



UTICA

COLLEGE

Diversity Committee



April 29, 2020

Dear Mr. Kovacs:

The Utica College Diversity Committee's *Certificate of Recognition for Excellence in Fostering a Diverse Campus Community* is intended to recognize individuals at Utica College who work tirelessly to promote diversity by building a welcoming and inclusive campus community. You were nominated for this recognition and selected to receive this certificate, and it is a pleasure to present it to you.

Mark, you have exemplified the College's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion throughout your many years of service, first in Residential Life, and now as Executive Director of Alumni & Parent Relations. On an institutional basis, you raise important questions and serve as a voice for those who are often overlooked through your work with the Diversity Committee, the Honorary Degree Committee, the Commencement and Convocation Committees, and staffing the Utica College Alumni Council (UCAC), to name but a few. As the chair of the Homecoming Committee, you frequently work with affinity groups, many representing multi-ethnic and multi-cultural alumni, and spend many hours to ensure that their time back on campus is enriching for all involved and that the planning process is an inclusive one.

Your commitment to equity and inclusion is clear through not only in what you do in those areas but also the relationships you build and interactions you continue to have with many students after they graduate. It is clear that you genuinely care about students and want to see them succeed after graduation and into their careers, and your relationships - indeed friendships - are meaningful and substantive. As an advisor and mentor, you connect many students with a diverse group of alumni in order to network and set them up with internships and career opportunities.

One of the most recent testaments of your commitment to a diverse and inclusive campus was being asked by current students to serve as the advisor of the Black Student Union (BSU). In addition to being an engaged and visible advisor, you connected these student leaders with many alumni through a multitude of conversations and meetings. You worked tirelessly with the BSU in order to preserve their history and continue traditions through a memorable celebration of the BSU's 50th year, the 30th Annual Kwanzaa dinner, and Apollo Night for Black History Month, while serving as a guide and support for many of their members.

Finally, your willingness to commit your personal time and energy was clearly demonstrated during the weekend you set aside to personally present the outstanding senior award in person to an alum in NYC who was unable to attend the ceremony in person due to recent medical concerns. You knew how much it would mean to have two of his closest friends with him, and ensured a memorable experience by offering to bring them down with you.

It is with great pleasure that the Diversity Committee recognizes your contributions by naming you this year's staff recipient of the "*Excellence in Fostering a Diverse Campus Community*" award.

Sincerely,

Alane Varga

Alane Varga, Chairperson
Utica College Diversity Committee