



**SLA**  
**STUDENT LIFE AWARDS**

2012



***Friday, April 13, 2012  
4 o'clock in the afternoon  
Student Union Ballroom***

*Sponsored by the Office of Leadership Programs, Department of Student Activities*

U N I V E R S I T Y   O F   C O N N E C T I C U T



Oak Leadership  
*Agenda*

**EXPLORE**

**ENGAGE**

**ELEVATE**

*The Division of Student Affairs offers a comprehensive, unique, and “cutting edge” approach to the leadership development of its students. The OAK Leadership Agenda reflects the Areas of Emphasis identified in the University’s Academic Plan, seeks to integrate itself into the University’s academic programs and services, and prepares students to be engaged, forward thinking, and global citizens.*

The components of the OAK Leadership Agenda are grouped into three primary areas:

**EXPLORE**

*...providing students with opportunities to explore campus-wide leadership and introduce them to the basic concepts and principles of leadership.*

- DISCOVERY Leadership Series
- Emotional Intelligent Leadership Series
- Leadership Learning Community

**ENGAGE**

*...focusing on the development and application of student leadership skills within academic disciplines and co-curricular activities, Oak provides more advanced skill development and expanded exploration of leadership theories.*

- FUTURE Leaders
- SOLID
- HOLDUP!
- TRIAD

**ELEVATE**

*...students are provided with opportunities to reflect on their experiences, refine their skills, and mentor younger students while preparing them for leadership beyond the university.*

- Leadership Legacy Experience



## 2012 Leadership Legacy Experience Students

The University of Connecticut is proud to recognize the 2012 Legacy Students as part of the Student Life Awards Program. They represent a rich diversity of leadership experiences, personal accomplishments, and academic excellence. The Leadership Legacy Experience was established to recognize and invite some of the University's most exceptional student leaders to participate in a year-long leadership enhancement experience that builds on their legacy as University leaders, and helps prepare them for a life of commitment and contribution beyond graduation.



*David Andrew*



*Alana Benito*



*Christopher Campbell*



*Rebecca D'Angelo*



*Matthew Dempsey*



*Shreena Desai*



*Carl D'Oleo-Lundgren*



*Shervin Etemad*



*Celia Guillard*



*Anne Jensen*



*Kyle Kotvun*



*Dustyn Nelson*



*Meagan O'Brien*



*Sagar Rana*



*Giovanna Torres*

*Welcome!*

## *A Letter from the President*

Dear Friends,

Part of the thrill of being involved in higher education is the fact that, as professors and administrators, we are able to watch students flourish on this campus in your classes, through research and, as importantly, through service and campus activities.

It is the students who make our campus vibrant and rewarding and truly give life to our mission as a university. It is so fitting that our student leaders be recognized for your extraordinary contributions to the University of Connecticut, this community and your fellow students.

I feel a great deal of pride in knowing that today's campus leaders – the people making exceptional contributions to UConn and to the lives of others – will undoubtedly go on to do the same for this state, our nation and the world in the years to come.

Please accept my congratulations and best wishes to all those nominated for today's awards. You deserve the recognition.

Sincerely,

Susan Herbst  
President  
University of Connecticut

# Index

A Letter from the President of The University of Connecticut .....	i
A Message from the Student Life Awards Committee Chair .....	1
Selection Committee .....	1
Husky Pride Award .....	2
Martha and Albert Cohen Scholarship for Enhancing Community .....	2
Matthew B. Schechter Scholarship .....	3
Outstanding Graduate/Teaching Assistant Award .....	3
Spirer-Dueker Student Humanitarian Achievement Award .....	4
Student Organization Advocacy Award .....	4
Program of the Year Award .....	5
Organizing Community Service Award .....	5
International Student Leadership Award .....	6
Willis N. Hawley Service and Leadership Award .....	6
Individual Husky Pride Award .....	7
Individual Community Service Award .....	8
Andrea Dennis LaVigne Scholarship for Advancing Diversity .....	9
Student Organization Advisor Award .....	9
Edward Victor Gant Scholarship .....	10
Building Community Award .....	11
Emerging Leader Award .....	12
Donald L. McCullough Leadership Award .....	13
2012 Leadership Legacy Students .....	14

## Donald L. McCullough Leadership Award

This award recognizes individual students who have made significant contributions to the University community through leadership and service during their tenure as a student. This award is in memory of Donald L. McCullough, Director of Student Activities – 1979 and was established by his wife Verna and family.

### Finalists



#### Vanessa Lynne Ball

Vanessa is an extremely well rounded individual; she has worked as a Resident Assistant for a number of years, is a member of Pi Beta Phi, and serves as the Co-Executive Director for HuskyTHON. Through Vanessa's work with HuskyTHON, the organization was able to raise \$304,000 for the Children's Miracle Network and CT Children's Medical Center this past year. An amazing team player, Vanessa helped empower her fellow HuskyTHON students and make this one of their most successful years to date. Vanessa's calm demeanor, her ability to delegate, and her positive attitude make her an inspirational leader to any who are lucky enough to know her.



#### Kelsey Grace Brown

Kelsey first began embracing her leadership potential as the Films Chair for SUBOG during the 2010 school year. During the year, she also became the Daytime Committee Chair. Her guidance has allowed these committees, and SUBOG, to flourish as an organization. In addition to SUBOG and a number of other organizations, Kelsey has served as a FYE Mentor and as a facilitator for UConn Connects. As a member of the Suicide Prevention Committee, Kelsey was integral in hosting Frank Warren, the founder of PostSecret in the Fall 2011. Her leadership skills and ability to put others first have enabled Kelsey to succeed in all aspects of her involvement on campus.



#### Chelsea Marie Miller

A senior Communication Sciences major with a minor in Film Studies, Chelsea has been involved in a number of leadership opportunities while at UConn. Her exceptional organizational skills, creativity, and aptitude at public-speaking served her well in her role as a Peer Leadership Instructor. Chelsea also serves as mentor in the Leadership Learning Community, where she not only sets an outstanding example for the students, but also raises the bar among peers of what it means to be a mentor. In her role as a Productions Director at UCTV, Chelsea brings the poise, maturity, and professionalism of a true leader.



#### Nicole Jean Rubin

Nikki is pursuing a combined MD/MPH degree and is interested in confronting issues of public health from a human rights perspective. Nikki is extremely dedicated to issues of health and human rights, exemplified by her individualized major and her research centered on structural violence and the HIV/AIDS crisis. She has served as a trip director for three separate Alternative Breaks, is active with the UNESCO Student Ambassadors for Human Rights, and has worked as Poetry Editor for the University's literary publication, the Long River Review.



#### Katherine Artemis Tsantiris

As an Environmental Science major and President of EcoHusky, Kathy has led her peers in transforming UConn into a sustainable campus. In 2011, she was named a Udall Scholar for her commitment to marine science and conservation. She is the U.S. liaison for the Archipelagos Institute of Marine and Environmental Research and interns at UConn's Office of Environmental Policy. With her remarkable communication skills and persistence, it's no wonder those who work with Kathy see her as an effective leader in a variety of contexts.

## Emerging Leader Award

This award recognizes individual student(s) who, despite not holding a visible, established leadership position on campus, nonetheless has actively demonstrated attributes of a leader through his/her actions and character. The UConn Co-op is the proud sponsor of the Emerging Leaders Award.

### Finalists



#### **Shamara Ramona James**

Shamara, a sophomore English major, is extremely involved on campus, serving as the secretary for Honors Council, a mentor in the Peer Allies through Honors program, a participant in the Emotionally Intelligent Leadership Series, and a member of the Pre-Law Society. She is the secretary for the Parenting Apart program, which works with children in families that have recently experienced divorce or separation, and hopes to continue to work in this field. Both in and out of the classroom, Shamara's energy, positive attitude, and commitment to helping others all contribute to her outstanding leadership abilities.



#### **Jamille Ann Rancourt**

Jamille, a sophomore, is the Recruitment & Retention Chairperson in SUBOG, has served as a Husky Ambassador, and participated in the Discovery Leadership Program this past fall. Jamille is enthusiastic and creative in her role in SUBOG, and she has a natural ability to connect with and motivate her peers. She is eager to learn and to help her organizations thrive. Jamille will further her successful leadership within SUBOG by serving as the President for the 2012-2013 school year.



#### **Maeve Shea**

Maeve is extremely involved on campus; she has served as a USG Senator, Deputy Speaker of the Senate, and the Chair of the USG Recruitment and Retention Committee. In addition, Maeve has participated in Alternative Breaks to New Orleans and to Oklahoma, and also volunteers with Big Brothers, Big Sisters. Maeve's creativity, humor, passion, and thoughtfulness have made her an integral part of organizations she is involved in. She is a dedicated leader and global citizen, and hopes to eventually join the Peace Corps, working in the area of youth and community development.



#### **Esther Nof**

Esti, a first-year student in the Honors program, has been an active member of an Honors book club, and recently attended the Saban Leadership Seminar in Washington, D.C. as part of her involvement in UConn Hillel. This trip inspired her creation of the UConn Political Action Committee, a developing student organization aimed at raising awareness of the U.S.-Israel alliance and pro-Israeli topics. Esti was also a participant in the Honors Alternative Spring Break. Her dedication, passion, and willingness to grow and learn from all experiences has served her well in her mission to open a dialogue among diverse people to improve the world around her.

## A Message from the Student Life Awards Committee Chair

On behalf of the Department of Student Activities, I'd like to welcome you to the 2012 University of Connecticut Student Life Awards – recognizing outstanding contributions to and leadership of the University community! The campus was very much alive this past year with student involvement, service, leadership and pride! The student engagement represented by all of this year's nominations not only created an environment of diverse opportunities and activities but also served to enrich the campus atmosphere and enhance student learning.

The process and work of recognizing all of our outstanding student leaders and bringing everyone together today began at the start of this academic year and has continued non-stop throughout the past eight months. Below is the list of the members of our 2012 Selection Committee, who spent a significant amount of time reviewing nomination material and interviewing finalists. It is also important to recognize the many folks who have played a role behind the scenes in everything that culminates in today's event. Therefore a special thanks to Marilyn Gould, Anna Milot, Amy Sanders, Mary Shaw, Lillian Palacios, Dr. John Saddlemire, Dr. Christine Wilson and the entire staff in the Office of Leadership Programs.

Finally, a note of particular thanks to our donors and award sponsors who have so generously supported this program, and more importantly our students. You are invited to learn more about all of our donors and sponsors on the following pages.

Congratulations to all of the nominees and thanks for making the University of Connecticut a vibrant campus community in which to live and learn.

Joseph P. Briody  
University of Connecticut  
2012 Student Life Awards Committee Chair



## Student Life Awards Selection Committee

Melissa Arroyo, *Student Activities Programs Office*  
Joseph Briody, *Student Activities Leadership Programs*  
Kristen Carr, *Student Activities Involvement Office*  
Jamel Catoe, *Fraternity and Sorority Life*  
Carl Dean, *Student Support Services*  
Andrea Dennis LaVigne, *UConn Alumni*  
Jeremy DiGorio, *Student Activities Leadership Programs*  
Daniel Doerr, *Office of the VPSA*  
Kate Durant, *Club Sports*  
M. Kevin Fahey, *Student Activities Programs Office*  
Kathy Fischer, *Women's Center*

Melissa Foreman, *Learning Communities*  
Rebecca Gates, *Honors Program*  
Allison Hopkins, *Student Activities Involvement Office*  
Katie Johnston, *HESA*  
Jenn Kosciw, *Residence Education*  
Leo Lachut, *Student Support Services*  
Bruce Marshall, *Men's Hockey*  
Cindy Morrisette, *Student Activities Business Office*  
Krista Muise, *Student Activities Leadership Programs*  
John Sears, *Residential Life*  
Dana Wilder, *Office of the Vice Provost*

A special thanks to all of the members of this year's Student Life Awards Selection Committee for their time and commitment to recognizing and supporting student contribution to and leadership of the University community.

## Husky Pride Award

This award honors an individual for outstanding external representation of the pride and spirit associated with being a part of the University of Connecticut. The UConn Co-op is the proud sponsor of the Individual Husky Pride Award.

### Recipient



#### **Residence Hall Association**

This organization strives to represent over 12,000 graduate and undergraduate residents at the University of Connecticut. This year, UConn's RHA was selected to host the coveted North East Affiliate of Colleges and University Residence Halls conference, attended by 53 schools and almost 400 delegates. RHA came together to present an outstanding experience for those visiting the UConn community, leading workshops, programming sessions, facilitating meetings, and creating a welcoming environment for everyone in attendance. In addition to the success of the conference, this past year RHA ran the Hearts for HuskyThon program with all proceeds donated to HuskyThon. They are also excited about upcoming events such as Southapalooza. Whatever they are working towards, the RHA is dedicated to building and promoting pride in our community.



## Martha and Albert Cohen Scholarship for Enhancing Community

This scholarship is awarded to undergraduate students who have demonstrated a significant active commitment to eliminating bigotry, prejudice, and discrimination and whose actions have fostered tolerance and understanding among people. This scholarship was established and sponsored by Stephen I. Cohen ('65) in honor of his parents Martha and Albert Cohen.

### Recipient



#### **Claire Michelle Simonich**

Working towards a dual degree in Political Science and International Business Management, and a student in the Special Program for Law, Claire has a passion for employment law and discrimination. She is particularly interested in gender discrimination and received a grant to study the gender wage gap. In addition, she is a Babbidge Scholar, a UNESCO Student Ambassador, and Assistant Program Director for Cross Cultural Connections. Claire's deep commitment to social justice is reflected in her accomplishments both in and outside of the classroom.

## Building Community Award

This award honors students that have initiated and/or actively engaged in an activity that has significantly contributed to the sense of community on campus. This project may be a single event or series of activities. The UConn Co-op is a proud sponsor of the Building Community Award.

### Finalists



#### **Salina Abid**

The current President of the Residence Hall Association, Salina serves as a liaison between administrators, over 100 RHA members, and all students living on campus. She is also a USG Senator and a representative on the Campus Appearance Committee, a University-wide effort to beautify the campus grounds. In addition, Salina has volunteered as a Husky Reads facilitator, working with preschool and elementary children, teaching students about the importance of healthy living. Whether it is through her work with RHA or her community service endeavors, Salina is always striving to better the UConn community.



#### **Laura Marie Bozzi**

In her first semester, Laura joined the Women in Math, Science, and Engineering (WiMSE) Learning Community. Now a senior, Laura is a highly respected leader on campus. She was a founding member of the WiMSE Club, an outgrowth of the learning community, and now serves as the President of the club. Through her involvement, Laura has constantly worked to enrich the undergraduate experiences of women in majors traditionally held by men. She has planned annual banquets, and organized a one-credit course for WiMSE students, which has been a huge success. Laura also understands the importance of connecting with the community beyond UConn, and has led outreach opportunities in local schools to raise young students' interest in the sciences.



#### **Melissa Erin DePaolo**

Melissa is a strong, effective leader on campus, exemplified through her work with the Office of First Year Programs and Learning Communities, her co-curricular involvement, and volunteer experience. In her role as a Teaching Assistant to a group of FYE mentors, Melissa provided strong leadership and guidance to her peers. She is a senior member of the accapella group Rubyfruit, and helps the group coordinate performances across campus. Melissa also volunteers as a Husky Mate – an organization which pairs an American and international student, allowing international students to better connect with the community and establish a sense of unity amongst all students on campus.



#### **Jaclyn Gina Getonga**

An international student from Kenya, Gina is a Business student in the Honors Program. She played an integral role in forming and running the International Student Association, a group for international students to support one another and expose others to the diversity and multiculturalism on campus. In addition, she has participated in a community outreach alternative break on HIV/AIDS awareness in NYC, is a Learning Community Ambassador and member of the Business Learning Community, and has been an FYE mentor. Gina is passionate about bringing people of all ethnicities and backgrounds together to build a welcoming, diverse community.

## Edward Victor Gant Scholarship

The Edward Victor Gant Scholarship was established by the Board of Trustees and the family and friends of Edward V. Gant in 1979 and was first awarded in 1987. The scholarship recognizes academic excellence, professional potential, dedicated service, and exemplary integrity.

### Finalists



#### Michael George Chase

Michael is extremely active on campus, serving as the Academic/Professional Chair of the Pre-Med Club and co-founder of the UConn Health Professions Conference. He actively serves his community, volunteering at Stafford Teen Night and at a local soup kitchen. He hopes to attend medical school and eventually become a pediatric physician. Michael is motivated and committed to helping others while also striving to better himself as a student and a person.



#### Michael Alan Muebe

A student at Avery Point, Mike works tirelessly in advocating for students' needs on campus through the Associated Student Government, the Avery Point Husky Ambassador Program, and as an Orientation Leader in 2011. He works as a tutor for the Academic Center, a Student Library Assistant, and as a tour guide at the Avery Point Welcome Center. Despite all of his commitments, Mike maintains an outstanding academic record. His academic achievements, creativity, and dependable nature have garnered respect and admiration from everyone Mike interacts with both on and off campus.



#### Stephany Santos

Stephany has been described as a natural leader because of her energy, attitude, intellect, and professionalism. She volunteers extensively with the Engineering Diversity Program. For the past three summers, Stephany has worked as a tutor and Resident Assistant in the BRIDGE program, which works to eliminate education gaps in underrepresented students. As a leader, she inspires students across campus to make a difference in their own lives and the lives of others.



#### Claire Michelle Simonich

Working towards a dual degree in Political Science and International Business Management, and a student in the Special Program for Law, Claire has a passion for employment law and discrimination. She is particularly interested in gender discrimination and received a grant to study the gender wage gap. In addition, she is a Babbidge Scholar, a UNESCO Student Ambassador, and Assistant Program Director for Cross Cultural Connections. Claire's deep commitment to social justice is reflected in her accomplishments both in and outside of the classroom.



#### Amber Isabella West

Amber, a Ph.D. student in the English Department, has been called by some a flourishing "feminist-artist-scholar-mentor". Throughout her time at UConn, Amber has worked to mentor students facing boundaries of race, class, and gender. Amber served as Assistant Director for UConn's Creative Writing Program, during which she revitalized and revamped Long River Live, a bi-weekly multigenre performance series. Amber's encouragement and guidance to undergraduate students has allowed many to discover their full leadership potential, and her strengths as a feminist scholar and artist are truly inspirational to all who know her.

## Matthew B. Schechter Scholarship

This award is made annually to a deserving student on the basis of citizenship, scholarship, contribution to the University, and contributions to the causes of human rights and human dignity, civil liberties and freedom of thought. The family and friends of Matthew B. Schechter established this scholarship in 1969.

### Recipient



#### Nicole Jean Rubin

Nikki is pursuing a combined MD/MPH degree and is interested in confronting issues of public health from a human rights perspective. Nikki is extremely dedicated to issues of health and human rights, exemplified by her individualized major and her research centered on structural violence and the HIV/AIDS crisis. She has served as a trip director for three separate Alternative Breaks, is active with the UNESCO Student Ambassadors for Human Rights, and has worked as Poetry Editor for the University's literary publication, the Long River Review.



## Outstanding Graduate / Teaching Assistant Award

This award recognizes a Graduate Assistant who goes above and beyond their assigned responsibilities by contributing their time, energy, and talents to further the growth and development of undergraduate students on campus.

### Recipient



#### Rachael M. Shenyo

Rachael has been a Graduate Assistant in the Office of Environmental Policy since January of 2011, where she has been integral in developing, planning and administering UConn's sustainability initiatives and programs that reduce the environmental impacts and costs of the University's operations. In her position, Rachael serves as supervisor to seven student interns and she teaches them valuable office skills, project management techniques, event planning, grant writing and fundraising, presentation skills, leadership skills, critical thinking, and communication techniques. The events and activities coordinated by Rachael and OEP student interns include Green Game Days, Earth Day Spring Fling, Climate Impact, Mitigation and Adaptation (CIMA), and the UConn Cycles bike sharing program.

## *Spirer-Dueker Student Humanitarian Achievement Award*

*This award honors an undergraduate student on a University of Connecticut campus for outstanding contributions to public service. The award was established by Louise and Herbert Spierer and Marilyn Dueker, retired faculty members from the University of Connecticut-Stamford campus.*

### *Recipient*



#### **Garrett Richard Block**

This past year, Garrett has worked tirelessly at creating and implementing alternative break trips to New York City focusing on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights. Throughout the process, Garrett has collaborated with non-profit agencies in NYC to establish the most effective way students could serve the needs of these groups. He created core learning outcomes and trained students on issues surrounding HIV/AIDS. The trip was extremely successful, and Garrett continued his work back on campus, working with participants to create an art display that was used during World AIDS week.



## *Student Organization Advocacy Award*

*This award honors an outstanding student organization for the achievement of a remarkable goal or completion of a major project that significantly impacted students through advocacy or awareness initiatives. The Division of Student Affairs is the proud sponsor of the Student Organization Advocacy Award.*

### *Recipient*



#### **Environmental Committee of Honors Council**

The Environmental Committee strives to involve students on campus in environmentally conscious activities and programs. Their Shower Timer Project began during the Fall of 2010 when the committee, working with the Office of Environmental Policy, installed shower timers inside Buckley Residence Hall during the International World Water Day in March. The project was so successful, that shower timers have recently been installed in Buckley, East Campus and Brock Hall. The implementation of this project helped expose many students to water conservation issues, as well as educate student about water as an invaluable resource that should be used mindfully.

## *Andrea Dennis LaVigne Scholarship for Advancing Diversity*

*This award recognizes a student who demonstrates a commitment to encouraging and enhancing diversity at UConn. This scholarship was established in honor of former Trustee Andrea Dennis LaVigne through the gifts of many alumni, Trustees and friends.*

### *Finalists*



#### **Sharielle Donesia Applewhite**

Sharielle is the Advocacy Project Director within the Office of Community Outreach, working to support on-going social advocacy events on campus. No matter what she is working on, Sharielle is aware of the need for diverse perspectives and student participation, always keeping diversity at the forefront of her mind. This year, she partnered with PRLACC, the African American Cultural Center, Asian American Cultural Center, and the Rainbow Center during a Voter Registration drive on campus. She further deepened her cross-cultural understanding by participating in an alternative break to a Native American reservation in Oklahoma. She exhibits a positive attitude and is always working to increase her knowledge and understanding of others, while encouraging others to do the same. She embodies the spirit of diversity and inclusion that UConn strives for.



#### **Theresa Beatrice Govert**

Theresa is an involved leader on campus; she is a member of Active Minds, a teaching assistant for the Violence Against Women Prevention Program, and is involved in the Rainbow Center. She strongly believes that a rich diversity of people, cultures, and experiences are needed for reaching our full potentials. She works tirelessly to create a society where all are safe and welcome – exemplified by her being named the annual “Vagina Warrior” at UConn’s production of The Vagina Monologues. Theresa understands the importance of opening conversations about anything from racism, homophobia, and media’s effect on culture, just to name a few. She is compassionate and dedicated, passionately fighting for causes she deeply believes in.



#### **Saagar Ashvin Pandit**

Saagar is involved in a number of multicultural organizations on campus – the traditional Indian dance group ThundeRaas, CFO of Asha for Education, and chair of the USG Multicultural and Diversity committee. In these roles, he pushes for diversity on campus, both in terms of demographics and cultural awareness and appreciation. Saagar’s leadership within Asha for Education has allowed the organization to raise money for a school for the blind in Calcutta. Saagar works to ensure all people are celebrated, approaching issues with an open-mind and intellectual vigor. His approachability and even his humor compliment his strong leadership, making Saagar a true champion of diversity on campus.



#### **Jeniffer Perez**

Since coming to UConn, Jeniffer has strived to broaden her understanding of cultures, and has worked at connecting cultures across campus. She is passionate about gender equity issues, particularly in the Latino community, and serves as an unofficial liaison between the Women’s Center and PRLACC. Jeniffer has also worked extensively with Lambda Upsilon Lambda and other fraternities across campus, educating them through workshops on topics such as gender equality and women’s rights. A bright and energetic individual, Jeniffer is a tireless advocate for diversity and multicultural awareness.



## *Student Organization Advisor Award*

*This award recognizes an advisor of a student organization who has provided outstanding service and advisement to an organization. The Division of Student Affairs is the proud sponsor of the Student Organization Advisor Award.*

### *Finalists*



#### **Rebecca Gates**

A Program Coordinator for the Honors Program and the advisor of Honors Council, Rebecca plays an integral role in linking honors students across campus. She makes it a priority to meet with students and assist them in whatever way possible. In addition, she is a guiding, supportive presence during weekly meetings. Day after day, Rebecca helps students gain perspective, and she is extremely proud of the progress Honors Council makes each year.



#### **Paul Young**

Paul works as a Program Coordinator for Undergraduate Programs, advising undergraduate business majors (and prospective majors), and serves as the advisor for the Business Leadership Council. Paul does an outstanding job motivating students, leading them to transform the Business Leadership Council into the thriving organization it is today. In his role as advisor, Paul works tirelessly to challenge students to set and reach goals, while simultaneously fostering a spirit of service and leadership within the organization and his students.

## Individual Community Service Award

This award honors a student(s) who has initiated and/or actively engaged in a community service project(s). The project may be a single event or a series of activities. The UConn Co-op is the proud sponsor of the Individual Community Service Award.

### Finalists



#### Leah Gawlak

For the past nine years, Leah has dedicated herself as a volunteer at Camp Care, a therapeutic riding facility catering to children with physical disabilities. At Camp Care, Leah both works with children and cares for many of the horses in the program. She has also volunteered as Assistant 4-H Leader for the Hebron 4-H Horse Club for the past three years and served on the Community Outreach Alternative Break to South Dakota. Her thoughtfulness and communication abilities have allowed her to excel in all of these service roles. Leah hopes to one day become a certified instructor for a facility like Camp Care.



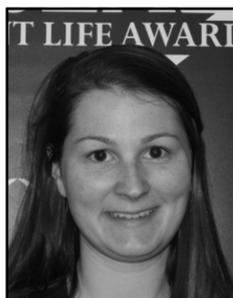
#### Kaitlyn Mary Lastrina

Kaitlyn considers one of her top goals at UConn to be getting others involved in the community. She is currently a Resident Assistant and works to educate residents within her "micro-community" about social justice issues. One way Kaitlyn encouraged this was by creating a book club with residents to read "Half the Sky". In addition, Kaitlyn organized her floor to participate in Starbase tutoring, a group which tutors students in Hartford in math and science. She also set in motion a Relay for Life team that residents are now organizing and planning. With outstanding motivation and involvement in the local community, and ability to encourage service opportunities among her residents, Kaitlyn truly exemplifies what it means to serve.



#### Emily Rose Pearson

Emily currently serves as the student peer leader, overseeing the fifteen students that implement Health and Human Service Programs for Community Outreach. In this student coordinator position, Emily directly supervises and supports student leadership development. In addition, Emily helped implement and now runs a new outreach program at Brooklyn Correctional Institute. She also served on an Alternative Break in Alabama and has volunteered with Big Brothers Big Sisters. Emily is open, supportive, and approachable, never losing sight of the bigger picture. Those who are fortunate enough to work with Emily see her commitment to service as a true inspiration.



#### Monica Cate Smith

A student in the Eurotech program, Monica also currently serves as the Resident Assistant in the Eurotech Learning Community. Her passion for engineering has led her to interact with students in local middle and high schools, opening their eyes to the possibilities within engineering. Monica is particularly passionate about involving women in engineering. She organized a workshop at the New England Air Museum which brought together students of all ages, and got them excited about engineering through a number of hands-on activities. Despite the rigor of her own academic schedule, Monica selflessly engages students in the surrounding communities; her enthusiasm for engineering is contagious.



#### Sarah Anna Treff

Sarah is the current Program Director for Community Service Days, a program which offers students one-time service opportunities to local communities in need. An excellent communicator and extremely reliable, Sarah is highly valued among those with whom she works. Sarah has participated in a number of alternative breaks, including a Habitat Humanity trip to New London and a Winter Relief trip to Alabama. In addition to her community service work, Sarah is an involved and well-rounded leader on campus, serving as the CFO of the UConn Dance Company, a member of GUARD Dogs, and working as a research assistant in a neuropsychopharmacology lab.

## Program of the Year Award

This award honors an organization or individual responsible for the development and/or execution of an event/program that significantly enhanced the social, recreational, educational, and/or cultural life of students and the general community at this institution. The Department of Athletics is the proud sponsor of the Program of the Year Award.

### Recipient



#### Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.-Lambda Tau Chapter

"Exposing Exploitation: Human Trafficking Awareness Conference", hosted by the Lambda Tau Chapter for Alpha Kappa Alpha Incorporated, was a collaboration between a number of groups on campus including the UNESCO Office and Institute of Comparative Human Rights. The two day conference brought together the UConn community as well as students and staff and those from the Greater Hartford area. This event supported the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking and provided a space for the sharing of knowledge and critical dialogue on an international issue with domestic implications.



## Organization Community Service Award

This award honors a student organization that has initiated and/or actively engaged in a community service project. The project may be a single event or a series of activities. The Department of Athletics is the proud sponsor of the Organization Community Service Award.

### Recipient



#### Doctors Without Borders

Though just formed this past semester, Doctors Without Borders (the UConn Student chapter) has already experienced tremendous success, both locally and abroad. Here on campus, the organization has arranged lectures and events open to the entire UConn community, aimed at raising awareness for local and global health issues. They have volunteered their efforts locally in New Haven and Hartford, giving back to those in need. The group also travelled to Peru this past March on a medical campaign, engaging with medical professionals in Peru, working with orphanages and clinics, and assisting in any way possible.

## International Student Leadership Award

This award recognizes an individual student(s) who has actively engaged in activities that foster the integration of international students and their experiences and cultures into the campus community in a visible and meaningful way. The Graduate Residences Association is a proud sponsor of the International Student Leadership Award.

### Recipient



#### **Naila Razzaq**

As a first-year student, Naila has already made an impact on the campus community, as well as the greater Muslim community within Connecticut. She is a weekly volunteer with UCAELI, eating lunch with and acting as a conversation partner for international students from Arab countries, especially Saudi Arabia. Naila is also an active member of the Coalition for Political Empowerment. Naila works to inform herself of the issues facing Muslim students, and actively participates in conversations with her classmates in the Special Program in Law about the legal challenges facing Muslim women in America.



## Willis N. Hawley Service and Leadership Award

This award recognizes individual student veterans who have made significant contributions to the University community through leadership and service during their tenure as a student. The Department of Student Activities is the sponsor of this award.

### Recipient



#### **Caitlin Davies**

Caitlin has served as the President for the Women's Veterans' Group (WVG) this year, where she has consistently articulated a commitment to ensuring a safe and welcoming space for women, while working to ensure that women veterans' unique perspectives and concerns are addressed within the larger veteran community. Caitlin also serves as a member of the Veterans Fellowship Program, welcoming new veterans to UConn and assisting them with navigating the academic and social terrain as they embrace Husky Pride. She is a member of the Veterans Advisory Committee, which is tasked with making recommendations to department heads in an effort to enhance sensitivity and review policy, where necessary, to benefit UConn's growing student veteran population. Throughout all this work, Caitlin has demonstrated the ideal of selfless service.

## Individual Husky Pride Award

This award honors an individual for outstanding external representation of the pride and spirit associated with being a part of the University of Connecticut. The UConn Co-op is the proud sponsor of the Individual Husky Pride Award.

### Finalists



#### **Michael John Carson**

Mike exhibits a sincere love for his university, exemplified by his numerous and diverse forms of involvement and advocacy on campus. He is President of SUBOG (also serving on several committees), is a member of Phi Gamma Delta fraternity, and is a supervisor at the Student Rec Center. Peers have called Mike a person who "sleeps, eats, and breathes SUBOG". He embodies UConn pride, recognizing not only the positive, but also seeing the potential within our university. His dedication and extensive pride in the university are reflected in everything he does on and off campus, whether that's Greek Week, supervising Intramurals, or representing UConn at national conferences.



#### **John Arthur Dearborn**

There's a good chance you've seen John at basketball games, on ESPN, or on UConn Today - wearing a blue and white wig his with face painted to match. John is the ultimate UConn Husky, rarely missing any games. And his involvement isn't just about athletics. He is an Honors student who has worked for the Center for Students with Disabilities, participated in the UConn Men's Project, and has served as a mentor for Peer Allies Through Honors. He is passionate about encouraging incoming freshman to get involved on campus. A Babbidge Scholar, John has pride in what he does, in and out of the classroom - he is a true ambassador for everything UConn.



#### **Kevin Francis Filchak**

Kevin has worked tirelessly to represent UConn's Residence Hall Association at the national level, serving as the National Communications Coordinator for two years. Under Kevin's leadership, UConn's RHA won a national Program of the Year award. In addition, he planned and organized a regional conference hosted here on campus. Kevin works to show students both at UConn and at other schools what it means to be a Husky and highlight aspects of our campus life in which we have the most pride. His abilities as a leader and delegate don't go unnoticed, even beyond UConn - a number of students from other schools have approached Kevin for advice and guidance. Courteous, friendly, and welcoming, Kevin has the ability to celebrate Husky pride and spirit.



#### **Justis Faustino Lopez**

In his first year at UConn, Justis was a member of the Leadership Learning Community, and shined as a highly involved and energetic individual. In his current role as a Resident Assistant on campus, he encourages camaraderie, involvement, and pride amongst his residents. Earlier in the semester, Justis served as the MC for the 2nd Annual Learning Community Talent Show. During some moments of technical difficulties, Justis was able to save the day - prepared with UConn trivia and giveaways; he seamlessly filled gaps in time while issues were sorted out. He brings positivity and a desire to succeed to everything he does; his talents and skills embodying true Husky spirit.



#### **Samuel James Tracy**

Sam, an Honors student double majoring in Political Science and Sociology, is currently the President of the Undergraduate Student Government. As a public figure, Sam is articulate and engaging, active on and off campus while also maintaining a stellar academic record. He strives to represent his peers to university administrators, and is a liaison between UConn and local communities. In addition to serving in USG, Sam has been both a resident and Resident Assistant of EcoHouse Learning Community, is a host of a radio show through WHUS, and volunteers at a local homeless shelter. Sam is dedicated to representing the public interest, whether that is right here at UConn, or at the national level. He truly represents the pride and spirit associated with being a part of the UConn community.