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Campus Compact for New Hampshire

Contact:
Debby Scire, Executive Director
Campus Compact for New Hampshire
Phone:
Fax
Email:

College and University Presidents Honor Leaders Who Improve New Hampshire Communities

Campus Compact for New Hampshire's annual Presidents' Awards honor students, faculty members, and community partners for outstanding public service.

Bedford, NH, April 10, 2012—This Tuesday, more than 230 college and community leaders will gather at the SERESC Conference Center in Bedford to honor hundreds of college students, faculty members, and community partners who devote their time and expertise to meeting critical community needs. In all, 24 campuses and their community partners will be recognized for their contributions with a Presidents' Award. The award is sponsored by Campus Compact for New Hampshire (CCNH), a statewide consortium of college and university presidents dedicated to advancing the civic purposes of higher education.

Shirley Sagawa, co-founder of a firm that helps organizations create strategic community partnerships, will serve as keynote speaker. Sagawa was named a "Woman to Watch in the 21st Century" by *Newsweek* magazine. CCNH will present three awards to each campus. The Presidents' Leadership Award honors students or student groups who have made outstanding contributions to campus service, service-learning, and civic engagement efforts; the Good Steward Award recognizes faculty or others on campus who contribute professional expertise in service to the wider community; and the Community Partner Award goes to a partnering organization that has enhanced the quality of life in the community.

The Plymouth State University (PSU) Presidents' Leadership Award recipient is Samuel Wisel. Wisel is also one of 162 Newman Civic Fellows selected nationwide by Campus Compact's national office for finding solutions to community challenges. As a sophomore, Wisel, who is pursuing a degree in nonprofit management, worked for months to start a student chapter for Habitat for Humanity. The following year he was offered a position on the Pemi-Valley Habitat for Humanity board of directors, on which he still serves. Among other work, he has led alternative spring break trips, co-led a group to help flood victims in Pakistan, and opened a food pantry with his peers.

"For anyone who thinks one person can't make a difference, Sam's work is inspiring. His leadership, dedication, and hard work have made a huge difference in the lives of community

members in Plymouth and beyond," notes Sara Jayne Steen, President of PSU. "We're pleased to honor his contributions and delighted that he has received both state and national recognition."

Another Presidents' Leadership Award recognizes a group of eight students at Antioch University New England. In their "Organizing for Social Change" class, the group's goal was ambitious: to stop the wasteful use of bottled water on campus. To do this, they conducted a well-researched campaign on the ecological benefits of using tap water, secured pledges from 400 campus members to stop buying bottled water, persuaded campus authorities to halt the sale of bottled water in vending machines and cafés, successfully lobbied the college to change its purchasing policy to buy bottled water only in emergencies, and garnered the administration's support to add new drinking fountains and filters to all drinking fountains.

A recipient of the President's Community Partner Award was one of New Hampshire Institute of Art's partners, B.R.I.N.G. IT!!! (Bringing Refugees, Immigrants and Neighbors Gently Into Tomorrow), an organization that provides quality after-school care to low-income, at-risk adolescents. Many of these youth are newly arrived refugees and immigrants who face socioeconomic and educational barriers, which the program helps them overcome. The program is a collaboration between Southern New Hampshire Services, Inc., and the Manchester school district.

"These awards showcase the real and lasting impact students and others can make, especially when they are supported by a solid campus-wide infrastructure supporting community engagement," says Debby Scire, executive director of CCNH. "We have seen results that make a huge difference in people's lives, such as providing housing, making systemic change to improve the environment, and helping to eradicate hunger."

The annual Presidents' Awards are one of many ways that CCNH and its member campuses promote civic engagement, service-learning, and community service on campus. The organization's programs and resources include training, advocacy, funding, legislative outreach, and recognition for community-based work that both enhances student learning and provides needed public services.

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About Campus Compact for New Hampshire

Campus Compact for New Hampshire (CCNH) is a statewide consortium of college and university presidents and private-sector partners who are united in their commitment to the civic purposes of higher education. As part of a national coalition of college and university leaders, CCNH serves as a catalyst to integrate community service and civic responsibility throughout academic and student life. CCNH is part of the national Campus Compact organization, which encompasses more than 1,100 college and university presidents representing some 6 million students. For more information, see http://www.compactnh.org/.