

## **Two seniors receive SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence**

4/30/14

Alfred University (AU) seniors Eric Teller and Gavin Tougher are recipients of the State University of New York (SUNY) Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence. They received their awards in Albany earlier this spring from SUNY Chancellor Nancy Zimpher.

Teller, a glass science engineering major from Granville, and Tougher, a sculpture major in the School of Art and Design from Delmar, were among approximately 300 students across New York State to be selected for this honor. Four of the academic programs in AU's Inamori School of Engineering biomedical materials science engineering, ceramic engineering, glass science engineering and materials science and engineering and the programs in the School of Art and Design are part of AU's statutory College of Ceramics, meaning that students enrolled in these programs are eligible for SUNY awards.

Teller "is one of the few students I honestly believe has the natural intellectual ability combined with humility, excellent communication skills, and a strong work ethic to be successful and well-respected in anything he does," wrote Scott Misture, Inamori professor of materials science and engineering, in his letter of nomination. "He is not afraid to get his hands dirty when necessary nor is he afraid to tackle enormous derivations and complex math problems in his technical classes."

Teller is currently working with Misture on his senior research thesis, and he has previously worked under him as a research assistant synthesizing photoactive bismuth-based ceramics to produce hydrogen for solid oxide fuel cells.

Teller has been the recipient of numerous scholarships and awards, including the E-LEAD Scholarship for AU students who demonstrated academic excellence and a high degree of leadership qualities, the Glens Falls Contractors Association Scholarship, and the Intercollegiate Tennis Association Scholar Athlete Award. He is also a member of Keramos, the ceramics and glass academic fraternity, and Tau Beta Pi, the honors fraternity for engineering students.

As a member of the AU Middle States Self Study Steering Committee, Teller conducted surveys and made recommendations on the efficiency of the University's executive branch. Teller was also selected to serve on the President's Council of Student Advisors for the American Ceramic Society.

On campus, he has been involved in a variety of student organizations, working as an Orientation guide director and Saxon Sidekick (student mentor), serving on the W.I.L.D. About Alfred Committee, and representing the Outdoors Club as vice president. Teller played trumpet for two semesters in the AU Symphonic Band and has played on the men's varsity tennis team for four years, earning a varsity letter.

Teller is the son of Marc and Cindy Teller of Granville. He is a graduate of Granville Central Junior-Senior High School.

Tougher was nominated for this award by Brett Hunter, associate professor of sculpture in the School of Art and Design.

He has served multiple roles on campus, including Alfred University Television manager and president of the Reusable Materials Depot (REPO). As REPO president, Tougher implemented a student-run recycling program for the School of Art and Design as well as organizing several REPO clean-out events.

Tougher was also selected to serve on the Student Advisory Board with the Dean of the School of Art and Design to discuss issues and improvements within the college and heighten transparency between administration and students.

He has also taken on several additional leadership roles within the School of Art and Design, assisting in the development of a public forum on the graffiti problem at AU and helping to organize the annual Hornell Art Walk in

2013.

Tougher has been a Freshman Foundations Studio Visits video assistant, a teacher assistant for two beginning sculpture courses at AU and for several summer art workshops at the Capital Region Center for the Arts, and completed a summer internship with the Division of Sculpture and Dimensional Studies in the School of Art and Design.

As a recipient of the 2013 Dr. Judith Temple Scholarship for the Arrowmont School of Craft, Gatlinburg, TN, Tougher was able to attend a workshop at Arrowmont for promising and talented students in the field of art and design.

He has exhibited and curated a number of sculptural, digital media, and installation-based exhibits at AU&s Robert C. Turner Gallery.

Tougher is the son of Bill and Beth Tougher of Delmar and is a graduate of Bethlehem Central High School.