

Student Experience Award Recipients 2020

The Student Experience Awards are presented each year to deserving undergraduate and graduate students, staff, and faculty members.

Student Experience is proud to honor the achievements and contributions of campus leaders who have made a lasting difference in the lives of our students and in the strong relationship that is fostered between the campus and greater community.

André Auger Citizenship Award

Recipient: Syvanne Avitzur, College of Social and Applied Human Sciences

Syvanne is a community-focused student that has focused on researching and volunteering her time to make a more inclusive Gryphon experience. Syvanne is a Senior Start Facilitator, supporting other students and encouraging others to voice their opinions. Syvanne also involved in the World University Service of Canada (WUSC), attending conferences with other like-minded individuals and discussing important issues such as refugee rights and sustainable international development.

Brian D. Sullivan Student Leadership Award

Recipient: Conor Russell, Ontario Agricultural College

Conor, with the guidance of ECM, created the Queer Christian Community, a program for LGBTQ2IA+ students seeking an affirming faith community. It has proved to be a much needed intersectional space on campus, where students don't have to repress or hide their sexual gender identity or their faith identity. Beyond this, Conor is also a lifeguard in the Department of Athletics as well as a research assistant with the Department of Plant Agriculture. Off campus, Conor volunteers with the Life Centre at Royal City Church where he volunteers weekly to serve meals to food insecure people in Guelph's downtown.

Carl Rom Colthoff Experiential Learning Award

Recipient: Cole Heasley, College of Biological Science

Cole was part of the Undergraduate Research Assistant program. He has been working with Dr. Matthew Little in the Population Medicine Department. Cole is focusing on improving food security in Guelph, the project is run by a community partner, the SEED. Cole chose courses that allowed him to spend more time on the project throughout the fall semester while remaining a full-time student because he enjoyed the project so much and wanted to see it through. Cole worked very flexible hours to ensure that those involved faced as few barriers as possible. Cole is also the Vice-President Social and Co-President with the Toxicology Students Association. Cole is an exceptional leader and leader who is passionate about community work.

Diversity & Inclusion Award

Undergraduate recipient: Isaiah Burton, College of Biological Science

Isaiah is the current President of the Guelph Black Students' Association (GBSA). Outside of the GBSA, Isaiah also volunteers at the Campus Alcohol Recovery Room and served as the Interhall Council East Residence Vice President. Isaiah has demonstrated strong leadership and a tremendous amount of care for the students at the University of Guelph. Recognition of barriers to accessing programs and resources, supporting the student experience of intersecting and marginalized identities (i.e. race, gender, identity, sexual diversity, faith, etc.) and a consistent willingness to collaborate with various internal and external partners.

Graduate recipient: Sharon Wang, College of Biological Science

Sharon was a principle organizer for the Symposium for Women Entering Evolution and Ecology Today, she is also one of the graduate student reps on the GenEQ committee. Sharon's accomplished many things in her time here at U of G but what stood out to the committee was her work with the Integrative Biology Equity, Diversity and Inclusion committee. Sharon is the co-chair along with Dr. Chris Caruso. They drafted an EDI statement that the department is using for practices such as hiring which has resulted in a noticeable culture shift and has been enthusiastically received by the Provost. Sharon has also been part of symposiums, programs and conferences, securing funding for many to ensure others have opportunities. She is a profound leader, constantly trying to break down the systems holding underrepresented people back.

Erin Angus Graduate Student Award

Recipient: Marshall Asch, College of Engineering and Physical Sciences

Marshall is a graduate student in the School of Computer Science. He has been a mentor to his peers in his lab, extra-curricular activities and to the broader community. Marshall is actively involved in Society for Computing and Information Sciences and has been nominated to be a Graduate Student Senator. Marshall manages the Guelph Coding Community on campus, updating and facilitating activities with both undergraduate and graduate student. Within the lab, Marshall co-led the development of an environmental and health monitoring tool used in the Inuit community of Rigolet, Nunatsiavut. Marshall has clearly made a huge impact on the department of Computer Science, the University of Guelph, and the broader community.

Hasnul F. Abdollah International Student Award

Recipient: Swathy Sethuraman, College of Biological Science

Swathy is a Peer Helper on the International Student Experience team and is a Program Facilitator for International House RLS. She has been involved in formulating and facilitating programs such as mental health, academics and way finding in a new environment for international students. She helps students develop tools and life-skills through discussion circles and socials. She has also been a START International volunteer, welcoming international students to campus and being a key player in their first year experience.

Kishaadigeh Award & Roberta Mason Award

Recipient: Jamie Horner, College of Social and Applied Human Sciences

Jamie is a Métis graduate student in her final year of her Masters degree. Jamie is the recipient of both the Kishaadigeh and the Roberta Mason award and she fit both criteria perfectly. She has made significant positive contributions to the lives of Indigenous students in the Aboriginal Resource Centre, as well as elsewhere on campus and in the community. Jamie is not a member of the Aboriginal Students Association executive team, however she has shown an incredible commitment to this organization. She volunteers at almost every event, is a commuter student and shows a level of passion and commitment that are hard to meet. On top of all of this, Jamie is also a TA. Jamie holds her office hours in the Aboriginal Resource Centre from time to time to encourage students to get familiar with the space. She also sits on the Racialized Students Constituency and also supporting the College of Social and Applied Human Sciences with their Indigenization efforts, originally sitting on the committee level, but now works with Prof. Kim Anderson as a Graduate Student Researcher.

Laurie Schnarr I am a Gryphon Award

Recipient: Dima Ismail, College of Engineering and Physical Sciences

Dima is a member of the Multi-Faith Resource Team and the president of the Muslim Students Association (MSA) who exemplifies what it means to be a Gryphon. Dina lead several important projects while on the Multi-Faith Resource Team, including a collaboration with the Wellness Centre on campus to make an MSA Peer Helper Program, in response to mental health concerns among Muslim students on campus. Dima also worked hard to find Muslim prayer spaces on campus and to increase the availability of Halal foods. Dima and the MSA also ran several Orientation Week events to include new students on campus. Dima is a passionate leader who works hard to ensure the best Gryphon experience for all students.

R.P. Gilmor Student Life Award

Student Recipient: Carolyn Trombley, College of Biological Science

Carolyn is a graduate student and member of the Integrative Biology Undergraduate Mentorship Program (iBUMP) on campus, impacting over 200 undergraduate students since she got involved. In this role, Carolyn helps undergraduate students write graduate school applications, find a supervisor, write a CV, and network with others. Carolyn assists undergraduates through their degrees in Integrative Biology, and providing them with social outlets to get to know their peers. Through Carolyn's efforts, her program has grown and improved, providing a better student experience for her fellow students.

Staff Recipient: Dave Easter, Department of Athletics

Dave Easter is the Manager of Marketing & Communications with the Department of Athletics. Dave was involved in making 9 minor sports within the city of Guelph become Jr. Gryphons, encouraging a relationship between the campus and greater community. Dave also started the Frosty Mug event 12 years ago, Aggies Night with OAC, Gryphons Mean Business with the Lang School of Business and has created several other events to encourage groups on campus

connect with athletics. Dave began Fryday Night Lights, a partnership with local high school football teams in the community to host weekly games at Alumni Stadium as well as other championship events with local high school using Gryphon facilities. Other community work includes Big Brothers Big Sisters and Believe to Achieve. Dave is a role model to his fellow staff at the Athletics Centre, to campus community members, and the broader Guelph community.

Peers Helper Award Recipients 2019

Katherine Elliot Scholarship

Recipient: Stefanie Stockhamer, Peer Training and Networking Team

In her three semesters as a Peer Helper on the Peer Training and Networking Team, Stefanie has shown strong initiative, a passion for self-directed learning, and adaptability. This year, Stefanie took an intentional approach to re-structuring a Peer Helper event focused on career readiness to better meet the needs and interests of peer helpers, using her creative visioning ability and strong communication skills. Stefanie is committed to the development of others, and frequently offers creative feedback, fresh ideas, and support to others on her team. These strengths will serve Stefanie immensely well as she pursues a career in Medicine.

Lin Coburn Award

Recipient: Nikan Momenbeitollahi, Intercultural Engagement

Nikan has contributed to the Peer Helper program for 8 semesters and her commitment and contribution have been beyond expectations. Her intellect, practical and personal ability has not only improved the LINK and Conversation Partners programs but also the Peer Helper program. Other being an excellent role model to the new peers in the team, she is also a great supporter and a friend to them by being there for them when needed. While striving for academic excellence, Nikan is actively involved in various communities on and off-campus and volunteering in the organizations for an extended period of time.

Barbara Cardow Award

Recipient: Emily Kerr, International Development Studies Ambassadors

Emily Kerr is an incredibly dedicated and compassionate individual, who has used her multitude of valuable skills to better the IDS Ambassador Peer Helper Team. She has continually pushed her Peer Helper team to broaden their horizons, to network, make connections, and value those connections. Emily is a highly involved student, as she sees the value in giving back and building up community relations among and across individuals.

Supervisor Award

Recipient: Brittney McManus, Experiential Learning Hub

Brittney was nominated for this award by her entire Career Services Peer Helper Team for her dedication to supporting student learning. Over the past year, Brittney developed the "Experiential Learning Street Team", played a key role in launching the new College of Biological

Sciences Career Services Peer Helper Team, developed new ways of collaborating with campus partners, all while leading and inspiring her Peer Helper team.

Academic Achievement (Departing Peer)

Recipient: Julianah Oguntala, Student Accessibility Services

Academic Achievement (Returning Peer)

Recipient: Anthony Nguyen, Wellness Education