



News

EMBARGO UNTIL 5:00PM, TUESDAY, APRIL 12, 2011

Hartford, April 11 – Higher Education Commissioner Michael P. Meotti will present five 2011 Higher Education Community Service Awards to Connecticut college students and staff tomorrow evening (Tuesday, April 12 at 5:00 PM) at the Mark Twain House & Museum – Hartford.

Commissioner Meotti will present the annual awards with William R. Dyson, chair of the Connecticut Commission on Community Service which co-sponsors this event with the Connecticut Department of Higher Education to honor student and campus service to communities.

This year, 26 Connecticut colleges submitted 69 nominations for the three award categories of Student, Student Group and Special Award for projects led by faculty and staff. Recipients are selected based on their ability to design projects which distinctly serve a community; incorporate originality and unique approaches to community service; substantially raise student participation; and address community problems.

This year's *Student Award Recipients* are:

- **Colin Carlson**, a student at the **University of Connecticut**, founded the Cool Coventry Club, whose mission is to make and keep Coventry a “cool” town by reducing its “carbon footprint.” Mr. Carlson created a 53-page manual for teachers about creating climate campaigns, which he distributed to nearly 650 schools in Connecticut, as well as to educators in 17 other states and 4 other countries.
- **Kevin Medeiros**, **Sacred Heart University**, for his leadership in the campus chapter of Habitat for Humanity, which has 200 members who work to build homes in Bridgeport, CT. Under Medeiros' guidance, the club's members have put in 5 work days per semester and fundraised the \$75,000 for Sacred Heart's first ever Habitat Home. The home will be completed by the end of the 2010-2011 academic year.

The *Student Group Award Recipients* are:

- **Dental Hygiene Services**, **Tunxis Community College** for providing dental services to underserved populations in Connecticut, many of which are children and the elderly. The program affords access to care at multiple sites, six days a week Monday through Saturday and has evening hours. The students and faculty support the endeavors of the program through personal funds, student fundraising, corporate and private donations, and college support.
- **HuskyTHON**, **University of Connecticut** students participate in fundraising efforts which culminates in an 18-hour dance marathon. This student-run event, which raises money for Connecticut Children's Medical Center, was inspired by students who had a desire to give back to the children in Connecticut who needed their help the most. In 2010, HuskyTHON raised more than \$150,000 and involved over 1,000 students.

The *Special Award Recipient* is:

- **Betsy Bowen**, professor of English at **Fairfield University**, for her leadership in institutionalizing community engagement through a partnership with Mercy Learning Center in Bridgeport, CT, a non-profit organization that provides basic literacy and life skills training to low-income women in the Greater Bridgeport area. The relationship between Fairfield University and Mercy Learning Center is a robust one that has grown over several years through Betsy's creative and consistent leadership. She has engaged the partnership through her teaching, students, research and personal commitment.

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