

2008 Marlin Miller Outstanding Senior Award recipients chosen

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Grace Stewart, an art in the School of Art & Design, and Conrado Bowen, a Spanish and marketing major in the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, are this year's recipients of the Marlin Miller Outstanding Senior Awards at Alfred University. Each will receive a \$5,000 check and a hand-crafted tile at Honors Convocation April 25. They were chosen for the honor - among the highest bestowed upon students - by a campus-wide committee on the basis of their scholarship, extra-curricular leadership and personal character. Candidates for the award are nominated by faculty and staff. "Grace and Conrado were chosen from a pool of very talented candidates," said Kathy Woughter, vice president for Student Affairs. "Each year, as we go through this selection process, I am impressed by what an incredible group of students we have at Alfred University. Grace and Conrado have enriched our campus through their contributions, and it's wonderful to hear about all the ways that the Alfred University experience has impacted them." "Grace Stewart has integrated her intellectual pursuits, her creative talents and her concern for community in breathtaking ways while at Alfred," wrote Amy Jacobson, director of the Women's Leadership Center, in nominating Stewart for the award. "She has taken advantage of all that Alfred has to offer and given back to the community in equal measure. In short, she embodies the best of what we hope for - and what's possible - for Alfred University students." "What impresses me most about Grace, however, is the way she brings all of her experiences and talents together in furtherance of larger goals," Jacobson wrote. "She does not perceive boundaries between creative endeavors, intellectual pursuits, and social justice priorities." Stewart told the selection committee that when she arrived on campus as a freshman in the fall of 2004, "I did not think of myself as a leader. I was the typical shy, reserved, self-conscious student who wouldn't talk in class, never raised my hand to ask a question, and tried as much as possible to blend in with those around me." That began to change her first year, when she auditioned for the AU Dance Team, and then was elected captain. "By taking advantage of all that Alfred University has had to offer me, and embracing those areas of myself that make me who I am, I have been able to grow and evolve as a student, a person and a leader in my community," Stewart said. An internship at the Women's Leadership Center prompted her to join the Campus Action Team for "Finding the Line," a national research project funded by the American Association of University Women, to determine incidence of sexual harassment on campus. She received a Bernstein grant to attend the American Association of University Women's Student Leadership Conference in Washington, DC, as a result of that work. The following year, as a junior, she attended and presented at several conferences, including the regional AAUW conferences, and founded Wee Reader, a student newsletter on women's issues. She created and wrote a comic, College Girl, with assistance from another student. The comic aimed at addressing women's issues in a humorous, yet relevant way. The summer after her junior year, Stewart lived in a village in Ghana, West Africa, where she worked in an orphanage. Her experience there influenced her own art work, and led her to curate a show, "In Foreign Space," featuring the work of AU art students. This year, she has been involved in another AAUW research project, "Dreams to Reality," that is looking at pay equity for women. She is working on a documentary in connection with the project. She was also selected by the faculty of the School of Art & Design as the student delegate to the 2007 International Society for Ceramics Art Education Exchange Symposium, Great Britain. Stewart has continued her interest in dance, participating in AU dance concerts through the Division of Performing Arts. A graduate of Northern Burlington County Regional High School in Columbus, NJ, Stewart is a daughter of William Stewart of Lakewood, NJ, and Deloris Stewart of Browns Mills, NJ. Conrado Bowen is "driven, easy-going, friendly and flexible," wrote Dr. Ariana Huberman, assistant professor of Spanish, in her letter nominating Bowen for the award. "He is a highly self-motivated student with a vast range of intellectual interests across cultural borders. He sets an example for the rest of his peers on how intelligence, effort, motivation, caring of others and enjoyment of life can go a long way." "Citizenship, duty and character have been the cornerstones of my education here at Alfred University," said Bowen, who adds that his contributions back to the community "are mere shadows if compared against the level of maturation those experiences have allowed. Alfred University has truly given me a complete college experience." My experiences at Alfred have shown me the boundless power of unity. A community cannot excel on the strength of a sole citizen's efforts. Instead, change and growth can only come of the collective efforts; this is the wisdom Alfred has bestowed upon me," Bowen said. Bowen is a resident assistant for AU's Office of Residence Life; production director at WALF, the campus radio station; a public safety officer and shift supervisor for the Office of Public Safety; a staff writer for the Fiat Lux student newspaper; chairman of the Mud Olympics Committee for Hot Dog Day; chairman of the Student Senate Transportation

Committee; and co-chair of the Judicial Review Board. He has also had roles in Alfred University theatrical productions of "Beyond Therapy" and "Once On This Island." He is a member of Poder Latino and serves on the University's Bias Response Team. A Dean's List student, Bowen received an Alfred University Outstanding Student Leadership Award in Spring 2007. He is president of S.A.F.E. - Students Acting For Equality - and helped to organize its "May Day Walk-Out" in 2006 as part of a national effort to demonstrate the buying power of Latinos across the country. He completed internships with CBS News in 2006 and MTV Networks in 2007; after graduation in May, he plans to return to MTV's international programming operations department. A graduate of Murry Bergtraum High School in New York City, Bowen is a son of Leu-Ann Nickey of Brooklyn, NY. Along with a hand-crafted tile made by Wayne Higby, an internationally acclaimed artist and professor of ceramic art in the School of Art & Design at AU, each will receive \$5,000 in cash, thanks to an endowment created by Robert L. MacNeil Jr. of Wyndmoor, PA, a friend and business colleague of Marlin Miller, who is a 1954 alumnus of Alfred University as well as a member and former chairman of the Board of Trustees. While Alfred University has for several years presented outstanding senior awards to the man and woman in each class selected by a campus-wide committee, in 2004 the awards were named in honor of Miller.