



Campus Compact

Ohio

Charles J. Ping Student Service Award Winners 2019-2020

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 and 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 2019-20 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

Adam Smith
Bowling Green State University



My civic engagement has greatly developed while attending Bowling Green State University due to the support of friends, mentors, and a clear vision set by my university, “A public university for the public good”. In addition, Bowling Green Alternative Breaks (bGAB) has played a vital role in the progression of active citizenship in my life. bGAB’s mission is to educate and empower individuals to become active citizens through immersive community service experiences that challenge them to foster positive social change.

After obtaining my Associate of Arts, I transferred to BGSU to pursue a degree in sociology. I found that many of the passions I had academically (food security, sustainability, environmental sociology) could also be studied and experienced through lenses of direct service and community-based work. During my first semester at BGSU I signed up for a bGAB trip. Since then I have gone on seven different trips as a participant and site leader. During these direct service experiences, I have engaged in collaborative work with community non-profits, and facilitated meaningful reflections over social change.

After my first year in bGAB I was nominated to serve upon the Leadership Team. Since then, I have studied and facilitated topics such as the active citizenship continuum, triangle of quality community service, and eight components of a quality alternative break. These methods are rooted in the Break Away philosophy. These philosophies have taught me to value and observe community needs, pre-service education, post-service reflection, and the intersectionality of socio-environmental issues.

My bGAB experiences have transformed themselves into many facets of my life. I intern for BGSU Campus Sustainability and the Center for Public Impact. These offices carry out the vision of civic engagement in their daily efforts to promote collaboration and social change. I was appointed by the mayor of Bowling Green to serve upon the Sustainability Advisory Board. I was also appointed by the President of BGSU to serve upon the President’s Council on Sustainability. Academically, I have received three undergraduate research grants to examine the potential of natural public parks to combat many socio-environmental challenges. Alongside my faculty mentor, Dr. John Boman, I will be published in the Journal of Deviant Behavior with a research paper that aims to demonstrate how the incorporation of “green” technology careers (carbon capture) can lower recidivism rates and provide meaningful opportunities to individuals being released from prison. I believe the drive for civic engagement is fostered at the intersection of an individual’s passions, an awareness of an individual’s connection to their community, and strong guidance from mentors. My leadership philosophy in life focuses on creating a shared vision with my team(s) and community, as well as empowering others by learning their own needs, desires, and passions. I plan to use the momentum and knowledge I have been presented with at BGSU to continue to foster positive social change by combining my passions with community needs to continually work towards and collaborate on social and environmental justice.

Blake Newman
Defiance College



Throughout my time at Defiance College I have been able to gain experiences in civic engagement, leadership, and service around the community, and globally. Within these major areas, A few things stand out to me as being worthwhile experiences that have provided me with the opportunity to stand out and get involved. These include being a Social Work major and member of the Social Work Organization, my work as a McMaster Scholar, and my time spent as a member of Alpha Phi Omega and Service Leaders.

Being a Social Work Major academically has been enriching, but it also has been enriching outside of the direct classroom work that we do at Defiance College. Through picking this as my major, I have been able to be involved in civic engagement and service opportunities like Empty Bowls and Night Without a Home. Empty Bowls is an event that is held to raise money for the PATH Center which is the local homeless shelter and soup kitchen. This event raises the majority of their food budget each year. Last year, my class was able to ban together and raise just over \$7,000. Night Without a Home is put on to raise awareness for rural homelessness. Through each of these experiences I was able to speak on WTOL, speak at a City Council Meeting to raise awareness about the events, and I also got to meet and speak with people who have fought through homelessness themselves, or who are actively advocating for homelessness awareness.

My work as a McMaster Scholar could take up the entirety of the 500 word essay I am writing now. Through this experience, I was able to conduct my own research projects each year working with individuals living in rural villages in Belize to improve their situations by understanding cultural, environmental, and socioeconomic barriers, and providing them with knowledge and resources to take action. My various projects were to assess and understand the development of the village, and I also was able to hold informational conversations about gender based violence and human trafficking with a fellow classmate. This partnership enriched my view of the world, and has made me more culturally competent to work within my field more fluidly. I hope that this service learning and research experience has also enriched the lives of the people I worked with through these various projects, as I believe it has.

Throughout my four years I have also been involved in Alpha Phi Omega Service Fraternity, and Service Leaders. These are both service based organizations on the Defiance College Campus. I have participated in service programs such as t-shirt drives to make dog toys for the Human Society, after school programs with local youth, involvement in food programs providing meals for students on the free and reduced lunch program, and so many more. I have logged over 700 hours of service through these various programs and I am extremely grateful for the experiences I have had within the local community and globally.

Tovey Nederveld
Denison University



As someone who is looking to go into healthcare and care for people for the rest of my life, I have always been interested in working with others. However, before I was a part of DCA, I wasn't confident in my personal ability to do that. Working with DCA has allowed me to develop the ability to not only work with others, but to lead others towards reaching a common goal. The primary DCA organization that I have been a part of is Denison Venture Philanthropy (DVP). Throughout my first year at Denison, I was overwhelmed by all of the opportunities that there were to be involved on campus. During my sophomore year, one of my friends suggested that I begin attending DVP meetings with her. Each week we would read about different projects that were going on in Licking County; every organization wanted us to fund their project and to volunteer with them. Through this opportunity, I was able to see all of the great things that nonprofits were doing in my local community. While the number of projects that we had to choose from was large, it allowed me to understand the daily need that my neighbors face and to explore my values in an important way. As DVP votes for the organization that they want to award the money and volunteer hours to, my personal opinion mattered and my values helped to contribute to something larger.

After that first semester, my friend nominated me to be the grant manager for DVP, which meant that I would work more closely with the non-profits, requesting that they send in proposals for the next grant cycle and helping them all to complete their applications such that they would have the best chance possible of being awarded the grant. After my position as the grant manager, I became the president of DVP. As the president, I worked with my committee to award the grant to Hospice of Central Ohio this past December. We had the privilege of going to the center and meeting with some of the members of the Handmade Items Committee, all of whom were incredibly grateful to receive money and time that will allow them to further develop their program. Supporting people in hospice care and helping them to receive comfort items is especially meaningful during this time and is important to me as someone who is looking to work in the healthcare field.

As evidenced by my various roles in DVP as well as being a part of DCA events committee and DCA cabinet, I have further cultivated my interest in working with people and helping those who are less privileged than I am. As a result, I anticipate working with people in a healthcare setting next year, with a specific focus on supporting people who are underprivileged. I will also continue to volunteer in my local community of Columbus, as being a part of DCA has emphasized the importance of civic engagement.

Nick Hupka
John Carroll University



If a man was standing in the middle of the road, yelling at every passing car, what would happen? For many passersby, this would mean continuing on their way or calling the police, just so the man is safe. However, for Jared, Jacob, and I, this meant to pull to the side of busy Lorain Road and make sure this man is alright and let him know that people care about his well being. On a cold December night over our Christmas break, my comrades and I were on our weekly journey of Labre (or “Super Labre” as we call it over holiday breaks when we only have one van instead of the typical two.) As on all of our drives, we did not know what the evening’s encounters would hold. At our last stop, we provided our friend with a meal, socks, gloves, a hat, a coat, countless refills of our hot chocolate, and - most importantly - friendship.

If you were to ask anyone on our core team (our group of dedicated individuals who run Labre) the most important thing we share with those experiencing homelessness is our friendship. Labre has been serving the greater Cleveland community for over 15 years. Many of the people we see on the street just want someone to see them as a person and not to be passed by as they usually are on a daily basis. Personally, I have been working with Labre since the fall of my sophomore year when I was recruited to be a driver for the project. Since then, I have spent many hours on the preparation and execution side of Labre including participating in our weekly meetings, cooking, preparing donations, and even visiting a friend outside of our Friday visit to wish him/her a happy birthday.

My role within Labre expanded throughout the years. I was nominated and elected to be the financial director of Labre during the fiscal year 2019. This allowed me to put something that I had been learning in my classes for my accounting major to practical use. Furthermore, this also allowed me to see how my major, that is often overhyped as the “big bucks major” could be applied to something that I was passionate about and would address a tangible, direct need in my community.

While the Labre Project goes out every 52 Fridays within a calendar year, my experience of working with those experiencing homelessness is not unique to Labre. I am a Student Liaison for the Center for Service and Social Action on campus and have led many visits to the Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry’s Men’s Shelter on 2100 Lakeside near downtown Cleveland. Playing chess, dominoes, or even just having a conversation with some of the men, I learned many life lessons that I am extremely grateful for and can carry forward into my career in the Army and beyond. These friendships and bonds that have been formed are the most important rewards that I’ve been given.

**Gabriel Morales
Oberlin College**

**Seretta Saylor Legacy
Award Winner**



Early on in my time at Oberlin, I was unsure as to how I would balance my work in music studies and performance with some form of community service. I felt as if they would be conflicting interests, each taking time from the other. After discovering Oberlin Center for the Arts (OCA), my perspective on this issue drastically changed. As an organization, OCA centers on connecting students, educators, and the broader community to various forms of arts programming and other area arts organizations. After joining the OCA team, I was collecting data on the accessibility of various forms of arts programming for underserved populations, researching and creating arts-in-health programming, and hosting performances for area high school students by acclaimed artists such as Rhiannon Giddens. This work shed new light on the relationship between music and community because I found that, instead of conflicting, the two were informing each other.

One of my main leadership achievements has been developing and implementing OCA's Performing Artists In Residence (PAIR) program. In the fall of 2019, I began researching organizations in the U.S. that had arts programming for health spaces- ranging from hospitals to senior care facilities -and compiled potential opportunities to bring the arts into underserved health spaces in Oberlin. Connecting with Mercy Allen Hospital and Welcome Nursing Home, the OCA team and I developed a program model where musicians would give regular performances, either at a patient's bedside or for small gatherings. These performances served the purpose of relieving stress, improving the atmosphere, offering comfort, and providing access to art that is often unavailable. Given the wealth of talent nearby, we recruited instrumentalists from Oberlin's Conservatory for this program, and I gave performances as well. Musicians taking part in this program were given basic training for working in health spaces and prompted to reflect on each performance- the patient's response, repertoire selected, and personal feelings, among other aspects. After a full semester of performances, it was clear that the patients and staff at the health facilities were delighted with the programming and eager to see it continue and expand.

During my time engaging in community service learning, I discovered newfound importance in music and the arts' connection to the broader community. Performing and creating programs for community members informed me of the importance of connecting to people from a service standpoint. Generally, we musicians tend to perform with the intention of, yes, giving ourselves to the audience but also receiving gratification. In service, the focus shifts to performing in a way that is perceptive of a patient's needs and elevates their experience. Such work has also impacted fellow conservatory students because those who have participated see how removed we can often be from our immediate community and how easily we can positively impact people if we take consistent time to share our talent and enthusiasm. Overall, engaging in community service learning has shown me the importance of approaching both my music and community-oriented work as correlated and most beneficial when united.

Brayams Ayala Ramos **Ohio Wesleyan University**



I am a first-generation college student, a Mexican immigrant who came to the United States in 2016 due to the socio-economic situation in Mexico. I faced a new world when I arrived in the United States. It was the first time that I did not fit in with society. I realized that being different closed doors, and I encountered racism. I attended two years of high school here; and during the first few months, my teachers interpreted all my classes. They also motivated me to attend college.

In 2016 I made the decision to attend Ohio Wesleyan University. Initially, I felt that I did not belong. I wanted to leave — but then I met VIVA, a student organization designed to promote Latin/Hispanic culture. These students made me feel a great sense of belonging. Soon I felt a commitment to make other Hispanic/Latin students feel the same. Next, I became a Spanish interpreter at parent-teacher conferences. I realized that Latin/Hispanic parents often lack important information. During my senior year, I became a tutor for at Columbus Bilingual Academy North. As an immigrant, I wanted to be a role model for children and a signal of hope for their parents

I came to realize that I, Brayams Ayala Ramos, might be able to help create social change. I engaged in two projects, one statewide and the other on Ohio Wesleyan's campus. It is my hope that these projects will have a lasting impact on their communities.

For the first project, I interned with the Immigrant Worker Project, an organization that cares about economic democracy, community solidarity, and human rights. Through this work, I was able to shine a light on the experience of immigrants in rural Ohio – their crossing experiences; their treatment on job sites; and the discrimination, harassment and healthcare issues they encounter on a daily basis. My role consisted of interviewing rural immigrants and providing them with information about organizations that could help. This was important to me because my mother immigrated in 2000, and she never seemed to have access to information about her rights. Through this project, I was able to help the voice of the immigrant worker be heard. I also learned how to become an advocate.

When I returned to campus, I began work on the second project. I felt a renewed sense that we needed to create a space where Latin and Hispanic students (7% of our campus population) could express our culture without fear of being judged. This sparked an idea to co-create a Latin/Hispanic house on campus. I gathered interested students; we refined our vision, wrote a proposal, and were successful in creating LA CASA, Ohio Wesleyan's first small living unit for Latin/Hispanic students. My hope is that the creation of LA CASA has forever changed Ohio Wesleyan by providing a social and cultural safe zone where students can share Latin and Hispanic heritage and support each other personally, socially, and academically.

Brayams Ayala Ramos continued

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.

Destanee O'Neil
University of Mount Union



Helping others has always played a big part in my life. My college experience helped develop my passion for service work. My freshman year, I joined a sorority. I joined for one reason and that was their philanthropy. My sorority's philanthropy is Carnation Restoration which gives back to four local non-profit agencies in the Alliance community. I was drawn to this philanthropy because I wanted to be able to give back to the local community. My junior year of college I worked on-campus as a student assistant at the Regula Center for Public Service and Civic Engagement. As a student assistant, I helped the director recruit volunteers and coordinated the service projects every month. This position allowed me to become more involved in the Alliance community. In January of 2019, the Regula Center hosted MLK Day of service. The director was on maternity leave, so it was up to me and two other students to run the service event. We recruited and placed 500 volunteers at 30 locations. This experience really moved me. For the first time, I got to oversee all these volunteers and appreciate a community coming together for one day. The enthusiasm was surreal. My senior year proved to be more exciting. I again worked at the Regula Center, and accepted an Americorps position that was on campus. This position was intended for graduate students fortunately our president and site supervisor thought the experience would benefit an undergraduate student. The program's goal is to create and implement a resource center for students. During the fall semester, we worked on research and development and learned the intricacies of college bureaucracy. We surveyed the Mount Union students and discovered that 43% of students struggled to buy groceries and 31% said they skipped meals because of the lack of money to purchase food. The survey results confirmed, the students of Mount Union needed a resource center. In the spring semester, we established a food and clothing pantry on campus for students which we named Raider's Cove. Raider's Cove created awareness to the Alliance community that students are struggling. As a result, the community supported this project by donating food and clothing items. The resource center has also made an impact on the campus community. We currently have 60 students registered at the center and on average, 15 people use it each week. These students do not have to worry about where their next meal will come from or professional clothing for their next job interview. On a personal level, the Americorps position helped me find my voice and improve my confidence. I have always been shy and feared public speaking. This position made me stronger and I am now more confident when addressing a group. When I graduate, my goal is to pursue a masters in nonprofit management and leadership. The Regula Center and Americorps positions made me realize that service work is more than a passion, it is my future.

MacKenzie Hill
Wittenberg University



Growing up on my family farm gave me the privilege to know the power of bonding with animals. There is something calming about having an understanding with just a look or a touch, even with a powerful 1,200-pound horse or steer. Size and communication differences don't matter when mutual respect fosters trust. When I began serving at Autumn Trails Stable in 2018, I recognized this as the foundation of their program to foster confidence in individuals who are too often defined by what they cannot do.

Through therapeutic riding, Autumn Trails strives to make the impossible become possible for individuals with disabilities. Volunteering with ATS has allowed me to be a part of helping students reach their fullest potential. I saw the joy it brought to the children each lesson as they successfully completed a task, whether it was tacking their horse or trotting around the arena. From the moment of arrival, the student would be focused on their horse who they recognized as their friend.

As a side walker, I would encourage the students to stay focused on their goals and helped make them feel secure in the saddle. I recall one student who was working on his core strength, and I would have to keep pressure on his back to remind him to sit up straight. One day he kept himself up almost the entire lesson, and it only took vocal reminders and light taps to help him maintain an upright position. Seeing this growth was an incredible feeling, and was reinforced by seeing the smiles on the riders' faces as they left the lesson. More importantly, this opportunity allowed the students to develop confidence in their abilities.

In the Fall 2019 session, I took on the role of horse leader, too. Being a horse leader allowed me to have a new perspective of the lessons as I maintained control of the horse but also encouraged independence from the students. While I guided the horse, I reminded the students they were in control and must communicate with their horse. One student was new to the program and had never worked with a horse before, so he was timid. By the end of the session, he could steer his horse in his desired direction. His excitement for his accomplishments was infectious, and his comfort around his horse demonstrated the power of equine-human bonding.

Autumn Trails strives to make their programs available to anyone who needs it by keeping it affordable. Participants only pay 30 percent of what it costs to offer the lessons, so fundraising is essential. This need allowed me to serve as an intern to help plan their annual Denim and Diamonds Dinner and Silent Auction. I created marketing material and sought out donations for the event. This role allowed me to engage in more administrative work for the organization which was incredible because it allowed me to share my passion for the mission with the community to help ensure the services could continue for future participants.

**Hannah Frey
Xavier University**

**Seretta Saylor Legacy
Award Winner**



Staring down the clogged opening of an Elmer's glue, frustration fills me as I try desperately to clear the opening. In desperation, I grab child's size scissors hoping to stab a clearing for the glue to flow through. The scissors appear to still be too large. A group of 10 middle schoolers surround me at a table waiting somewhat patiently as I try to open the glue, but I know that any moment they could erupt into chaos. Exasperated, I'm about to give up when I hear this soft voice whisper, "Miss Hannah?" I turn to see where the voice came from and a girl is looking up at me and has clearly had a front row seat to my wrestling match with this glue. She smiles understandingly at me, reaches into her hijab, and pulls out a needle for me to use to poke a hole in the clogged glue. In the relief of solving this impossible problem, we both broke out into laughter at the ridiculousness of the situation. The whole point of this afterschool club of middle schoolers was to help foster creativity and this girl had demonstrated that creativity perfectly through her ability to come up with a simple solution to my seemingly impossible problem.

My friends and I had started this program for middle schoolers with the goal of re-stimulating their imaginations. With the growing dependence on technology, the younger generations have less of a need to use their imaginations to entertain themselves. In addition to this crisis of creativity, and due to my summer working at a nature preservation, we recognized the crisis of climate change. Therefore, we started a program that combine sustainable efforts with creative play called Imagination Foundation. An example of a project the students completed was when the students used cardboard, paper, markers, and other miscellaneous materials to create costumes for a Halloween fashion show. Not only did they build the outfits themselves, some of the students even collaborated to create a choreographed dance to music. In this moment, I realized that the students had truly tapped into their creative powers and made something unique and beautiful.

For many of these students, English was not their first language and quite a few were refugees from various countries. This space after school allowed them an outlet to express themselves freely that they might not have had naturally built into a school day. Through art and building, there was no need for language or communication and created a space of mutual exchange through expression. Now through my field placement, I see these same students thriving in high school. One of which wants to work at Artworks over the summer and ultimately to become a lawyer. While I would never pretend our once a week club has contributed a ton to her success, however I hope that in our time in Imagination Foundation she was able to see the magnificence of her creative abilities and carry that with her into her future endeavors.

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.



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