the Fellowship is to partner with the women's groups to develop a cooperative social business and/or community-led microfinance initiative that will amplify the skills that the women already possess and the strengths that are inherent in the community.

In 2012, I interned with women's groups in the communities of Labor de Falla, Cerro Alto, and Bola de Oro. I was hosted by local families and welcomed into many community events, such as weddings, religious services, and Mayan ceremonies. Every invitation to participate in community life came as a great honour. I am forever indebted to the women and families who shared their lives with me during this time.

# COADY

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE  
ST. FRANCIS XAVIER UNIVERSITY

OceanPath Fellowship