



UTICA

COLLEGE

Diversity Committee



April 29, 2020

Dear Ms. Steele:

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.

The myriad of roles you play on campus serve as a starting point to describe your contributions, not simply because of what you do but also how you do it. You have been actively involved, both as a member and in leadership positions, in Active Minds, the Gender and Sexuality Alliance, and as an RA on campus, and support events and groups engaged in the work of diversity and inclusion in many ways.

You are invariably one of the first to say "yes" when asked to collaborate, and intentionally reach out across groups as part of your own planning process. The Mental Health Monologues you led as president of Active Minds had representation from a wide range of identities and experiences with mental health, and you consistently reach out to groups that could speak to the experience of diverse constituencies for resource and educational fairs. You are tireless in your planning – even over breaks, you will work from home, returning calls, doing virtual meetings, and looking for feedback in order to accomplish your goals more effectively.

Your nominators also describe you as someone willing to take the risk of stepping out of your comfort zone. Whether facilitating a workshop for your peers based on the invisible burdens all of us carry or hosting a Pio Talk around mindfulness, you share appropriately of your experiences in order to encourage others to have their voices heard. On a more individual level, you have been a role model for students, faculty and staff alike. You don't hesitate to reach out to fellow UC community members in order to address needs that you see and validate the range of ways in which people walk through the world - which requires listening to others and being genuinely interested in connecting with and understanding their lives and experiences. You have served as an advocate, ally, and support system for many who are members of often marginalized or underrepresented groups, and have done so with grace, humor, creativity, and a great deal of persistence!

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

Sincerely,

Alane Varga

Alane Varga, Chairperson
Utica College Diversity Committee