

*Thank you to the sponsors of the 2016 Student Life Awards*



**Thursday, April 14, 2016 | 4:00 pm | Student Union Ballroom**

*Scholarship. Advocacy. Innovation. Service. Pride. Community. Leadership.*





**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

*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 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



## 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 2016 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 2016 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 Anna Milot, Shari Latif, Krista O'Brien, Mary Shaw, Karen Provost, 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  
2016 Student Life Awards Committee Chair



## Student Life Awards Selection Committee

Terrence Abney, *Residential Life*

Claudia Arias-Cirinna, *Dean of Students*

Joe Briody, *Involvement and Leadership Office*

Kristen Carr, *Involvement Office*

Jamel Catoe, *Fraternity and Sorority Life*

Chelsea Cichocki, *Student Support Services*

Miguel Colon, *Community Outreach*

Andrea Dennis LaVigne, *Alumni*

Dan Doerr, *Office of the VPSA*

Steve Drasdis, *Club Sports*

Jessica Glynn, *Leadership Office*

Kaitlin Heenehan, *Honors Program*

Thomas Krumel, Jr., *Leadership Office*

Shari Latif, *Involvement and Leadership Office*

Glenn Mitoma, *Dodd Center*

Kyle Neary, *Programs Office*

Krista O'Brien, *Leadership Office*

Alexis Parrill, *Leadership Office*

Emily Pearson, *Leadership Office*

Angela Rola, *Asian American Cultural Center*

Michelle Scali, *Programs Office*

Eileen Stone, *Wellness & Prevention*

Ashley Vrabely, *Community Standards*

Dana Wilder, *Office of the 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.*

## Outstanding Graduate/Teaching Assistant Award

*This award recognizes a Graduate Assistant(s) 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. This award was established prior to 2002 and is sponsored by the Office of Research and Graduate Education.*

### Recipient



#### **Erin Jouliot**

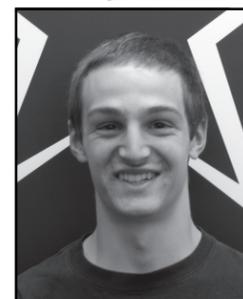
A second year in the Higher Education and Student Affairs Masters program, Erin has made a lasting impact on the Careers for the Common Good program, increasing employer registration and student attendance. Additionally, she founded the Grad Student Net-impact chapter, was selected to present at the UNESCO conference on Human Rights in South Africa and at the Ashoka U Exchange, and focused on bringing social entrepreneurship opportunities into higher education. Her commitment to social entrepreneurship and helping develop undergraduate and graduate students across campus is evidenced in all of her work, including her 'Inclusionary Practice' professional development series for the Center for Career Development.



## Student Employee of the Year

*This award honors the outstanding contributions and achievements of students who work on-campus or earn their work-study off-campus in community service positions at agencies with an established Federal Work-Study contract with the University. This award was established in 2005 and is sponsored by the Office of Scholarships & Student Employment*

### Recipient



#### **Brian Greco**

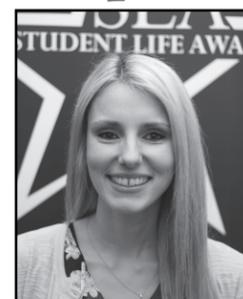
Brian has been a student employee on campus since August 2013. His current role is as a Supplemental Instructor at the Academic Achievement Center. As a SI for Chemistry, Brian dedicates his free time preparing lesson plans and other resources. Additionally he meets with fellow classmates during "office hours" to be sure that students are mastering the material. After graduation Brian plans to attend Dental School.



## Student Supervisor of the Year

*Established in 2016. This award was established to recognize permanent staff members of UConn who supervise student employees and to acknowledge these staff members and the work they do.*

### Recipient



#### **Jennifer Murphy**

Jennifer, a staff member in the Learning Community Office, demonstrated encouragement, dedication and leadership qualities in her role as a supervisor of student employees. Jennifer is responsible for training and managing the student employee workflow to ensure that the tasks of other staff members are balanced and allow her students to be self-starters and more efficient.

# Edward Victor Gant Scholarship

Established in 1979 and first given in 1987, the scholarship is a gift of the University Of Connecticut Board Of Trustees and the family and friends of Edward V. Gant, former Provost and Professor of Civil Engineering. Edward V. Gant, who also served as the University's acting president for brief periods in the 1960s and '70s, passed away in 1985. The scholarship is granted on the basis of academic excellence, professional potential, dedicated service, and exemplary integrity. The scholarship(s) are awarded to students, graduate and/or undergraduate, who will be continuing their studies at the University of Connecticut next fall.

## Finalists



### **Undergraduate Nominee: Brock Chilmileski**

As a junior double major in Physiology and Neurobiology and Molecular and Cellular Biology, Brock oversees the volunteers of the Community Outreach Generations Family Health Care program and has increased the number of volunteers while in this position. He has shown commitment and excellence to research in the field of neuroscience with his professor and at Connecticut Children's Medical Center Emergency room. He is in the Honors Program, a University Scholar, IDEA grant recipient, and SURF award recipient, able to balance his workload in the lab as well as his commitment to service, including his participation as a Peer Research Ambassador.



### **Undergraduate Nominee: Samantha Lawrence**

A third year student working towards a double major in Psychology and Human Development and Family Studies in the Honors Program, Samantha is actively involved in the Office of Undergraduate Research Ambassador program and the Peer Pals program on the UConn Hartford campus, helping first-year students with their transition. Her research is on the relationship between eating and anxiety disorders and victimization in adolescence and exclusionary victimization and she been selected as a SHARE award recipient, SURF award recipient, and a Babbidge Scholar.



### **Undergraduate Nominee: Marissa Piccolo**

As a Babbidge, University and Holster Scholar, Marissa has shown great dedication to local, state and federal politics from her involvement as President of the UConn College Democrats and co-founder of UConn for Hillary to her work with various Democratic Town Committees. She has studied abroad in London and is currently working on her University Scholars project, which looks at female participation in politics. She is in the Honors Program, a participant in the Leadership Legacy experience, and a research assistant for the Roper Center for Public Opinion research.



### **Undergraduate Nominee: Kavisha Thakkar**

Pursuing a dual-degree in Physiology and Neurobiology and Accounting, Kavisha is passionate about healthcare and serving others. She is a Resident Assistant, Asiantation Mentoring Program mentor, Discovery Leadership Program participant, serves on the Rowe and STEM Scholars executive boards, and volunteers at Southeast COPE, which teaches coping skills to children. Her research is through the School of Nursing where she studies the differences in brain development of incarcerated individuals and the effect that race has on treatment of inmates in prison settings.

# Edward Victor Gant Scholarship (continued)

## Finalists



### **Graduate Nominee: Tommy Lee**

A second year Ph.D student in the Department of Psychological Sciences, Tommy has maintained a commitment to the university through teaching and mentoring students both on and off-campus. He supervises 18 honors students through Dr. Etan Markus' lab, works with the AsACC KUBE mentoring program, and facilitates the UConn First Summer program, where incoming students can come to campus early to take classes and get acclimated to the campus. In addition to his service, his interdisciplinary research with Dr. Markus integrates animal behavior, neuropharmacology, electrophysiology, and computational neuroscience to uncover mechanisms underlying learning and memory in the brain's hippocampus.



### **Graduate Nominee: Jesse Mala**

After serving in the United States Armed Forces, Jesse returned inspired to pursue his education and is now working towards his Ph.D in Sport Management within the Learning, Leadership and Educational Policy Program. His commitment to helping intercity youth through sport is evidenced by his service through Husky Sport, as well as his research on sport and school connectedness. Jesse has developed a working framework to create and implement an intervention for middle school boys around sport and the life skills of Grit and Leadership.



# Matthew B. Schechter Scholarship

This scholarship is named after Matthew Benson Schechter, who earned a Bachelors of Art in English in 1962. It was established in 1969 to recognize a deserving student(s) on the basis of citizenship, need, scholarship, contribution to the University, and contributions to the causes of human rights and human dignity, civil liberties and freedom of thought.

## Recipient



### **Josephine Ankrab**

Josephine is a Human Development and Family Studies Major on a health careers path. She has served as a UNESCO Student Ambassador for two years and has found the experience to be transformative. She has also taken the initiative to participate in two Alternative Break trips: working with the homeless in Boston and a 10-day journey to the Dominican Republic to work directly in rural medical clinics with UConn's Pre-Med Society. She has demonstrated how to take what she learned in class and apply it in her public service and hopes to one day be a part of the UN providing medical care for international communities.

## Willis N. Hawley Service and Leadership Award

Willis N. Hawley, (1875-1898), attended Storrs Agricultural College, beginning in the fall of 1895 and soon after graduating in 1898, he joined the U.S. Army, Company H, Third Connecticut Volunteer Infantry. This award recognizes a student veteran(s) who has made significant contributions to the University community through leadership and service during their tenure as a student. This award was established in 2010 and is sponsored by the Office of Veterans Affairs and Military Programs.

### Recipients



#### **Michael Castillo**

Michael is a Veteran of the CT Army National Guard, and deployed to Iraq in 2003. Michael is currently in UConn's MBA program with a concentration in Finance and Management. In addition to his work, school, and family commitments, Michael is honored to serve as the Secretary and Treasurer of a non-profit organization called the Veterans Advocacy Center. Their mission is to provide veterans with the skills and therapy they need to better their lives.



#### **Garrett Taylor**

Garrett is a Veteran of the U.S. Army, with deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. He previously completed a degree in Finance at UConn and he has returned to pursue a second degree in Mechanical Engineering. In addition to his studies, Garrett volunteers his time as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) for UConn's Veteran Student Organization (VSO) for which he's been an integral part of organizing a weekly social for veterans and a BBQ at the start of the year. Garrett also serves other student veterans through his VA Work Study job in the main office of Veterans Affairs & Military programs on-campus.



## First Year Excellence in Innovation Award

The First Year Excellence in Innovation Award stems from a university-wide initiative to cultivate talent among first year students. This award recognizes a current first year student(s) that has displayed a significant level of innovation and creativity. This award was established in 2016 and is sponsored by the Office of First Year Programs and Learning Communities.

### Recipient



#### **Britney Reynolds**

Britney is a first year student at UConn, double majoring in Management Information Systems and Psychology. She is currently a member of Innovation House and will hold a student leadership role in the community next year. During the past year, Britney worked with a team to develop an app that will encrypt the data stored on our phones, so that when it is retrieved and accessed by other apps, no meaningful data is given out, protecting our security. In addition to her work in Innovation House, Britney is also a Murray Freedman Memorial Scholar and a Connecticut Information Technology Scholar.

## Individual Community Service Award

This award honors a student(s) that has initiated and/or actively engaged in a community service project(s). The project may be a single event or a series of activities. This award is intended for those engaged in activities that offer direct service, as opposed to fundraising or lobbying activities. Such service(s) should directly benefit a community external to the University and have occurred in the past academic year. This award was established prior to 2005 and is sponsored by the UConn Co-op.

### Finalists



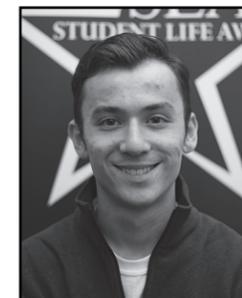
#### **Sara Butter**

Having been a volunteer well before she enrolled at UConn, Sara has been involved with Community Outreach for three years, serving as a student coordinator for the past two and a half. She works with Community Outreach's Special Projects section to plan and implement large service opportunities, overseeing several student leaders. Sara hopes to continue in the medical field and will be joining the Peace Corps after graduation.



#### **Zane Grady**

Zane has recruited incoming engineers and potential students to participate in various summer programs through the Diversity and Outreach Center. These opportunities include alternative breaks, engineering tour programs, serving on presentation teams, and other ways to explore the field of engineering. Zane has served as the head tutor of the Explore Engineering Program, overseeing 12 undergraduates who gave 150 high school students the opportunity to see engineering at a university setting. Zane has led alternative breaks to Mississippi, New Orleans, and New London and also participates in BRIDGE, an organization serving engineers from underrepresented populations.



#### **Shawn Henderson**

Shawn has served as the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program Coordinator for the past year through his organization, Beta Alpha Psi. Through Shawn's work as the program coordinator, he helps international students and scholars with their federal and state income tax returns. Shawn successfully recruited 39 tax preparers and 15 reviewers into this program and worked with advisors and external tax professionals to provide trainings for the volunteers.



#### **Lauren O'Malley**

Lauren O'Malley Lauren has been involved with Husky Sport, a sport-based service learning program designed to connect members of the Hartford community with UConn students. Lauren most recently created professional development opportunities for other undergraduate and graduate student participating in the program and its related courses. Lauren has helped to develop, deliver, and evaluate a professional development curriculum for 50+ UConn students and assisted in developing trainings for UConn student volunteering in Husky Sport. Lauren is also a community project coordinator for the student organization United Against Inequities and Disease (UAID), where she teaches sexual education to students at Windham Middle School.

## Individual Community Service Award (continued)

### Finalists



#### **Rachel Reed**

As a student leader with Community Outreach for the past year and a half, Rachel has served as the Director for Stafford Teen Night - a teen center for at-risk youth. Rachel spends every Friday night at the center working with the teens and finding ways to improve the center. She also designs trainings and activities for the 14 student volunteers she supervises. Rachel is currently creating a service day for the teens in the center, and the rest of the community, to improve the conditions of the center.



#### **Erin Szymanski**

Erin has been a student leader with Community Outreach for the past year working with the Big Brother Big Sister program at Windham Center School. Erin strives to provide a safe, healthy, and enjoyable mentoring environment for UConn students and the children they mentor. Erin has been described as the first one to step up and help with the program, and currently oversees 20 volunteers. Next year she will transition to the Program Director role, which oversees nine student leaders and 150 volunteers at six different sites.



#### **Amaris Vazquez**

Ami has worked with the Jumpstart program for the last three years and as the Community of Practice Coordinator this past year. This program serves twelve different communities engaging pre-school children and enhancing their learning of language and literacy skills. Ami currently supports the leadership development of the student leaders involved with Jumpstart. Ami also serves as a mentor in the Office of First Year Programs and Learning Communities helping first-year students transition into UConn and this year she also helped organize a writing contest for K-12 students and teachers in Connecticut.



## Organization Community Service Award

*This award honors a Registered Student Organization that has initiated and/or actively engaged in a community service project that offered direct service, as opposed to fundraising or lobbying activities, to a community external to the University. This award was established in 2002 and is sponsored by the Office of Community Outreach.*

### Recipient



#### **Husky Sport**

With University students on the frontline, Husky Sport recruits and empowers passionate, driven and relationship-oriented lifelong-learners who support the vision of Husky Sport, which is rooted in the framework of Sport Based Youth Development (SBYD) and focused on developing right, meaningful and reciprocal relationships through the pillars of nutrition education, physical activity, life skill development, and academic enrichment. Committed to the Hartford North End community for 13 years, Husky Sport offers four school day programs, collaborates with five after school partners, and supports 250 students and 25 teachers six days a week with the assistance of fourteen seven-passenger vans of student-staff and volunteers.

## 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. This award was established prior to 2005 and is sponsored by the UConn Co-op.*

### Finalists



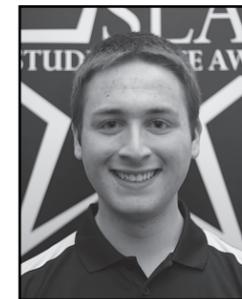
#### **Rachel Conboy**

Rachel is a senior majoring in Political Science, and serves as the President of the Undergraduate Student Government. During her time as President of USG, she has advocated to create and develop a more diverse and safe campus culture through the Safe Nurses Program, testifying at the State Legislature and representing UConn at Capital Day. This year, Rachel worked with the Women's Center on the ElectHer program to inspire more women to join USG, and for her work with USG she was named to HerCampus' "22 Women Under 22" list. She has also worked with the Student Alumni Association in order to bring back old traditions, such as a revival of Founder's Day and a unified bucket list for graduating seniors.



#### **Marissa Carbone**

Marissa is a junior majoring in Communication and serves as the current Chair of the Major Weekends Committee for the Student Union Board of Governors (SUBOG). In this capacity, Marissa is responsible for putting on two of the most visible and recognizable weekends here at UConn: Homecoming and One Ton Sundae. Her work with LipSync this year included collaborations with cultural centers, Greek Life, Student Organizations, the Town of Mansfield and over 5000 attendees. Despite a snow storm, she coordinated One Ton Sundae and served a record number of attendees. Beyond SUBOG, Marissa works at the Homer Babbidge Library and is a Dancer Rep for HuskyTHON.



#### **Nathan Francis**

Nathan is a junior who is involved in the Connecticut Reparatory Theatre on campus. Most recently, he was the dramaturg for the production of Sense and Sensibility. He has constantly pushed himself outside of his comfort zone on multiple occasions, including developing a play that he wrote. In addition to Nathan's involvement with the Connecticut Reparatory Theatre, he is also a tour guide and desk operator at the Lodewick Visitors Center and he consistently volunteers for the Department of Dramatic Arts in their recruiting efforts.



## Organization 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. This award was established prior to 2002 and is sponsored by the Division of Athletics.*

### Recipient



#### **Nutmeg Publishing**

Nutmeg Publishing has been responsible for the development of UConn's student yearbook since 1915. The organization has undergone significant changes and developments over the past few years, transitioning the organization from Nutmeg Yearbook to Nutmeg Publishing. In this restructuring, Nutmeg continues to publish a high quality yearbook and now also publishes a quarterly digital magazine that targets issues of importance to current UConn students. The aim of this restructuring was to address financial challenges as well as increase awareness from non-seniors, meeting both challenges with creativity, determination and forward-thinking.

## Spirer/Dueker Student Humanitarian Achievement Award

The award was first given in 1994 and was established by Louise and Herbert Spierer and Marilyn Dueker, retired faculty members from the University of Connecticut-Stamford campus. This award honors an undergraduate student(s) for outstanding contributions to public service. Recipient(s) will have demonstrated a concern for others that benefits society and impacts positively on his/her personal and professional life.

### Recipient



#### **Eric Cruz Lopez**

As an active leader for the C4D (CT Students for a Dream) organization, Eric spends countless hours working to advocate for the rights of undocumented students. He works to organize allies, plan and execute events, and campaign for change at the institutional and state levels, providing access and support for undocumented students in Connecticut. Most recently, Eric worked with administrators at UConn to offer training in support of students' access and assistance during their time at UConn. Eric also works weekly with a local school system to help plan lessons, support students, and develop a program that promotes public service and action. He seeks out opportunities to contribute to his community and to teach others the importance of finding their voice and using it to promote positive change.



## Andrea Dennis LaVigne Scholarship for Advancing Diversity

This scholarship was established in 2011, in honor of Trustee Andrea Dennis LaVigne through the gifts of many alumni, trustees and friends. This scholarship recognizes a student(s) who demonstrates a commitment to encouraging and enhancing diversity at the University of Connecticut.

### Finalists



#### **Micheca Fevrius**

Micheca, an Honors student, is a sophomore majoring in International Business and Chinese. She is the inaugural President of the Multicultural Honors Collective, an organization that seeks to celebrate, empower, and unify members of underrepresented backgrounds in the Honors program. In her role, Micheca works to create a more complete, welcoming, and diverse student community both in the Honors program and at UConn as a whole.



#### **Victoria Ho**

Victoria, a senior, is a member of the Resident Assistant Social Justice Educators. In this role she actively engages her residents and the wider UConn community in conversations and programs on a variety of social justice topics. Victoria pushes herself, and those she surrounds, to recognize the voice they have on campus and the ability they have to make an impact on their community through outreach, programming, and education.

## Student Organization Advocacy Award

This award honors a Registered Student Organization for the achievement of a remarkable goal or completion of a major project that significantly impacted students through advocacy or awareness initiatives during the past academic year. This can include, but not be limited to increasing awareness about a particular issue across campus or taking a leadership role in the advancement of an issue or cause on campus. This award was established in 2005 and is sponsored by the Leadership Office.

### Recipient



#### **Undergraduate Student Government**

Over the past year, the Undergraduate Student Government has worked on three big issues: increasing access to resources regarding sexual violence, collaborating with groups to promote diversity and inclusiveness on campus, and bringing student voices to the forefront on issues affecting students. USG partnered with state senators and representatives, the Women's Center, and the Office of Diversity and Equity to help develop a SAFE Nurse program and testify on behalf of SAFE Nurses legislation. USG created a flow chart with ODE to help students navigate the complicated legal process of reporting. The External Affairs committee of USG has partnered with Students for a Dream to write legislation which would grant access to financial aid for undocumented students. Lastly, USG is working to get the UConn student voice out far beyond the boundaries of Storrs by advocating for another undergraduate student on the Board of Trustees and working with regional campuses to advocate across the state.



## Program of the Year Award

This award recognizes 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. This award was established prior to 2002

### Recipient



#### **METAS**

METAS seeks to create smoother transitions for predominantly first year Latinx students at the University. The organization has been active on campus this last year through workshops, trainings, socials and informational sessions. Noteworthy activities include a resume critique workshop, a weekend retreat that provided deeper connections within cohorts, a sexually transmitted infection workshop and a visit to Journey House in Natchaug to volunteer with adolescent females in the court system. Frequent programming sponsored by METAS includes Spanish Hour and Café Con Leche. METAS strives to develop a holistic approach to building student leaders, encouraging them to take initiative and promotes a healthy lifestyle to achieve academic success.

## 2016 Leadership Legacy Experience Students

The University of Connecticut is proud to recognize the 2016 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.



**Karim Abdel Jalil**



**Christian Allyn**



**Lauren Biernacki**



**Caitlin Briody**



**Maman Cooper**



**Ian Fignon**



**Alleya Jenkins**



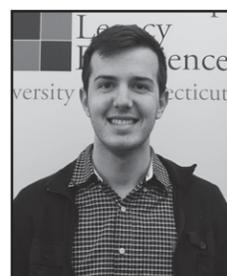
**Sydney Lauro**



**Yijia Liu**



**Marinela Maxhari**



**Myles Mocariski**



**Anurag Ojha**



**Marissa Piccolo**



**Carolina Reyes**



**Ariana Scurti**

## Leadership Certificate Series

We would like to recognize the following students on their completion of the Leadership Certificate Series by participating in and/or facilitating three or more Leadership Certificate Series workshops:

**Danielle Benito**  
**Mallory Chila**  
**Giuliana David**  
**Stephany Eastmond**  
**Tatiana Eng**  
**Caitlin Eaton-Robb**  
**Christiana Field**  
**Myles Gibbs**  
**Kelsey Heidgerd**  
**Andrew Jones**  
**Jordan Keyes**  
**Yijia Liu**

**James Lun**  
**Nora McNeil**  
**Ayush Mittal**  
**Sydney Morrison**  
**Shreya Pandaya**  
**Stefano Riccobene**  
**Jaclyn Ruszczyk**  
**Victoria Sylvestre**  
**Myroslava Veres**  
**Olivia Wilson**  
**Jordan Zielinski**  
**Sonali Shah**

We would like to recognize the following students who have served as the Leadership Office Certificate Series Workshop Facilitators:

**Gabriella Beaumont-Smith**  
**Makenzie Berntich**  
**Lindsay Cadwallader**  
**Victor Calle**  
**Abigail Colburn**  
**Giuliana David**  
**Joey Ferraro**  
**Micaela Joyce**  
**Emily Larkin**  
**Ayush Mittal**  
**Chris Rescheberger**  
**Jaclyn Ruszczyk**  
**Nora McNeil**  
**Sydney Morrison**



## Learning Community Leadership Award

This award recognizes a current Learning Community student(s) that has displayed a significant level of, either formal or informal, leadership within their Learning Community while supporting the overall mission of the Learning Community Program which prides itself in the holistic education of students in an academic environment while supporting significant opportunity for co-curricular engagement. This award was established in 2015 and is sponsored by the Office of First Year Programs and Learning Communities.

### Recipient



**Aaron Plotke**

Aaron has been a member and a student leader in the Learning Community Program over the last four years. He was a member of Business Connections House for two years and served as vice president on the BCLC council in his sophomore year. Over the last two years Aaron has assisted with the development the Learning Community Executive Council in collaboration with the Office of First Year Programs & Learning Communities. He currently serves as President of the Learning Community Executive Council and has been integral in the development of many new events and initiatives such as Learning Community Spirit Week and Learning Community Research Connections.

## International Student Leadership Award

This award recognizes a 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. This award was established in 2010 and is sponsored by the Global Affairs Office.

### Recipient



#### **Juefang (Cassie) Zhang**

As an international student from China, Cassie has gotten involved in numerous arenas that aim to integrate international students and their experiences into the UConn campus community. Cassie has been a First Year Experience mentor, an International Orientation Advisor, an active member of the Business Connections Learning Community, and was named the Asiantation Mentoring Program's "Mentee of the Year" before becoming a mentor herself this year. Additionally, Cassie established a group chat for all international students living in the Alumni Residential Area in an effort to provide support, communication, and guidance on the UConn campus.



## Building Community Award

This award honors a student(s) that 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 project should also have been significantly advanced during the past academic year and it should directly enhance the sense of community among various members of the campus community. This award was established in 2005 and is sponsored by the UConn Co-op.

### Recipient



#### **Neban (Maha) Saleem**

Neban (Maha) has worked at the Women's Center since fall of 2013 where she has created activities to support the recruitment and retention of women in STEM. She joined the Persistence of Women in STEM committee and developed a mentoring program for women in STEM at UConn, including the recruitment, training, and support of all mentors and mentees. Maha was the recipient of the Ella T. Grasso Leadership in Action Award and was inducted into the Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame. She currently serves as a Biochemistry Teaching Assistant, a member of the Collegiate Health Service Corps, and is a recipient of UConn's Day of Pride Scholarship.

## Emerging Leaders Award

This award recognizes a student(s) that, despite not holding a visible, established leadership position on campus, has actively demonstrated attributes of an emerging leader through his/her actions and character. The recipient(s) will demonstrate attributes of an emerging leader, poised for significant contribution and accomplishment through their future academic work, community service, organizational leadership, issue advocacy, and/or active participation in a campus-wide initiative. This award was established in 2005 and is sponsored by the UConn Co-op.

### Finalists



#### **Jennifer Akosa**

As an incoming student, Jennifer participated in the UConn First Summer program in 2014. The following year, Jennifer was hired as a mentor for the First Summer program, taking on many responsibilities as a rising sophomore. She is a member of the Pharmacy Club, Alpha Epsilon Phi National Sorority and its HIV/AIDS committee. Jennifer also helped create the Multicultural Honors Collective, which supports students in building a sense of community and is a venue to celebrate cultures, and demonstrate pride in heritage.



#### **Matthew Lin**

Matthew, a sophomore STEM Scholar in the Honors Program, currently serves as the first Executive Director of the STEM Scholar Executive Board. This student group works to support the STEM Scholar Community through a mentor program, study groups for scholars in similar classes, and a partnership with East Hartford Public Schools. Matthew also has supported the University's Day of Pride and Nutmeg Scholars program through his work to plan events, attend meetings, and bring together both current and prospective students. His efforts have resulted in increased scholarship acceptances. Finally, Matthew also traveled to Guatemala over winter break to do medical humanitarian service.



#### **Rachel Sanacora**

Rachel is currently working towards an Individualized Major in Global Health in the hopes of providing medical care to underserved communities throughout the world. She is a STEM Scholar in the Honors Program, and participated in UConn's Premedical Society's Alternative Break to the Dominican Republic as one of two freshman participants. She later was selected to be a trip director for the group. Rachel, who interned at a lab at Yale University, is a peer mentor for the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation program and the Peer Allies Through Honors program, and was recently selected into UConn's Making More Health program.



#### **Aziz Sandhu**

Aziz is a first-year student and a member of the Public Health Learning Community, UConn Empower, the Medical Humanitarian Society, Husky Ambassadors, and Community Outreach. Aziz was selected as one of two freshmen to participate in an Alternative Break trip to Birmingham, Alabama where the focus was Civil Rights and Urban Poverty. Aziz hopes to continue working with Community Outreach's Alternative Breaks program, as well as become a First Year Experience mentor for her living and learning community. She serves as an informal leader on her floor, and was a finalist for the Public House Learning Community Resident Assistant position.

# Donald L. McCullough Leadership Award

Established in 1979, in remembrance of the former Director of Student Activities, Don McCullough, the McCullough Leadership award is the University's highest student leadership award. This award recognizes individual student(s) who have made significant contributions to the University community through leadership of, and/or involvement in an initiative(s) that has had University-wide impact and is representative of the highest level of student leadership and involvement.

## Finalists



### Quian Callender

A senior majoring in Health Care Management, Quian is an active member in UConn's Honors Program and was recently selected to testify in support of UConn's budget at the state legislature. He has participated in the Sexual Violence Prevention Focus Group and through that group helped name UConn's Bystander Intervention Initiative, "Protect Our Pack." Quian joined the Student Union Board of Governors his freshman year and now serves as their Vice President for Finance and Administration. He created a new student organization, Honors in Business Association, to support students interested in business, regardless of their major.



### Erin McMahon

As a senior involved in UConn's Student Alumni Association, Erin has served as a general member, Vice President of Programming, OOzeball Coordinator, and currently is President of the Association. Erin has dedicated significant time in developing traditions and campus-wide school spirit, including working with the Huskies Forever Weekend, coordinating and expanding the 32nd annual OOzeball tournament, and helping develop the "81 Things to Do Before You Graduate" bucket list. Erin has also been an active member of Alpha Beta Epsilon, UConn Club Figure Skating, the Spring Weekend Committee, and the Public Health House Learning Community.



### Jovonne Pullen

Jovonne has actively served in several roles within UConn's Women's Center since the Fall of 2012, and she currently sits as the Center's representative to the Vice President for Student Affairs Leadership Council. Jovonne is the co-founder of Sisters Inspiring Sisters (SIS), which provides support and resources for female students of color. She also helped reactivate UConn's chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc., and she currently serves as their President. She also is a spoken word poet active in the student organization Poetic Release, where she uses artistic expression to shed light on issues in today's society.



### Julian Rose

Julian is a member of the Rowe Scholars Program, where he has been engaged in activities and conversations around equity and diversity for the last four years. As President of ManyMentors, Julian involved the organization in STARBASE, arranging for mentors to work with elementary students on STEM-based projects to provide exposure and excitement about the field. Julian was a 2015 cohort member of UConn's Leadership Legacy Experience and has also been an active participant in several equity issues campus-wide including the Vigil for Victims of Police Brutality, the March for Civility, Diversity, and Equity, and the Speak Out: Standing with Mizzou Rally. Julian will be participating in Teach For America after graduation.



### Nehan (Maha) Saleem

Nehan (Maha) has worked at the Women's Center since the Fall of 2013 where she has created activities to support the recruitment and retention of women in STEM. She joined the Persistence of Women in STEM committee and developed a mentoring program for women in STEM at UConn, including the recruitment, training, and support of all mentors and mentees. Maha was the recipient of the Ella T. Grasso Leadership in Action Award and was inducted into the Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame. She currently serves as a Biochemistry Teaching Assistant, a member of the Collegiate Health Service Corps, and is a recipient of UConn's Day of Pride Scholarship.



## Stewardship Awards

Leadership Office  
Department of Student Activities

Established in 2010, the Stewardship Awards exists to acknowledge Tier III (Student Fee-Funded) Organizations for success in four areas of organizational stewardship: constituents, members, assets, and administrator relations. Throughout the year, these areas of stewardship are emphasized in training and advisement of these organizations, and within the governance bodies of the groups themselves.

### Constituents

This organization has demonstrated a strong level of commitment to and awareness of its constituents through sound understanding of organization accountability. Demonstrations of engagement, interaction, and overall care in the best interests of the student body have been shown through continued efforts this past year. This organization has set the stage for improved constituent relations for both their organization and other fee-funded student leaders in the Triad Leadership Program.

### Members

In keeping with the best traditions of their organization and the University, this group has demonstrated successful stewardship of its members through the excellent recruitment, development, and mentorship of an effective membership base in the organization. By providing adequate support, this organization has helped create a positive and supportive place for involvement for current and future members. This group has demonstrated strong efforts to work collaboratively, professionally, and ethically as an organization.

### Administrator Relations

This organization has displayed excellence in the stewardship of administrator relations during the past year. In collaboration with faculty, staff, and administrators, this organization has developed sound partnerships in order to support the organization's mission and the student body. By working more closely and effectively with administrators at the University, this group has demonstrated how students and administrators can work together in order to achieve a high level of success.

### Assets

This organization has demonstrated outstanding effort in terms of maximizing available assets. By using conscious efforts to use resources in innovative and responsible ways, this organization has learned to balance fiscal responsibility with the needs of the UConn community. This group is an excellent example of how student leaders and fee-funded student organizations can best incorporate their assets to better their successes.