



# Campus Compact

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Ohio

**2024**

**Charles J. Ping Student Service Award**  
*Recipients*



**Campus Compact**

**Ohio**

## **Charles J. Ping Student Service Award Winners 2024**

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 was 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. This donation is made to a community-based nonprofit organization in the student's name. The Ping Legacy Award recognizes students who address economic, emotional, and environmental community needs.



# Campus Compact

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## Ohio

Congratulations to the 2024 Charles J. Ping Student Service Award Winners. We applaud your outstanding leadership and many contributions to your campus and your community.

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**Hannah Barnes**  
**University of Akron**



Community service means giving what you can to make the world a better place and change the lives of others. It is essential to aid those who are less fortunate than oneself to foster community growth and increase the value of life. Making a difference in the lives of others, even if you never meet them, is a rewarding experience. I strive to be active in not only my campus community, but also in the surrounding community.

Over the last 3.5 years, I participated in a vast array of community service events and positions to help aid my community. I held the volunteer position of Service Engagement Guide for two years at The University of Akron, sponsored by ServeAkron. The position allowed me to have a role in creating and hosting two or more events each month to benefit students and the local community. These events benefitted the Akron's Children Hospital, a women's shelter, senior homes and more. Oftentimes, I would participate in each event that was held to create more product to be given out to those in need. While I may not hold the position presently, I do still participate in the service events that I am able to.

ServeAkron is a program on The University of Akron's campus that seeks to engage students in community service. I was immediately drawn to this organization upon arriving freshman year. I was thrilled to find a program on campus that could connect me with various service projects and events. ServeAkron hosts Make-A-Difference-Day each year in the fall to promote a large-scale day of community service. I have participated in this event each year and enjoy the various locations available off campus. Make-A-Difference-Day has allowed me to explore and connect with other organizations and individuals in need on and off campus. As an art major, I was fortunate to find a volunteer position in the Emily Davis Gallery, located on campus, in the Myers School of Art. I volunteered consistently in the gallery for a few days a week for six semesters. I was able to help students and staff, while also gaining valuable experience pertaining to my major. The Myers School of Art also holds one portfolio day each semester for prospective incoming students. I participated in these each semester and was able to answer questions, give tours and create a welcoming atmosphere.

Through my efforts, I was awarded the 50-Hour Service Challenge Award twice in my time as a student. In one of the previous years, I reached 93 hours of service. I believe my contributions, whether big or small, positively impacted many individuals. I believe community service is necessary in progressing society forward to create a better world for all of those in it. I hope you will consider the impact I have made in a few short years through service to my community. Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Jacob Buttar**  
**University of Mount Union**



Over the past two years, I have had the opportunity to be a part of the revitalization of a once vacant community center here in Alliance. The center, now known as The Commons, has become an incredibly rewarding project that I am proud to be a part of. Since work began on the project, The Commons has gradually become a fixture in the Alliance community. Through our hard work, many local agencies have moved into the space with a clothing boutique and grocery store also now calling The Commons home. This incredible progress is a testament to all the hard work brought forth by Abby Schroeder and many Mount Union students.

Starting in the fall of 2022, my fellow classmates and I began moving furniture and other supplies into the vacant center. Later, we began painting multiple rooms throughout the Commons to prepare for agencies to move into office spaces. This project started in the spring and continued throughout the summer. As painting continued, more help was needed moving more agencies and businesses into the space as well. With the addition of the Stark Fresh grocery store, I helped the organization move freezers, shelves, and items to be sold into their new space. The last and continuing project that I am a part of now at The Commons is serving a community meal every Wednesday. Since last fall semester, The Commons helps serve a meal free of charge to the Alliance community each week with the help of volunteers from Mount Union. On average, we usually serve around 60 meals per week. The meal has become a great way to see more of a direct way to reach out and help the Alliance community through The Commons.

Being a part of a project like this has been a rewarding process that I feel is making a difference in the Alliance community. When the project started way back in the fall of 2022, little to nothing made up this space. Through the hard work of many, The Commons has now become a gathering place for many agencies and individuals in the Alliance community. While much progress has been made over time so far, there is still plenty of work to do. The Commons has become and will continue to serve as a pillar of the Alliance community and I am proud to say that I have been a part of its efforts to this point and will continue to do my part in building the space up.

**Kyle Calvey**  
**Bowling Green State University**



Throughout my time at Bowling Green State University, I have demonstrated my commitment to community service and service learning. As a student studying to be an Intervention Specialist, I have always had a desire to serve and give back to individuals with disabilities. The education I have received has given me the knowledge, insight, and tools to demonstrate my commitment to servicing the disability community. The desire for service led me to volunteer at PALS Program; PALS is a week-long camp for individuals with Down syndrome. Last summer I was one of the Program Leads of Camp PALS Cleveland and this summer I have been selected to be Lead again, which entails programming, leading, and creating inclusive environments for the camp.

Coming into college I knew I wanted to get involved with a Greek life organization. In my freshmen year, I joined the Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity (ATO), and I have served my fraternity as the New Member Educator and Chapter President. After my term as Chapter President, I was elected as President of the Interfraternity Council (IFC). I now serve as the Order of Omega Vice-President of Membership. In each organization, I strived to demonstrate my commitment to community service. These positions have given me a voice to introduce our Greek community to PALS Programs. Last summer, PALS Cleveland had several students from BGSU volunteer at PALS; students were members of the Interfraternity Council and the College Panhellenic Council. During my term as Interfraternity Council President, I created an expectation that each fraternity provide their members with community service events and I provided community service opportunities continuously each week. The Chapter Presidents and I led the effort to lead our Greek community to complete over 25,000 hours of community service.

I have had the opportunity to complete several leadership certificates at BGSU: Inclusive Leadership, Social Justice, Ignite Leadership, and Life-Design Leadership. I apply each of these certificates to the work I do for PALS; they have helped me develop more inclusive spaces and events for all individuals. I have been asked to serve on the Board of Trustees for Jacob's Ladder Special Needs Fitness. The knowledge I have gained from the leadership certificates, my education at BGSU, and my work with PALS Programs has allowed me to contribute meaningfully to this organization.

PALS Program now has a direct pipeline for BGSU students to volunteer with PALS Programs. Each BGSU volunteer has talked about the "life-changing experiences" that PALS Program has brought them and the new perspective on life PALS has given them. The voice that my Greek life experience has given me has led to more opportunities for BGSU students to not only serve others but also get the life-changing experience PALS has given to so many. In my last semester of college and student teaching full time, I have realized that my commitment to civic engagement and community service for individuals with disabilities has given me experiences and knowledge that makes me such a better teacher.

**Avinab De**  
**Youngstown State University**



Community service is considered a cornerstone of a college education. Abraham Maslow attributed it to the level of self-actualization in his hierarchy of needs. While I had volunteered and organized community events in my high school career, my experience setting up Youngstown State University's inaugural Red Cross Club has been a transformative experience for me; both in understanding the importance of outreach and being an active leader in the community.

Working as the founder of the Red Cross Club introduced me to the importance of collaborating to bring a positive impact. I gathered my peers and worked to set up campus blood drives. Hosting and promoting blood drives was an important endeavor for our club. A single donation can save up to three lives, and because of our efforts, our September campus blood drive had over 65 donors, impacting 195 lives! In addition to the blood drives, we offered free certified CPR and first-aid training to students on campus. 70% of heart attacks happen outside a hospital setting, and having certified training in CPR is an indispensable skill to have.

War is an unfortunate reality that has scarred our history and threatens our future. While wars may be inevitable, having conscious knowledge of our roles and responsibilities as victims or aggressors is a mission the International Red Cross and by extension, our club strives for. We have campaigned and set up demonstrations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) for students and faculty on campus.

I also serve as an Honors Teaching Assistant for our university's Sokolov Honors College. In this experience, I learned key skills such as management, assessing performance, and fostering teamwork. The classes helped me meet incoming freshman students and introduce them to key skill sets such as proper goal-oriented planning, financial planning as a college student, and how to collaborate with community partners and serve the community. The opportunity to inspire freshmen and encourage them to pursue their dreams as they embark on their college journey is one of my most impactful experiences at YSU.

Currently, I am also training as an AHEC Scholar under the Eastern Ohio AHEC chapter of the AHEC organization. The experience provides 160 hours of didactic and experiential training in the social determinants of public health and working in an interprofessional environment. Through the AHEC Scholars program, I was allowed to learn about important topics such as cultural literacy in a healthcare setting, patient interviewing skills and even practicing physical examinations for vitals. Under the AHEC banner, I arranged a physician interview – for students and faculty – with local infectious disease attending Dr. Virginia Banks. She shared her experiences about the condition of Youngstown hospitals during the pandemic and how representation and active participation can tackle the generational mistrust marginalized communities harbor towards medicine.

In conclusion, my unique community engagement journey has resonated with my interests and continues to motivate me to pursue my dream of being a physician and serving the community.

**Mallory Dunlap**  
**John Carroll University**



I lost my father to COVID in 2020 during my senior year of high school and it left me reeling. I found my grounding in service organizing a voter registration drive and canvassing at the polls in my hometown of Elyria, Ohio.

I chose John Carroll University for its Jesuit education, which tapped into a new reservoir of commitment to service and defined my goals. I was selected as an Arrupe scholar, an academic and mission-based program that teaches students how to turn advocacy into action. I am also a Student Liaison for JCU's Center for Service-Learning and Social Action (CSSA). I have tutored at low-income elementary schools, assisted displaced students at the International Newcomers Academy, and helped incarcerated individuals prepare for reentry at Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry.

One of my proudest accomplishments was being selected as a freshman as the inaugural Democracy Fellow on campus. I developed a plan and mobilized a diverse coalition of students to promote civic engagement on campus in a non-partisan manner. As a result, JCU was recognized nationally as a Voter Friendly Campus, making it one of only 350 schools to receive this prestigious honor nationwide, and one of only 22 in the state of Ohio.

My passion for voter rights is equal only to my other commitment to refugees and immigrants. My first internship was with El Centro de Social Services in Lorain during the forced displacement of Ukrainians. That launched me into immigration work as I helped displaced families with resettlement. The next summer, I expanded on that work through CSSA's Summer in the City internship program, interning with Catholic Charities Migration and Refugee Services. I aided refugees by assisting them in applying for benefits, preparing their homes, and being a support person. I gained valuable insights into the importance of empathy and dignity through roundtable discussions with my JCU internship cohort. During a semester abroad in fall 2023 with the JCU in Rome program, I was able to get a global perspective on these issues when I interned at Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS) International Office in Vatican City. I witnessed the immense need for aid to help displaced people globally, and saw that the refugee crisis is not a U.S.-centric problem but rather a world one.

During my final year at JCU, I am ensuring that what I started will continue. As a Democracy Fellow, I expanded our team to include additional Fellows who can carry on nonpartisan democratic engagement on campus. As an Arrupe scholar, my advocacy project is to enhance the connection between JRS and the Arrupe program. We now are an Action Team for JRS U.S.A. and that advocacy is being incorporated into the Arrupe Scholars service-learning curriculum.

I am grateful for the impact that a Jesuit education has had on my lifelong journey to work for the common good. After graduation, I will be doing a year of service through City Year in South Carolina before attending law school.



**Somarr Elliott**  
**The College of Wooster**



In the last few years, I have made sure to involve myself in giving back to our homeless community. The lack of a social safety net, increasing prices, and stricter homeless legislation make being homeless a situation that cannot be easily overcome. This is especially difficult when factoring in other things such as intersectionality, mental & physical health, and generational circumstances. Nobody should have to experience this plight, let alone experience it alone with no help. I know this intimately as the help of family and strangers was necessary for my mom to overcome homelessness. It takes a community and kindness to try to uplift and humanize our most vulnerable population.

I started my efforts at Wayne County Severe Weather Shelter which provides a safe place to stay during nights when temperatures are freezing. I volunteered here for the first two years of my college career and was responsible for making sure guests were following the rules, preparing & serving food, and maintaining cleanliness. I also had the chance to have conversations with guests. There is a level of ostracism that comes with being homeless that I also want to push back on. Volunteering here allowed me to do that while still offering my service. While volunteering at the shelter, I joined my college's volunteering student organization, Wooster Volunteer Network (WVN), and led initiatives to organize events that could benefit Wayne County's homeless population. One of the more popular events that came from this is Blanket Making Night. WVN provides fleece of different colors and patterns for volunteers to craft into blankets. These blankets are donated to the Severe Weather Shelter or Wayne County Homeless Task Force for use in Ohio's cold winters. This event has also been important to me because it gives College of Wooster students the opportunity to get involved in helping the homeless.

While I only volunteered at the shelter for two years, I did not let this experience be my last in helping this population. The summer after sophomore year, I spent my summer working at Open Door Counseling Center as a Residential Support Staff at one of their shelter locations. Not only did I have many of the same tasks and opportunities to build community with the residents, but I also was able to help provide resources that would assist them in becoming self-sufficient. This included providing bus tickets for free public transportation and informing them about permanent housing programs.

I now volunteer at Trinity Church Free Breakfast Program once a week. As the name implies, this program seeks to provide free breakfast for those in need. I am responsible for preparing and serving food for everyone. My experiences in this sector have been fulfilling and affirmed my need to integrate work in this sector into my future career. As an aspiring scientist-physician, I hope to create a practice that can provide health resources to those who are homeless.

**Logan Marie Gray**  
**Defiance College**



When walking onto campus many years ago, I had a completely different picture of where I would end up, but one thing that never changed was wanting to help people. I have engaged with the community locally and internationally throughout college. Our mission statement: To know, To understand, To lead, and To serve, has pushed me to get involved with the community through various groups like Kaitlyn's Cottage, the Parent Café, and as a Scholar within the McMaster School for Advancing Humanity. Other on-campus opportunities I have participated in include working as a Resident Assistant (RA), Peer Interventionist, and a member of the Women's Soccer Team. I have learned so much about myself as a student and how my involvement could impact my community.

Initially, the McMaster School for Advancing Humanity drew me to Defiance College. I started as a research assistant for the Belize learning community during my freshman year, learning about community-based research. The following year, I was a Scholar for Belize and implemented a resource guide for parents to help explain the importance of emotional resilience in their children. I was also part of the Ghana McMaster learning community. Our team met with schools and orphanages in Ghana to prepare our community partners with valuable information in hopes of building their own. This year, I am a Scholar for Ireland, conducting genealogical research with local community partners about families who traveled to this area during the Great Hunger. This initiative combined local and international involvement by interviewing community members to gather family history to research before traveling to Ireland. With all of these initiatives, I saw the impact we left behind, giving me more reasons to stay active in my local community.

I am part of the Service Leadership Program and have completed over three hundred service hours. While completing these hours, I have worked with community groups such as Kaitlyn's Cottage, The Human Library, local homeless shelters, and the City of Defiance. Through Kaitlyn's Cottage, which is a respite care facility, I have spent time with individuals with developmental disabilities, and it has highlighted that community within Defiance for me. Defiance is a small town but a tight community, which I learned this year while volunteering at Night to Shine. I had experience working with communities internationally, but this event opened my eyes to a local setting. Being part of a community that came together to pull off a one-of-a-kind night was incredible because of its impact on each individual and their families. Working directly with these families has shown me how much it means to them to be included. As a senior, I mentor many underclassmen. Being involved in various organizations and groups shows them how one person can make a difference in a small town and a close community. I have given a lot of time at Defiance College, but it has given me endless opportunities that I will never take for granted because it has shaped me into who I am today.

**Caden Hibbs**  
**Ohio University**



Truly engaging within one's community is an activity that I've redefined for myself several times over my college experience. Before I arrived at Ohio University, I only applied community leadership out of necessity for my college resume. Hence, my beginnings in community involvement in Athens, Ohio were ones of trial and error. I found myself contacting professors, administrators, and community leaders to share my perspective on big picture ideas that I believed should be supported by Ohio University.

It wasn't until I joined Student Senate that I gained a greater understanding of how to create activism in and around the environment you live in. Regarding environmentalism, I viewed small victories to be few and far in between compared to the overarching goal of climate justice. These ideals were challenged when I became the Environmental Affairs Commissioner. For the first six months in the position, I was playing from behind. I was often in the backseat of initiatives that I had not created and had only surface-level knowledge of. It took me until the spring semester of that year to realize that true advocacy must come from thinking outside of the box to bring people together. This began by helping promote projects that were the brainchild of students that came before me, such as the On-Campus Farmers Market, the Sustainability Network, passing a bill in support of a revolving sustainability fund, and Eco-Fest. Through these efforts I built important connections and recognized the opportunity to create my own path by finding new ways to build coordination among environmentalist organizations. This meant intentionally building on my previous projects to institutionalize them as annual opportunities to create sustainable organizational connections between students and the greater Athens community. To do this I engaged local non-profits in Eco-Fest alongside student organizations; invited local farmers to participate in the on-campus farmers market; and collaborated with local organizations such as Community Food Initiatives for distribution tabling in a highly populated area of campus.

Facilitating community partnerships is something I will expand on even further into this spring with events such as the Environmental Justice Summit, which bands together environmental organizations with an often marginalized community of international students on campus, and a divestment campaign, which allows the Sustainability Network to collaborate with the Athens' branch of the national sunrise coalition to promote the restriction of fossil fuel investments in Ohio University's private equity funds. All of this goes to show that my abilities as a community leader weren't something I immediately had at the onset of my arrival in Athens. Instead, it was something I had to grow into by learning from those around me and taking it upon myself to lead when I best felt that I finally had the experience and resources to do so.

**Simran Kaur**  
**Ohio Northern University**



When I moved to Ohio, the first building that caught my eye was the hospital down the street from where I lived. As I aged, the hospital remained the same. Although many of the circumstances behind my visits weren't ideal, I considered them blessings in disguise. Using these opportunities to explore the hospital, I would talk to the current volunteers and ask why they chose to volunteer here. They always told me generosity truly came from the heart, and so does giving back, hence their volunteer job. This was convincing enough for me. Through my time there, I learned that generosity is something that one comes to love so much that the initial reasons behind it begin to fade away as generosity truly has no reason. Having worked with a Key Club in high school, I knew that I wanted to join a Circle K International in college. But, when I was provided the chance to create it from scratch, I took it! As leader, I would like to ensure that the same opportunities that were offered to me as a Kiwanian are offered to students on ONU's campus. Some collaborative ideas that I am working on right now to strengthen that community bond is working with other incredible non-profits, such as Beatitudes and its sister store, Bee Home.

Moving forward with CKI, I would like to show appreciation for the student volunteers who are taking giving their time and energy and giving it back to those around us. Whether this be through handshakes, social media posts, or words of gratitude. As a leader, I believe that any and all recognition is deserved for everyone.

But, as a student who has struggled with fitting in due to my minority background, the actions that I have taken in my journey of volunteering have also been to encourage others to become more socially included. Setting an example, I wanted to show others that although we may come from different backgrounds, at the end of the day, we all have one shared goal and that is to create and enforce community engagement.

Being a member of The Institute for Civics and Public Policy has also encouraged me to remind others that volunteering for political reasons also has its benefits. Helping with campaigns sets you in the heart of the workings of the American political system. Having this opportunity allows one to have the power to become an even more active political participant. Hosting and helping with small events such as going door-to-door for campaigns or even holding community events allows for the chance to amplify political initiatives while considering the opinions of local citizens.

**Jared LaPointe**  
**Hiram College**



In 2023, I was given the opportunity to serve for AmeriCorps at Hiram College, opening a Student Resource Center (SRC) and reviving the Hiram Access Pantry for Personal Items, better known as the HAPPI Place. In this time, I have been able to connect with and serve over 10 percent of the Hiram College population and begin to bridge the gap between college and community engagement. In following the mission of the SRC to eliminate barriers to academic success, I have organized several initiatives to serve the Hiram College community in the past year. Last April, our SRC hosted a month-long initiative for Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) to educate Hiram College students through pop-up tables with information, distributing teal ribbons, facilitating a bystander training seminar, and in turn recruited student volunteers to pack and donate fifty iCare kits for those seeking help at Townhall II in Kent. In January, our team recruited student volunteers from Hiram College to serve at The Center of Hope in Ravenna, completing different projects within the food pantry, striving to make the impact made at The Center of Hope easier to accomplish. In February, our team organized a Chili Cook-off, connecting the Hiram College student population to the devoted members of the Hiram Village community while raising money for the HAPPI Place. Regularly, our team hosts blood drives on campus twice a semester, donors are given the opportunity to be entered in for a prize while saving lives through the gift of blood. One per semester, we also host Food for Fines, partnering with Campus Safety at Hiram College to relieve student parking tickets in return for donating goods to the HAPPI Place. Once per month, I organize and host an event where I drive students who do not have transportation to the grocery store.

I am so grateful for the relationships I have made with the students and community members in the area. I have learned so much through connection with others from different walks of life and never take a moment for granted. I believe that service can teach you things you would not have learned about yourself and life otherwise. The Hiram community has truly become a family to me throughout this service experience.

**Katherine Mims**  
**Denison University**



Community service has always been a big part of my life, starting from the time I can remember; I started by raising money for and donating graduation gifts to the local special needs school that my sister had attended, and am now the Co-President of our community service organization, DCSA, at Denison University. I began volunteering and seeing the rewarding nature of community service in middle school, where I would volunteer at my church, and also at different organizations in our community on the weekends. Through this, I was awarded the Gold Presidential Service Award each year in middle school, participating in over 250+ hours of community service each year. These experiences in middle school catapulted me into a life dedicated to serving my community, finding ways to help others, and creating service projects for areas that I saw a need or was passionate about. As I grew older, the fields I focused on developed, from volunteering in my church's youth ministry, to finding ways to help children in my college town, and looking for courses at Denison that partnered my academic interest in public service with volunteering in different areas that would positively impact children. Denison has enabled me to actively join my academics with community service, providing a seminar course where I traveled with my classmates to Tucson, AZ and Nogales, Mexico to work directly with service based organizations who provide shelter, food, medical resources, and more to migrants crossing the US-MX border. This course allowed me to see how I could continue service work after graduating from Denison, demonstrating the various opportunities to get involved in for years to come. Whilst at Denison, I have dedicated myself to community service, starting as the PR Chair for Denison Community Service Association, and becoming Co-President in my second year with the org, all while serving my campus community as a Class of 2025 Co-Governor and PR Chair for Denison Campus Governance Association. Through these positions, I have been afforded the opportunity to work directly with Denison students and our surrounding community, planning service events such as Habitat for Humanity playhouse builds, Big Red's Big Day, where Denison students go to the local YMCA and work with children in the community and health and fitness activities, and, even starting our first parents weekend service event, making dog toys out of donated t-shirts for the local animal shelter. Each of these events have changed the way I view community service—when you are doing the work to plan, organize, coordinate, network, and execute a service project, your passion for service grows even more. Being a leader and advocate for community service on Denison's campus has opened my eyes to the needs on our campus, as well as the surrounding community, and has thrown more fuel in the fire of my desire to serve and to continue to grow and evolve the involvement of Denison in community service!

**Mikayla Myers**  
**Wittenberg University**



I joined Alpha Phi Omega as a new student at Wittenberg because the organization's three pillars of leadership, friendship, and service matched my value of leading others in serving the community. This aspect of Alpha Phi Omega is important to me as it shows itself as an organization for people to grow; it shows that its members think about how their actions affect the community and others around them.

During my sophomore year, I was elected as our service vice president. This is when I flourished. I began to plan service events for the members of the organization. These events were selected based on what members showed interest in and how they would benefit our community. Some projects included a field day, assisting with the execution of camp outs for the Boy Scouts of America, and various drives for community organizations. These projects have developed my skills in communication and cooperation while growing my desire to lead my peers. As of the fall of my junior year at Wittenberg, I was elected president of Alpha Phi Omega because of the characteristics that I displayed during my time as service vice president. As the service vice president, I conducted the first successful National Youth Service Day event since the COVID-19 Pandemic. For the event, our members traveled to Oesterlen Services for the Youth, an organization that serves youth to promote their mental, social, physical, and spiritual well-being, and conducted a field day for the residents. In preparation for this event, I had to find a day and time that fit the members of Alpha Phi Omega and the Oesterlen organization. I also had to prepare different supplies and materials for the activities. This event was meant to address the social and emotional needs of the residents while challenging what we thought we knew about the needs of our neighbors. While I thought of myself as an open-minded person before coordinating this event, experiencing the event made my mind grow to a whole new light of different needs in the community. As president, I have improved our relationship with the Hagen Center for Civic and Urban Engagement and involved others in supporting the emotional development of children - giving them someone to hang out with and talk to even for a short period of time. As president of Alpha Phi Omega, my goals have been to continue laying a strong foundation for the future of the organization and motivating my peers to stay committed to our mission. We have been building relationships with our community to further promote our purpose as a service fraternity and I am working to form relationships that will continue to grow. In closing, in my time as a campus leader in Alpha Phi Omega, I have been offered chances to grow as a member of the Springfield community. As Ernest Hemingway has stated, "There is nothing noble in being superior to your fellow man; true nobility is being superior to your former self." This quote rings through my mind in a time of progressive mindsets and constantly striving to be better than who I was before.

**Jared Scott Vornhagen**  
**Xavier University**

**Ping Legacy Award Recipient**



As a member of Xavier University's Community-Engaged Fellowship, I am part of a group of students who decided to make community service the focus of our time in college: in the classroom, on campus, and in the surrounding community. As a fellow, I have dedicated over 1,000 hours to organizations that serve those involved in the criminal justice system. Primarily, my service in college has been with the Hamilton County Public Defender's Office and with the Ohio Innocence Project (OIP), two organizations that I began volunteering with in high school. Founding the Xavier University Chapter of Ohio Innocence Project-u is the work I am most proud of on my university's campus. Through my current role as President of the chapter, I bring education-based programming on wrongful convictions to campus, which is vital to OIP's goal of preventing future wrongful convictions. I have organized events including multiple exoneree speakers, a panel discussion on the role of forensic psychologists in wrongful convictions, and a community discussion on innocent people sentenced to death in Ohio. For my work with the chapter, OIP awarded me the Dr. Donna Mayerson Leadership Award, an honor given annually to student leaders who have made invaluable contributions to educating others on wrongful convictions.

In recognizing the many complex issues facing those in the criminal justice system, I have also taken part in Xavier's Community-Engaged Scholars program, which annually partners students with faculty to conduct research addressing a community issue. My first year in the program, I worked with Dr. Thomas Wagner to investigate the impact of narrative persuasion on students' attitudes toward the death penalty, utilizing a qualitative approach. This benefitted Ignite Peace, a peace and nonviolence nonprofit. My second year in the program, I worked with Dr. Kathleen Hart to conduct empirical research on confession contamination and the misleading credibility it can give to false confessions. In my third and most recent year in the program, I continued to work with Dr. Hart on two different research projects. The first examined whether jurors recognize and account for youth as a false confession risk factor as well as the influence of a defendant's race. Both research projects on false confessions helped to inform OIP's policy initiatives. Dr. Hart and I are still working on the second research project, which will benefit the Youth Defense division of the Hamilton County Public Defender's Office. We are reviewing the state of psychology research on adolescent brain development and the capacity for further emotional and cognitive growth.

Through my work serving the Cincinnati community in collaboration with my friends, classmates, and professors, I have strengthened my desire to serve while opening my eyes to different needs and struggles in the city. I plan to continue my commitment to the people and issues I have come to care so deeply about by attending law school and pursuing a legal career in the public interest, hopeful that my advocacy can truly impact the lives of others as much as it has shaped my own.



**Leonard (Lenny) Zaleski**  
**University of Dayton**

**Ping Legacy Award Recipient**



To me being nominated for the Charles J. Ping Student Service Award feels like the culmination of three years of service in partnership with the Dayton community. From the moment I stepped foot on this campus after the drive from my hometown Chicago, I connected with the community instantly and felt welcomed. It's become a home to me, a place for me to learn and grow.

Dayton becoming my home and a place I want to serve started in my freshman year with my term of service in my university's AmeriCorps chapter. As a Library Aide, I tutored upwards of 90 students, and their hard work paid off with a 20% improvement in their grades. With this experience, I stepped right into the world of community building and leadership, and I was rewarded with a nomination to ServeOhio's LeaderCorps program.

My service with AmeriCorps guided me to apply for the Statehouse Civic Scholars, an internship program hosted by the University of Dayton. During the program, we are placed with a nonprofit, government agency, or legislative office in Columbus full-time for the summer. I was placed at the Ohio Environmental Council and supported a healthy and flourishing environment for all Ohioans. Throughout the heatwaves and power outages Columbus faced during that summer, I was able to work on connecting residents to services that helped keep people safe in the face of near triple-digit temperatures without air conditioning.

My civic leadership journey has continued as a member of the Dayton Civic Scholars, a co-curricular program at the University of Dayton aimed at fostering a deep understanding of civic engagement through community-engaged learning and service. As part of the Dayton Civic Scholars program, I volunteered with the City of Dayton Human Relations Council and communicated the issue of fair housing and a massive city-wide event to the community. I went door-to-door with staff, led a social media campaign, pitched stories to the media, and spoke to community members at many events. Because of these efforts, the Fair Housing Symposium sold out with 120 attendees. The conversation sparked led to the city prioritizing Source of Income legislation which outlawed discrimination in housing based on how people pay for them. This legislation has helped hundreds, if not thousands of low-income single mothers and their children keep their housing across Dayton.

When I think of the importance of civic engagement, I think of one word: care. Our communities are stronger when we care about them and work to better the lives of those around us. When we care and invest, we strengthen our communities. This has been the north star of my civic leadership, and the ways I've served as a civic leader in Dayton. When we care and want to give back, work together, and better our communities, we drive positive change for the places we call home.







# Campus Compact

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## Ohio

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