



SLA
STUDENT LIFE AWARDS
2014

UConn
STUDENT ACTIVITIES
LEADERSHIP OFFICE

*Thursday, April 17, 2014
4 o'clock in the afternoon
Student Union Ballroom*

Sponsored by the Leadership Office, Department of Student Activities

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

MISSION STATEMENT:

Guided by its core principles, the Leadership Office facilitates educational and experiential initiatives that challenge individuals and organizations to explore, strengthen, and elevate their character, leadership and ability to contribute as global citizens.

CORE PRINCIPLES:

We commit to be:

- Engaging: interactive programming that provokes critical thinking and action
- Progressive: pushing boundaries in pursuit of continuous growth
- Strategic: intentionally turning big picture concepts into meaningful opportunities
- Authentic: genuine congruence between values and practice
- Unconventional: unafraid to question what is generally used or accepted
- Empowering: guiding our participants in self-actualization



2014 Leadership Legacy Experience Students

The University of Connecticut is proud to recognize the 2014 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.



RJ Anderson



Quian Callender



Gabe Castro



Trayvonn Diaz



Kiana Gonzalez



Erin Holden



Victoria Kallsen



Andrew Kim



Rubby Koomson



Nordia Meggie



Mashcal Mobiuddin



Sean O'Briskie



Sarah Purtillo



Megan Rowland



Emily Stassen

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



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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



Oghenefejiro Okifo

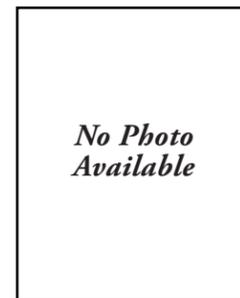
Fejro is a student in the Honors Program, a Rowe Scholar, and a member of the Special Program in Medicine. As a member of the Health Disparities Clinical Summer Research Fellowship Program she worked at the Hartford Dispensary, a methadone-dispensing clinic for recovering heroin addicts, to complete a study entitled “Efficacy of Modified Directly Observed Chronic Hepatitis C Treatment in a Methadone Clinic”. She is also the Program Director for the PeaceJam Scholars Program in Community Outreach, which unites Nobel Peace Prize winners with students in an effort to empower participants to improve the world around them.



Willis N. Hawley Service and Leadership Award

This award recognizes an individual student veteran who has made significant contributions to the University community through leadership and service during their tenure as a student. The Office of Veterans Affairs and Military Services is the proud sponsor of The Hawley Service and Leadership Award.

Recipient



Aaron Jones

Aaron is a student-veteran who served in Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2004, and continues to serve the student-veteran population at the UConn Hartford campus, where he is pursuing a Masters in Social Work. He is also the Veterans Outreach Coordinator at the South Park Inn, a homeless shelter that takes in a significant number of homeless veterans, and volunteers with numerous veterans organizations. He recently assisted in coordinating an event with Governor Malloy on improving veterans housing assistance and announcing the goal of ending veteran homelessness in Connecticut by the end of 2015.

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



Rebecca Acabchuk

Rebecca is a Physiology and Neurobiology Doctoral student serving as the Associate Director for the Women in Math, Science, and Engineering (WiMSE) learning community. Rebecca serves as an exemplary role model, mentor, instructor, and supporter of the 60 women in the WiMSE Learning Community. Rebecca teaches an FYE class for the WiMSE students and is spearheading a research project that involves a CT-wide assessment of concussions in the K-12 school system with the goal of developing an app for athletic trainers, coaches and school nurses to report concussions.



Martha and Albert Cohen Scholarship for Enhancing Community

This scholarship is awarded to an undergraduate student who has 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



William Ollayos

Bill is a Resident Assistant in Buckley, working with first-year Honors students, and is passionate about social justice education. Much of his programming for his residents centers around raising awareness of issues impacting members of the community and educating on human rights and diversity. This year, such programming included "The Wall of Hate" to combat the use of derogatory language, "Splatter Paint" to raise awareness of the intersectionality of identities, and a deaf culture program to educate his residents on the discrimination faced by members of the deaf community.

A Message from the Student Life Awards Committee

On behalf of the Department of Student Activities, I'd like to welcome you to the 2014 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 2014 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 Gina Croteau, Anna Milot, Theresa Kelly, Lillian Palacios, Dr. Michael Gilbert, Dr. Christine Wilson and the entire staff in the Leadership Office.

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
Associate Director of Involvement and Leadership Programs
University of Connecticut
2014 Student Life Awards Committee Chair



Student Life Awards Selection Committee

Nana Amos, *UNESCO Chair Office*
Melissa Arroyo, *Student Activities Programs Office*
Aimee Bishop, *Community Standards*
Joe Briody, *Student Activities Involvement & Leadership*
Kristen Carr, *Student Activities Involvement Office*
Miguel Colon, *Student Activities Community Outreach*
Cindi Costanzo, *Athletics*
Andrea Dennis LaVigne, *UConn Alumni*
Danielle DeWeese, *Student Activities Leadership Office*
Kevin Evringham, *Veterans Services*
Melissa Foreman, *Learning Communities*
Kaitlin Heenehan, *Honors Program*

Kim Hill, *Community Standards*
Jess Hoffman *Student Activities Leadership Office*
Theresa Kelly, *Student Activities Involvement & Leadership*
Kyle Neary, *Student Activities Programs Office*
Krista O'Brien, *Student Activities Leadership Office*
Kris Perry, *Veterans Services*
Joanna Rivera-Davis, *Student Support Services*
Kim Sadowski, *Club Sports*
Garrett Schlichte, *Orientation Services*
Dana Wilder, *Office of the Vice Provost*
Robert Yanez, *Residential Life*

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.



Building Community Award

This award honors a student who has 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



Alexandra Arendt

As staff in Student Health Services and a member of the Student Health Outreach Team, Alex has provided assistance, knowledge, passion, and vision in creating a welcoming place for students to go on campus. Additionally, Alex is a member of Alpha Beta Epsilon, an academic organization centered around service, academics, and brotherhood. Through this experience, Alex has also served as a HuskyTHON Morale Chair, and has led numerous other community service trips for her organization. She looks forward to traveling to Ghana this May to participate in medical and dental clinics for those in need.



Marissa Mannello

Marissa has spent time as a UConn Connects Coach and Master Coach, Alpha Lambda Delta (ALD) Community Outreach Chair and Chapter President, and has shown considerable dedication to First Year Programs and Learning Communities as a student worker. Marissa has made an impact on many students, either through one-on-one conversations or by creating large-scale events to help incoming students have a better understanding of campus. Looking forward, Marissa will be pursuing a Master's degree in Higher Education and Student Affairs, and is excited to continue building community in every capacity she can in the future.



Colby Sim

Colby is a Resident Assistant for the Fine Arts and Connecting with the Arts Learning Communities and was awarded the Programmer of the Year Award last year for her commitment to creating programs that showcased residents' talents, promoted deep connections, and enhanced the community on both her floor and her building. In both her role as the Recruitment and Retention Chair for the Student Union Board of Governors and as an RA, Colby's intention is building an inclusive environment and UConn community. She will be graduating in May and plans to pursue a degree in Higher Education and Student Affairs.

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 Department of Student Activities is the proud sponsor of the Student Organization Advocacy Award.

Recipient



SUBOG

This year, the Student Union Board of Governors (SUBOG) planned and co-sponsored a series of events to recognize and raise awareness for National Eating Disorders Awareness Week. SUBOG collaborated with the Women's Center, S.H.A.P.E., the UConn Recovery Community and Active Minds in order to create a week-long series of events to engage and educate the student body on eating disorders and mental health. By developing these events and awareness campaigns, SUBOG was able to create and contribute to a more supportive, inclusive, and welcoming community for students to learn about body image, eating disorders, and mental health.



Student Organization Advisor Award

This award recognizes an advisor of a student organization who has provided outstanding service and advisement to an organization.

Recipient



Kimberly Duby

Kimberly is the advisor for Phi Sigma Rho, a sorority for women in engineering and engineering technology. She is more than just an advisor to the women who have had the pleasure of working with her – she not only offers organizational advice, but personal support and encouragement. She goes above and beyond her advising responsibilities by hosting “Duby Lunch Dates”, an opportunity for her to get to know organization members on a more personal level, while also mentoring them for their professional careers in the STEM field.

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 Office of Community Outreach is the proud sponsor of the Organization Community Service Award.

Recipient



UConn Empower

Members of UConn Empower share the goal of improving access to education and healthcare in impoverished communities around the world by implementing sustainable projects that empower local populations. In their two years as a recognized student organization on campus, UConn Empower has organized and executed two service trips to Cameroon where they worked with an orphanage to implement a new learning platform utilizing Khan Academy. UConn Empower has also hosted fundraising events on campus like USplash and the Underwear Mile, drawing hundreds of student participants in an effort to generate funds toward their trip and projects and raise awareness about global inequities and social justice issues as well as possible solutions.



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 Division of Athletics is the proud sponsor of the Program of the Year Award.

Recipient



METAS

The Mentoring, Educating, & Training for Academic Success (METAS) program is a student-run peer-mentoring program in the Puerto-Rican/Latin American Cultural Center. METAS strives towards enhancing underrepresented student retention by providing support and empowering students to succeed both in and out of the classroom. This year, the 60 participants, both mentors and mentees, participated in KUBE, Relay for Life, HuskyTHON, forums on bi-racial identity, talks on Afro-Latino identity, and a series of workshops in collaboration with the Leadership Office and the Rainbow Center.

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



Jennifer Artruc

A Masters student for Secondary Math Education in the NEAG School of Education, Jennifer is an active member of the Alpha Lambda Delta honor society and is currently student teaching mathematics for a group of eighth graders. Jennifer has served the UConn community in the Office of First Year Programs & Learning Communities through her past role as a Teaching Assistant and currently as a Supervising Teaching Assistant in the FYE Program. In this new role, she oversees 8 TAs and over 100 mentors, introducing these students to the developmental



Shristi Rawal

A Doctoral student in Public Health, Shristi has impressed faculty and students alike with her intellectual capacities and dedication to the Public Health field. Shristi's dissertation research is considered by her advisors to have had a significant impact on understanding the prevalence and health consequences of smell and taste impairments in the United States. She has served as a member of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources Graduate Council and is a student member of the Public Health Curriculum Committee.



Molly Rockett

Molly is an Honors student majoring in Political Science, a Leadership Legacy Experience Student, President of College Democrats, and a Resident Assistant within the Honors First Year Learning Community. She has helped to run ElectHer, a training day for women leaders and political activism, in collaboration with the Women's Center. Molly currently serves on the Board of Education in her hometown of Somers, CT, a fulfillment of her passion to inspire women to take on positions of leadership in politics.



David Sugrue

As an Honors student in the School of Pharmacy, Dave shows great promise not only as a student, but as a future pharmaceutical professional. Dave has made the best of his time here at the University by taking on independent research studies and serving as President of the Pharmacy Student Government, where he coordinated the annual James Malaney 4K run raising over \$5000 for a pharmacy student scholarship. He is a participant in the Pharmacy LEADERS track, and volunteers in the community by advising patients on the Affordable Care Act through the AccessHealthCT organization.

Emerging Leader Award

This award recognizes an individual student 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



Emily Basler

As the only first-year to serve as one of the Team Leaders for Jumpstart, a program within the Community Outreach Office where she leads a group of her peers in teaching pre-school kids to read, Emily has shown amazing drive and passion for early childhood education. She is a member of the Community Service Learning Community and took her service initiatives nationally this winter when she participated in the alternative break trip to Birmingham, Alabama centered on urban poverty.



Christine Doherty

Christine is an extremely active member of the WiMSE (Women in Math, Science & Engineering) Learning Community. She has worked to bolster the support of women in the STEM fields at UConn, and served as a mentor and tutor to the first year women participating in the Freshmen Year Experience course by hosting a weekly "Snack and Study session". She has also participated in Collegiate Health Service Corps, specifically the West Avenue Women's group and Brick Row Health Education. She aspires to become a doctor and researcher focused on women's healthcare.



John "Riley" Pflomm

As a member of the Public Health Learning Community (PHLC), Riley has sought out informal leadership opportunities on his floor and actively works to include all members of the PHLC in events. His leadership on campus extends beyond the PHLC and into his academic pursuits, where he has been recognized by faculty members for his preparedness and participation in class. He has participated in HuskyTHON and went on an Alternative Spring Break trip to Baltimore focused on Public Health. Riley will be taking on the role of Resident Assistant next year, a position he hopes to use to influence the experience of incoming first-year students.



Marissa Piccolo

Marissa is a first-year student actively working with faculty in the Political Science Department. She has been awarded a competitive SHARE Grant to fund her work studying the role of NGO's and International Environmental Government. She has recently been elected as the Event Coordinator for College Democrats, and is currently working on voter registration for the fall mid-term elections. Marissa is dedicated to the student body at UConn, and works to keep the community as informed as possible by serving as a staff writer for the Daily Campus.



Aaron Plotke

As a member of the Business Connections Learning Community (BCLC), Aaron has taken an interest in improving the experiences of other students, especially students who are transitioning from their first to second year. He currently serves as the Vice President of the BCLC, and has made it his mission to improve attendance at their events as well as the community among floors in the residence hall. Aaron has participated in an Alternative Break trip to Macon, Georgia and has completed the Student Leadership Challenge and Emotionally Intelligent Leadership



Julian Rose

As a first-year student in the Rowe Scholars Program, Julian has had the opportunity to explore his interest in the health field. Beyond this, Julian is also extremely interested in the education system, and is passionate about access to quality education. This interest inspired him to become involved with Teach for America (TFA) as their Campus Campaign Coordinator at UConn, as well as the mentoring program Big Brothers/Big Sisters. Julian also works with the Engineering Ambassadors Presentation Team, with the goal of promoting excitement among young students in the STEM Fields.

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 Spirer and Marilyn Dueker, retired faculty members from the University of Connecticut-Stamford campus.

Recipient



Juanita Austin

As a digital media major with a minor in human rights, Juanita has dedicated her time at UConn combining her passion for photography with social justice work. This past January she was a participant on the Alternative Break trip to Costa Rica, where she worked on providing community health care options to the residents in the rural village of Los Jazmines. Juanita coordinated the first ever Human Rights and Healthcare Career Expedition as part of her job with Careers for the Common Good, in an effort to connect students with organizations in Hartford to explore career options that merge human rights and healthcare services.



Husky Pride Award

This award honors an organization for outstanding external representation of the pride and spirit associated with being a part of the University of Connecticut. The Division of Athletics is the proud sponsor of the Husky Pride Award.

Recipient



UConn Irish

UConn Irish operates under the philosophy that culture is meant to be celebrated and shared by all. Over the past year, the group has collaborated heavily with other organizations in an effort to build a larger UConn cultural community including a Kwanzaa dinner hosted by the African American Cultural Center, International Nite, Welcome Weekend, HuskyTHON, LipSync, the Homecoming Parade, and the Hunger and Homelessness Sleepout. The group has also represented UConn at the New Haven St. Patrick's Day Parade and the Shamrock Traditional Irish Music Society of Connecticut.

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 Daniels

Michael's enthusiasm and passion for UConn has made him an incredible advocate for the University in various forums. Last year, he was the Chairman of the External Affairs Committee for the Undergraduate Student Government and gave remarks at a press conference regarding the integral importance of Governor Malloy's Next Generation Connecticut initiative. Currently, Michael serves as the Undergraduate Student Trustee on the Board of Trustees, and is committed to learning about the issues surrounding the University. Somehow amidst all of these leadership positions, Michael finds time to be one of the most dedicated UConn basketball fans.



Elizabeth Tomasco

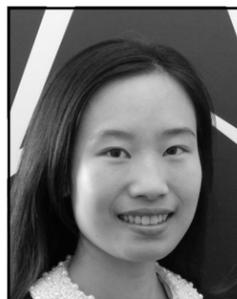
A Connecticut native, Liz has grown up with a passion for UConn. She excels academically in the Diagnostic Genetics Sciences major, is active in multiple clubs/organizations, and is a student employee in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. In her role as a CANR College Ambassador, Liz creates a positive and welcoming atmosphere for prospective students. She is a student-athlete, competing on the Rowing Team, and lives by the motto "Students First. Huskies Forever."



International Student Leadership Award

This award recognizes an individual student 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 Vice Provost of Global Affairs is the proud sponsor of the International Student Leadership Award.

Recipient



Tianrong Yang

A junior Accounting major, Tianrong is currently the Chief Financial Officer for the International Chinese Students Association. In this role, she has helped provide a sense of community for international students as well as offer educational opportunities for domestic students to learn about Chinese culture. She is an FYE mentor working with a UNIV 1800 class of 15 Chinese students, with increased focus on helping these students successfully transition to the University by addressing issues typically experienced by international students.

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



Peter Adintori

Peter was selected as one of eleven Resident Assistants for Social Justice Education, where he promotes diversity, inclusivity and equity to members of the UConn community through programming. Peter continues his work in social justice education as a facilitator for the Leadership Office's semester long workshop, Impact Delta, focused on the Social Change Model of Leadership. Peter has also participated in several Alternative Breaks through Community Outreach, traveling to Atlanta, GA, Biloxi, MS and New Orleans, LA. Additionally, Peter serves as the Co-Chair of HOLDUP! an organization that mentors Connecticut middle and high school students.



Ali Etman

Ali is a senior with a passion for enhancing diversity through service and leadership initiatives on campus and throughout the country. Ali's experiences growing up in Egypt, coming to the United States as a young boy, and overcoming many adversities including racism, microaggressions and familial changes has molded Ali into the individual he is today, a story he shares through spoken word and slam poetry. Ali has been a member of the Leadership Learning Community (LLC) since his first year on campus, and now serves as their Resident Assistant. He has been a participant on an Alternative Break to Mississippi and recently served as a Trip Director to Moore, Oklahoma for Disaster Relief.



Shantel Honeyghan

In her three years on campus Shantel has demonstrated exemplary leadership in recognizing and celebrating the diversity of her fellow students. Shantel serves as a tutor and mentor for the Upward Bound Program and a Teaching Assistant with the African American Cultural Center for the Preparing African American Students to Sustain Success course. She is an active participant in the Students Engaged in Academic Leadership (SEAL) program and serves as a Resident Assistant. Additionally, Shantel hopes to turn the passion she's developed through these experiences into a career as a Student Affairs professional focusing specifically on Multi-Cultural Affairs and working with first generation students.



Geena Russo

Geena works to promote diversity through her roles as a Resident Assistant and as a member of Community Outreach's Public Relations Team. This year, Geena has served as one of the eleven Resident Assistants chosen to be RA's for Social Justice Education where her work revolves around creating awareness of issues of oppression, justice, diversity and inclusion. Working as a member of CO's Public Relations team, Geena increases student participation in community services and raises awareness of relevant community issues. This has given her a way to combine her interest in social media and social justice to promote diversity and provide education opportunities to others on campus.

Donald L. McCullough Leadership Award

This award recognizes an individual student who has 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, former Director of Student Activities and was established by his wife Verna and family in 1979.

Finalists



Rose Cersonsky

A senior in the School of Engineering, Rose is an accomplished undergraduate scholar and recent finalist for the Marshall Scholarship. She has conducted research off campus, as an intern for Pratt and Whitney examining polymeric materials and structural alloys, and on campus, in a lab devoted to the use of polymer film in bomb detection. She has worked with the UConn Engineering Ambassadors to improve outreach to middle school students and other community members. Additionally she has been a leader in the TEDxUConn organization where she helped plan and organize the 'Future in Focus' event on campus.



Rebecca D'Angelo

Rebecca is a University Scholar and Honors student committed to academic and leadership success. She has been extremely involved in the Honors Program - serving on the Hall Council, as a Honors First Year Seminar Facilitator, and as a mentor in the Holster Scholar program. In addition to her honors and University Scholar activities, she serves as the VP of Marketing for TEDxUConn and was a member of the 2012 cohort in the Leadership Legacy Experience. Beyond campus, she has dedicated countless hours to the Mystic Seaport Museum, where she has volunteered as a librarian and actor and worked as a museum interpreter and teacher for various education programs.



Shervin Etemad

Shervin has played an integral role in the founding of the Innovation House Learning Community where he has served as a Teaching Assistant and Resident Assistant. He also helped to create the new Honors student organization, Leadership in Action. His activities span organizations across campus from TEDxUConn to Honors to the Leadership Legacy Experience. Off-campus, Shervin works with the non-profit, non-partisan organization, Iranian Alliances Across Borders (IAAB) - an organization committed to providing educational leadership programming for the Iranian Diaspora Community.



John Giardina

Actively involved with the Undergraduate Student Government since his first year, John has worked tirelessly to reformat the funding process for student organizations in order to provide better internal planning and improve usage of USG funds. Beyond his quiet and dedicated leadership in USG where he currently serves as Chief of Staff, John also participates in Community Outreach with the Collegiate Health Service Corps where he educates and provides basic health screenings to community members. Whether volunteering as a Health Educator, conducting research through the competitive Holster Grant Program, or interning in Washington D.C., John employs his considerable focus, determination and capacity for critical thought to each of his endeavors.



Molly Rockett

Molly is an Honors student majoring in Political Science, a Leadership Legacy Experience Student, President of College Democrats, and a Resident Assistant within the Honors First Year Learning Community. She has helped to run ElectHer, a training day for women leaders and political activism, in collaboration with the Women's Center. Molly currently serves on the Board of Education in her hometown of Somers, CT, a fulfillment of her passion to inspire women to take on positions of leadership in politics.

Individual Community Service Award

This award recognizes a student 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



Alexandra Buda

A senior Molecular and Cell Biology major with a minor in Human Rights, Alex has spent her four years at UConn in the service of others. Last year, she was the Assistant Director of the Windham Hospital Volunteer program, where she recruited and trained students to be part of the EMT program. This summer, Alex worked for the Migrant Farm Workers Clinic, providing health care screenings and interpreting medical conversations for the patients. Alex has participated in 6 Alternative Break trips, and most recently served as a Trip Director for the January Costa Rica trip focused on rural poverty.



Meghan Gagnon

Meghan is a Pharmacy major dedicated to serving members of community at UConn and off-campus. She is a former member of the Community Service Learning Community, and has been consistently involved in programs through the Community Outreach Office. Last year, she was the Program Director with the Manchester Area Conference of Churches, a homeless shelter and food pantry. Currently, Meghan serves as the coordinator of the Democracy and Political Engagement Community of Practice and is the chair of CO's student executive board.



Melissa Lovitz

Before starting at UConn, Melissa took a gap year in order to work with City Year in Washington DC, at Ferebee Hope Elementary School. At UConn, Melissa has served as Alpha Phi Omega's service chair and created a multitude of projects for fellow students and community members including the Girl Scouts. A substitute teacher in Westford, MA and at Beth El Temple in West Hartford, Melissa also plays the mellophone for the UConn Marching Band. She is in the Masters in Public Policy program and her future plans include teaching and working on education policy as a principle or superintendent.