

Alfred University, Alfred State College hold ceremony honoring community service

2/01/19



ALFRED, NY – Alfred University and Alfred State College honored students, faculty and staff who dedicate their time to helping their communities. Honorees were recognized at the ninth annual Spirit of Service Awards Ceremony on Tuesday, Jan. 29, at Union University Church in Alfred.

Each year at the ceremony, Alfred University and Alfred State present a student, faculty or staff member(s), and a community member or group with Spirit of Service Awards. Recipients receive the award for exemplifying principles that Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. advocated, including equity, social justice, and community service.

Caitlin Brown received the 2019 Alfred Community Spirit of Service Award. Brown, a village of Alfred trustee and instructor/chief curator of the Cohen Gallery at Alfred University, spearheaded the Art Walk, a collaborative monthly venture whose purpose is to foster dialogue within the local arts communities.

The 2019 Alfred University Faculty/Staff Spirit of Service Award was presented to the Alfred University Support Staff Council. Currently chaired by Crystal Henshaw, the Council has engaged in sustained and focused fundraising to raise money for the Gail Walker Textbook Fund, which is used to purchase textbooks for students who have run into financial roadblocks and need a one-time boost in order to get the books they need. Also nominated were Michele Hluchy, professor of geology and environmental studies; Beth Johnson, associate professor of psychology; Russell Phillips, head men's basketball coach; and Mark Zupan, president of Alfred University.

Kyle Silberstein received the 2019 Alfred University Student Spirit of Service Award. Silberstein has served as president and treasurer of Student Senate, and has worked to revitalize the Jewish community in Alfred as the president of Hillel.

Other nominees for the Alfred University Student Spirit of Service Award were: Ramin Farajifijani, who served as an ambassador from Alfred University to the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh last fall after the deadly shooting there, and who has worked to improve experiences for international students arriving on campus; Makenna Ransom, whose service efforts include raising money for the Navajo Water Project "Dig Deep", and participating in numerous medical fundraising benefits for people with life-threatening illnesses; and Kelley Staub, a leader on the Saxons'

softball team and volunteer at the Alfred Montessori School.

Corey Fecteau, art career advisor at the Robert R. McComsey Career Development Center and service learning coordinator at Alfred University, helped organize Tuesday's banquet and awards ceremony.

"The Celebration of Service is one of my favorite annual events, a time for all of Alfred to recognize and honor the often-unseen service performed with dedication by members of our community," Fecteau commented. "The Spirit of Service Awards are given in memory of the life and legacy of Dr. King, who challenged us all to uplift others through service while striving for a more equitable world. Spirit of Service nominees and award winners alike have demonstrated their commitment to making Alfred a better, more just, and more caring place. It is a privilege to celebrate their contributions to our community."

In photo above, Alfred University winners and nominees for 2019 Spirit of Service Awards (left to right): Kyle Silberstein, Student Spirit of Service Award Winner; Kelley Staub, Student Spirit of Service Award Nominee; Beth Johnson, Faculty/Staff Spirit of Service Award Nominee; Mark Zupan, Faculty/Staff Spirit of Service Award Nominee; Michele Hluchy, AU Faculty/Staff Spirit of Service Award Nominee; and Ramin Farajifijani, Student Spirit of Service Award Nominee. Not pictured: Caitlin Brown, Community Spirit of Service Award Winner; Makenna Ransom, Student Spirit of Service Award Nominee; and Crystal Henshaw and Gayle Gebhard, Support Staff Council representatives. The Alfred University Support Staff Council was the Winner of the Faculty/Staff Spirit of Service Award.