

2023 Student Ambassadorships

Center for Integrative Learning

Community Advocates Ambassadorship in Community Engagement: Rocio Ruiz ('23) *"32/23: Remembering Kelsey and Matthew" a Documentary Podcast*



How might we as Geneseo community members honor and remember the lives of Kelsey Annese and Matthew Hutchinson?

For my ambassadorship, I am producing a podcast that will allow the Geneseo community to honor the lives of Kelsey Annese and Matthew Hutchinson by spreading love and support to others, just like they did in this community. This podcast will also remember these two individuals for who they were and what they embraced rather than associating them with the tragedy surrounding their death. Their story also teaches us as listeners the importance of having conversations on mental health.

Eddie Lee '76 Ambassadorship for First Generation Students: Laura Wright ('24) *The Impact of Institutional Racism in the US Education System on BIPOC Students*



How might we increase public awareness of the limited educational resources in predominantly BIPOC-serving K-12 schools?

Due to the historical effects of structural institutional racism, BIPOC students in New York attend heavily segregated and under-resourced schools. Black and brown students thus have less access to technology, honors curricular resources such as textbooks and honors courses, extra-curricular activities and clubs, and highly qualified teachers. This creates barriers for BIPOC that can hinder them when they transition to college. For my ambassadorship, I plan to increase awareness on this issue through conducting research, recording interviews, and sharing my findings through a publicly accessible website.

The Edward Pettinella '73 Ambassadorship in Business: Bryce DeFazio ('24)

A Financial Literacy Game



How might we better educate students on personal finance concepts in a fun and interactive way to break the chain of generational poverty and financial illiteracy in America?

Through my ambassadorship, I aim to address the problem of financial illiteracy among students in the US by creating and distributing an interactive card game that teaches personal finance concepts. The game is tailored to students and is designed to make learning about money management fun and engaging. My goal is to empower students with the knowledge and skills they need to make informed financial decisions throughout their lives and to help them better prepare for their financial future. By using an interactive, game-based approach, this project aims to make financial education accessible and

enjoyable for all students.

The Frank Vafier '74 Ambassadorship in Leadership: Paris Interdonato-Carreras ('24)

The Study Guide: A SUNY Geneseo Study Space Website



How might we help promote on-campus accessibility by elements of college life such as finding a place to study easier to navigate?

As a neurodivergent student and former Accessibility Advocate with the Office of Accessibility Services, I have encountered and heard about students' struggles to find the right study environment on campus. For some of my peers - with physical disabilities especially - getting around campus to try out study spaces can be challenging. In order to tackle this problem, for my ambassadorship I am designing a website that includes photos and descriptions of every study space available on

campus. This website will be available for the entire SUNY Geneseo community to use.

The Frank Vafier '74 Ambassadorship in Leadership: Jessie Mazzeo ('24) and Lauren Verde ('24)

Genny Thrift: A Sustainable Alternative to Fast-Fashion



How might we reduce the negative environmental and social impacts of the fast fashion industry while providing accessible and affordable clothing to SUNY Geneseo students?

The harmful fast-fashion industry releases high levels of greenhouse gas emissions, generates a copious amount of textile waste, and permits

inhumane working conditions in order to maximize profit. Genny Thrift reduces the negative environmental and social impacts of the fast-fashion industry by collecting clothing donations and providing high-quality, affordable, secondhand clothing to Geneseo students within walking distance of campus. For our ambassadorship, we are expanding the operations of Genny Thrift with the goal of transitioning from a “pop-up” model to having a permanent space for Geneseo students to purchase clothing.

The James S. Houston '80 Ambassadorship in Innovation: Olivia Khang ('23)

New Student Sexual Health Education Program



How might we improve access to information, education, services, and outreach regarding student sexual health on the SUNY Geneseo campus?

College sexual health services, and especially educational programs, are lacking nationwide. Students don't have the resources they need or want, and college students are at high-risk for sexual health issues. For my ambassadorship, I am conducting a qualitative research study to address this issue and designing an educational intervention. The intervention will be a seminar-style presentation to be given to all incoming students by a group of peer educators. I am also designing an accompanying website containing all of the information delivered in orientation so that students can access it at any

time.

The John A. '87 and Mary Grace '84 Gleason Ambassadorship in Student Affairs: Halie Cardon ('24), Matthew McGowan ('26), Shelby Soper ('24)

The Pantry at Geneseo: An On-Campus Resource for Food Insecurity



How might we expand the usage of the Pantry amongst Geneseo students and provide resources to decrease food insecurity on campus?

A recent student survey sent out by the Geneseo [food] Pantry committee revealed that while at Geneseo, 31.3% of students were hungry – but didn't eat – at least once because they couldn't afford food. Despite this, 84.1% of students have never used the on-campus food pantry. For our ambassadorship, we aim to (1) expand the Pantry to reach more students, (2) work towards finding a more accessible food source for the Pantry, and (3) identify and acquire more storage space for the Pantry.

The Keith '11 and Joanna '13 Walters Artist-in-Residence Ambassadorship: Elliot Pecora ('24)

Rural Transgender Poetics



How might we use in-person and online poetry workshops alongside an online collection of written works to grow both community and self-expression for transgender people living in rural areas?

Although about 16% of transgender people in the US live in rural areas, there are far less support structures in these parts of the country. Rural transgender people are also more visible than their urban counterparts and are more likely to live in states that are less likely to have legislation in place that protects transgender people. Therefore, my ambassadorship will include holding online and in-person poetry workshops that encourage self-expression and community building among Queer people in

rural areas. I will also be creating and collecting poetry to post online via a website dedicated to this topic.