



Campus Compact

Ohio

Charles J. Ping Student Service Award Winners 2018-2019

The Charles J. Ping Award was designed to recognize and honor undergraduate students' outstanding leadership and contributions to community service on their campus and within their community. This award is granted annually to undergraduates from Ohio Campus Compact member institutions that exhibit outstanding leadership in their community service endeavors both on their campus and within their community.

The award is named in honor of Charles J. Ping, who served as President of Ohio University from 1975 – 1994. An early supporter and Board Member of Ohio Campus Compact, Dr. Ping has been a tireless advocate for campus-community partnerships and increased opportunities for students to become active and engaged citizens.

Candidates must be nominated by the president of their college or university. Candidates have met the following criteria:

1) Evidence of exemplary community service during each student's undergraduate years should reflect the student's efforts to meet needs in his or her community. The Ping Award recognizes student efforts, from individual commitment to service and community, to the ability to create an organization and to involve others.

2) Although outstanding community service of any kind will qualify, Ohio Campus Compact is especially interested in efforts that have connected service with academic study or designed programs with long-term community involvement.

Each year, Ohio Campus Compact awards a \$250 Legacy Award to the top two nominees. The grant is given in the recipients' name to the community-based nonprofit organization of their choice. The Seretta Saylor Legacy Award recognizes students who address economic, emotional and environmental community needs.



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Congratulations to the 2018-19 Charles J. Ping Service Award Winners. We applaud your outstanding leadership and many contributions to your campus and your community.

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* Seretta Saylor Legacy Award Recipients

Brandon Willinger
Bowling Green State University



My passion for politics was first ignited during the 2008 Presidential Primary Election. Though I was only in fifth grade at the time, I was inspired by the campaigns that were striving toward a better future. This passion was a driving force until my first year of college when I had the opportunity to work for a local city council campaign. Though I was not the most effective with my engagement, that campaign helped me realize the impact I could have in political engagement. I spent the next two years working for campaigns on the local, state and national level, learning how to be more impactful in political engagement, before joining BGSU Votes. BGSU Votes is the non-partisan political engagement program for BGSU. I joined the team in the spring of my third year, and became the Civic Action Leader (CAL) for BGSU Votes for my fourth and final year at BGSU.

While the CAL position has existed at BGSU for years, I am the first CAL dedicated to BGSU Votes. As the CAL, I serve as the team leader for BGSU Votes. I have focused on building a strong organizational foundation to increase the impact of this program. I, along with two other student leaders, have recruited and trained 15 volunteers, 7 of whom volunteer with us on a consistent basis. We have become a more consistent and visible resource for students, engaging with more students this year than ever before. We have registered over 740 students to vote, more than twice as many as in previous years. We have engaged nearly 6,500 students with our various programs centered on voter registration, voter education and getting out the vote. We were able to formally present to over 500 students on the importance of political engagement and how to become informed voters. In all aspects of our work, we have been more impactful than ever before.

Through our efforts, BGSU was named a Voter Friendly Campus by Campus Vote Project and NASPA for the first time. While we are still waiting for our full report for 2018 from the National Study on Learning, Voting and Engagement, we expect that student turnout was much higher in 2018 compared to the 2014 midterm. We observed that participation at the on-campus polling location was six times that of the 2014 midterm. I had high expectations for BGSU Votes when I became the CAL, but our impact this year has exceeded those expectations. I have been fortunate to have leadership opportunities in several organizations at BGSU, but none can compare to BGSU Votes. Being a part of this program's growth the past year has been the highlight of my college experience. I am incredibly grateful to have had to opportunity to engage with so many students while having a positive impact on my community. This program has helped me grow as a leader, helping me in my future with political engagement as I strive to continue to have an impact on my community.

Elyzabeth King
Defiance College



I began serving in my community well before high school and I have used my leadership skills to serve and give back to my community. My desire to serve others and be a prominent leader continued to grow as I got to college, and with the multitude of opportunities at Defiance (DC), I have been able to fulfill that desire. I am a member of the Defiance College Service Leadership program at DC where I have completed over 1200 hours of service learning, leadership and service hours. These hours include working with Defiance College's student-run non-profit, Project 701.

Out of all the opportunities that I have had at DC, being a McMaster scholar, through the McMaster School for Advancing Humanity, is what has truly sparked my passion for using my leadership skills and working within the non-profit sector. As a McMaster scholar, I have spent countless hours researching, designing, and implementing projects for community partners in developing countries that allow them to use the knowledge and resources I provided to create a more sustainable living environment.

My first year as a McMaster Scholar to Cambodia in 2017, I developed and implemented a community-based research project focused on business decision making skills with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and educational institutions. This experience was so rewarding as it has taught practical life skills, built relationships, enhanced my professional education, and has been so beneficial in a multitude of other ways that I knew I had to continue my work.

In December 2017 and 2018 I traveled to Belize as a McMaster Scholar, where I was able to present training sessions I had developed on business practices and marketing concepts for emerging entrepreneurs in response to requests from women in rural Belizean villages. Having been a McMaster Scholar for three years, I have seen first-hand the impact I can make; it brings me true happiness knowing that my knowledge and skill set can help create better lives for others. The work I have done in Belize has given two groups of women in remote villages the power to further their business initiatives, allowing them to create a more sustainable living for them and their families. This also has a larger impact as their success positively impacts the economics of their village, which can then come full circle as the village can support the women. I have grown into a hands-on leader with a passion for helping others and I believe these experiences, among many others at Defiance College has positively affected myself, my college, my community, and even those individuals I have met on an international scale.

Michael Angelo
Denison University



During my tour as a prospective student at Denison, I learned about an organization called Denison Venture Philanthropy (DVP). This organization using an endowed gift, was able award a local non-profit organization with a \$10,000 grant, as well as 300 service hours directed towards a capacity building project every year. I knew that if I ended up at Denison, I wanted to be involved with this organization.

A year later I found myself in my first year at Denison attending the annual involvement fair, searching for DVP. I found the organizations table and promptly joined. DVP taught me some of the basics of the inner workings of nonprofits, such as identifying what parts in operational structures that can significantly benefit from additional funding, the need for volunteers in several areas, as well as the specific needs of the community they touch. The biggest benefit I received from DVP was through developing an understanding of the needs of the community and the services local organizations offered, as well as working directly with several organizations through interviews and direct service, I was able to become a part of the community beyond my college campus.

My sophomore year of college I was elected the president of the organization. In this leadership role I lead the organization's efforts and partnerships. This was one of my first serious leadership roles, and was a daunting task. However, understanding the benefit of my own experience in the organization, both personally and the effect on the community, I was able to empower members of the organization to think critically about their position in the community and make an impact when possible.

My involvement and leadership in DVP eventually lead me to serving on the board of the umbrella service organization on campus. In this role I have used my own experiences with service on campus to empower students across the student body to act in their community. Every community partner I have interacted with has expressed their eternal gratitude for Denison's work in the community, and I am honored to have been able to participate and empower other students to act in their community.

Zachary Chapman
John Carroll University

Seretta Saylor Legacy
Award Winner



When I first met Jose, through Labre, he knew little English and was afraid. Knowing minimal Spanish, I talked with him, but he said he didn't want any help. We still provided him with a meal, and prayed with him. After this, Jose broke into tears because he felt nobody in his life had ever been that kind to him. He believed he didn't deserve love. I have been volunteering with the JCU Labre Project since my freshmen year at John Carroll, enjoying every minute of it. The goal of Labre is to provide unsheltered homeless people in the city of Cleveland with food, clothing, and, most importantly, friendship, every Friday. This program has changed me because I have never encountered a population who needed something I can always provide: genuine compassion. The homeless people we have befriended are faced with the challenging task of seeking acceptance in a city that too easily ignores the needs of the homeless and marginalized. We provide the acceptance and love they desperately seek because our goal is to see people beyond the stereotypes and labels.

This past year, I took on a leadership role as the Vice President of Labre. My role now challenges me to lead and mentor other students who are interested in getting to know and befriend those who are homeless. On campus, I started a planning team, whose sole purpose is to recognize our amazing volunteers, making them feel valued. I also planned the first annual Labre retreat to allow our volunteers to reflect on their experiences in volunteering with Labre. This role also involves mitigating conflicts within the Labre officer team and attending all 52 Labre excursions every Friday.

In the summer of 2018, I became an intern with the Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless (NEOCH) as part of the Center for Service and Social Action's JCU Summer in the City Service and Social Action Internship Program. In this role, I conducted legal research to begin crafting a "Bill of Rights" for the homeless population of Cleveland. First, I met with the homeless population during their homeless congress to learn about the problems they faced. Next, I met with homeless service advocates to get their input. Later, I met with the ACLU who provided legal advice on how to introduce this bill to City Council. Finally, after approval of the bill from everyone, I sought out a City Councilmen to sponsor it. My goal was to change the system and create laws which protected my friends experiencing homelessness, thereby improving their quality of life. This bill is still being moved through City Council; funding discussions have made it difficult to move forward. I still seek regular feedback on the Bill from my Labre friends. Giving my homeless friends back their voice, has given them purpose again. Labre taught me no human deserves to feel less than human. I have utilized this lesson to enact change in my community as an advocate for my friends experiencing homelessness.

Sianna Green
Lorain County Community
College



My experience as a student at Lorain County Community College has allowed me to accept opportunities that positively impact my campus and local community. I began significant involvement in the community by volunteering with St. Jude's Helping Hands Food Pantry as a Food and Beverage Assistant in addition to assisting with paperwork in my free time. In this role, I learned valuable professional skills such as community outreach, customer service, and organizational vision. This experience helped shape my interest in giving back to my community and growing personally.

I was fortunate to participate in the 2018 Propel Regional Gathering, an annual Ohio Campus Compact event that creates a dialogue concerning continued problems in our state. I collaborated with community and campus leaders as well as other students to discuss effective strategies to combat food insecurity, inequities in education, opioid addiction, and homelessness. The ability to have a conversation on significant issues affecting those within our state and others as well as engaging with my community on ways we can alleviate these concerns has been such an integral experience to understanding how crucial it is for people to take an active role in their communities.

The Propel Ohio event and my previous experience with volunteering at food pantries helped me secure a work study position with LCCC food pantry, the Commodore Cupboard. Through this position, I greet clients who come into the pantry, assist them in paperwork, and make sure the cupboards are stocked with food and personal care items. In addition, I collaborate with my supervisor on ideas to raise awareness of Commodore Cupboard on campus including informational material and ways to talk to the community about food insecurity. I also have taken a leadership role in training new volunteers and making recommendations to improve processes within the food pantry. Through this position I have gained a deeper understanding of how vital community outreach and organizational vision are.

Jesus Martinez-Garcia
Oberlin College

Seretta Saylor Legacy
Award Winner



Founding and leading El Centro Volunteer Initiative (ECVI) is the culmination of my leadership and community engagement with Lorain County during my undergraduate career. Our student organization focuses on teaching Citizenship Classes, English Communication Classes, and writing grants for El Centro de Servicios Sociales (El Centro), a community non-profit. The role of this non-profit is pivotal as it primarily serves the Latino community in Lorain County.

My endeavors to build a strong partnership with El Centro has allowed ECVI to connect Oberlin students directly with community members in the county. The genesis of this partnership began during my first year when the leaders of Obies for Undocumented Inclusion, a student advocacy group, were implementing a private reading for Oberlin students on citizenship. A component of this private reading had students tutor permanent residents on the 100 questions in U.S naturalization exam, every Saturday morning at El Centro. Intrigued by the mission of the private reading, I decided to attend one Saturday to lend a hand. That one Saturday turned to a whole semester of helping out as the permanent residents, the community members, I met shifted my perspective on immigration in North East Ohio. When studying the 100 questions on US Civics and History, the community members would share their immigrant narratives and the barriers, such as language, cost, and legal help that impeded them from obtaining their citizenship.

Hearing these barriers, I was motivated to address them directly. Thus, I soon began to mobilize Oberlin students to not only volunteer for the citizenship tutoring but also start an English communication class and a grant writing/ fundraising committee. A key event that formalized all these small initiatives into ECVI, now with a 14 person leadership board and over 30 active volunteers every semester, was the 2016 presidential election. Immigration took center stage in political discourse. Through the election race, I saw the demand for the citizenship tutoring triple and with consultations with experts in pedagogy, a solid 10-week course was developed. After the election, energy from my peers to do tangible work channeled into ECVI and El Centro. Once just a volunteer helping out on a Saturday, I now found myself in a leadership position leading strategic planning meetings, connecting with heads of other organizations, and bridging the essential partnership with El Centro and its staff.

During my growth as a leader, I also came to understand the difference between simple volunteering and community engagement. There are responsibilities that come with community engagement. There is still harm that can be done when entering a community no matter how well intentioned one may be. Volunteering has pitfalls such as the savior mentality, deficit community thinking, and the complexity of white volunteers entering a brown/black community. I made it part of the org's mission to address these issues via training and workshops required for all volunteers and ECVI leaders. Through reflections and feedback, we hope to continue to better our organization, ourselves, and the relationship with Lorain County.

Haylie Schmoll Otterbein University

A volunteer is a person who can see what others cannot see; Who can feel what most do not feel.

George W. Bush, Sr.



So many people are struggling in our communities every day, however many people do not see the hurt, look the other way or aren't willing to get involved to help. For me, the more I see, the more I want to do! Helping others is my passion and at the heart of everything I do.

My first year at Otterbein, I knew that assuming leadership and community service opportunities in college would be important to me, I just didn't realize how much they would alter my Otterbein experience. It became apparent that I was at the right place as I saw what many people had described as something special about Otterbein students, they love giving back. Wanting to contribute to the more than 70,000 hours of community service year, I jumped in with both feet to make a difference in my community.

During my time at Otterbein, I have witnessed the struggle in our community and have joined initiatives to help address issues in which I am passionate about. From being a part of OTTERTHON, Otterbein's year-long fundraising effort and 10-hour dance marathon benefiting Nationwide Children's Hospital to working as a Cardinal Corps Leader planning community plunges and running a weekly service program for middle schoolers at Walnut Springs, I have learned staggering statistics about the need in my community and joined in to address it.

One in 10 college students are food insecure around the country, according to Feeding America. Looking around in my class that means three of my peers could be struggling right now. In fact, out of Otterbein's 3,000 enrolled students, 300 of them could potentially be food insecure. Gaining the so called, freshman 15, is a constant topic of conversation; food insecurity is not. Many college students are learning how to live on the college budget and money is tight. Food is the last thing on their mind. But what if one runs out of food swipes? What if a commuter doesn't have the funds for lunch today? An unexpectedly large number of students may be unable to afford nutritious food, putting their physical health, mental well-being, and academic performance at risk during the college years.

Growing up, I have been blessed beyond belief. I never had to worry about food on my plate or a roof over my head, but for many, they cannot say the same. This became a reality for me during week 3 of my Fall Semester at Otterbein. I was waiting for my food at the Den and a guy came up to me and asked me for a swipe. Confused at why my fellow peer, a first-year who was required to have a meal plan, was

asking me for a swipe, I said sure, puzzled. I swiped for a meal and he sat down and told me his story. He was homeless before he came to Otterbein and he was worried that he would run out of meal swipes towards the end of the semester. This is only one of the many students that I have talked to that worry about having enough to eat in college, something that often is not thought about for those who are blessed to have enough to eat. I witness frequently what society calls the, face of hunger. I have seen and heard many personal stories. How were we going to support them?

To combat the issue at hand, I joined a group of students to act and help form The Promise House, a community resource center and food pantry improving the lives of our fellow peers, neighbors, friends, and family who are struggling every day and often get overlooked. We created a volunteer network where students, faculty and staff can support one another through challenges, and rise with one another against all odds. Through both formal and informal engagements, we have created a continuous dialogue with staff, students, and community members around this difficult issue.

We have started a movement and we want as many people as possible to join. The Promise House is a mission, an investment in each other, our institution and our peers. It is a continuous effort to make sure that every student at Otterbein feels like they are part of the family. We are all Cardinals with one promise: to make sure all students succeed. This mission isn't easy, and it takes many people believing in it to make it come true. That's why students are making the pledge and uniting under, *Many Cardinals, One Promise*. I have taken the pledge and I hope that years from now, nobody comes up and asks me for a swipe.

Corina Cleveland
Wittenberg University



The thought of community service always scared me because usually it means interacting with people and that was something I was never very good at. So, naturally, when my psychology professor, Dr. Little described the service learning component of her child abnormal psychology course I became very nervous. I decided that I would volunteer with teens because they were the oldest children with whom I could serve. I began the process of serving with Teen's, On-The-Rise, a non-profit organization that focuses on building life skills in at-risk youth, in the fall semester of my Junior year. I was terrified the first day as I met the program director in the public library watching the students shuffle in after her. We began with introductions; as the students introduced themselves, they also stated what goal they had. It was an experience like no other as I witnessed the kids opening up about how they wanted to be better.

When it was my turn to share I stated my name, but I also shared that I wanted to work on communicating with people as I suffered with social anxiety and I didn't want to let that hold me back. This was like an olive branch that the students and I extended to each other. I was there to work with them and help them learn, but I was also allowing them to see that I was open to them as individuals who could help me, too.

That semester of service learning changed everything I thought I knew about myself. The teens and I worked through significant life issues and became a little family of individuals who would help each other succeed. At the end of the semester I couldn't leave. I had seen my students grow and mature. They had worked to make their lives better and I knew that I had been a part of that transformation for them, and I had felt a transformation and self-growth in myself. I stayed with On-The-Rise the next semester and helped grow the teen program as we added in a community service portion and a job shadow portion for the youth. As my time with the program progressed I found myself needing to help in any way that I could. I stayed on campus over the summer to develop a website for the program and work with the younger students who participated in the summer session. Even still, I had to do more, so I began leading the Teen program by myself during the last semester of my college career.

The experience of service learning did more for my college career than any class I've ever taken. It led me to an understanding of why I needed to help those within my community and helped me realize what I was capable of; but while I experienced growth through this experience, I know that it has done even more for the students that had the opportunity to gain life skills in our safe environment.

Donald Foley
Xavier University



For four years I have participated in a unique partnership with nearby Withrow High, a Cincinnati Public School that serves Cincinnati's burgeoning refugee and immigrant populations. MuskieTigers, so named for our respective school mascots, is a collaborative, student-led after school program that focuses on building resiliency for students as they adjust to American social and academic culture, and laying the foundation for a collegiate education as part of a realistic plan for each student's future.

Two years ago the high school was vandalized with racial slurs and swastikas. The students in MuskieTigers, who come from over 30 different countries, cultures, and faiths - were surprised by the uproar that the incident caused within the community. We learned that the students did not fully understand the meaning and history behind the symbol's use. However, some of the students shared that they had been victims in the past because swastikas were commonly spray-painted on the front doors of their own homes. The students also expressed concern that they might be blamed for the vandalism by American students who make up the majority of school's population.

I noted there were two significant needs that we could meet through our program. First, we put a focus on educating the students on the significance of the event. To do so, we created a workshop that outlined the history of civil rights in the United States, showing both its successes and historic low points of racial injustice in the United States. We finished the workshop discussing the vandalism that occurred at Withrow, emphasizing that it was the most recent event that took steps backwards in the journey to a more just United States.

As club leader, I worked to reshape the focus of the club following the vandalism. With the event creating a notable separation between the immigrant students and the students born in the United States, we also challenged ourselves to involve more students outside of the refugee and immigrant population at the school. We invited American students to the club to bridge an open discussion and to educate and celebrate both foreign as well as American cultures. The students participating in the program voiced a desire to expand this celebration to the rest of the school, putting on events that celebrated all cultures in the club and brought the student body together as one.

Although the vandalism was a terrible moment for the Withrow and Cincinnati communities, it provided an opportunity for growth. The event also served as a turning point in MuskieTiger, growth and success, emphasizing how unfortunate events can be opportunities to grow and better meet community needs.

Legacy Awards:

Seretta Saylor Legacy Award

Seretta Saylor was an inspirational and generous individual who understood the importance of education, communication and community. The Seretta Saylor Award seeks to recognize those compassionate and generous individuals, and related projects, that systemically address economic, emotional and environmental needs in a community.

615 North Pearl Street
Granville, Ohio 43023
740-587-8568
www.ohiocampuscompact.org