



Office of Student Affairs

April 29, 2020

Gabriella Felipe

Dear Gabriella:

Congratulations on being selected as a recipient for the Dean Robert Woods Student Life Award for 2020! We are pleased to recognize your hard work, diligence and commitment to campus life at Utica College.

Gabriella, your selflessness, work ethic and leadership skills have been greatly valued by the UC community. Your commitment to racial and social justice, ensuring the voices of students from marginalized communities are heard, and your willingness to not only advocate for change but take an active role in ensuring a more equitable and inclusive community have made an impact.

Throughout your Utica College career you have truly made the most of your experience. Despite your involvement in a multitude of areas, you continue to achieve at a high level in the classroom. It takes an exceptional student with self-discipline, boundless energy and an ability to prioritize to be as involved as you have been and maintain a GPA that has kept you on the Dean's Honors List for much of your time at UC, particularly in a major as challenging and all-involving as nursing.

Your commitment to giving back to your community and serving as a voice for students is clear. As an individual, you challenged yourself to step out of your comfort zone by facilitating community conversations on UC's campus climate related to diversity and inclusion, serving on panels on a range of topics, and organizing open forums when difficult discussions such as those around the racial climate on campus were needed. More formally, you have worked with committees and the Utica College administration to create meaningful programming to commemorate Dr. Martin Luther King's legacy, organized rallies, shepherded the creation of a process to award the 2019 MLK scholarship, and provided your perspective in an advisory role as a member of the President's Student Task Force on Race and Equity. You have taken on leadership roles as president of the Black Student Union and secretary for the Student Government Association, and unhesitatingly said "yes" when asked to represent Utica College on the board of the state-wide Higher Education Service Corporation. Because of your willingness to be vulnerable, take risks, and work through difficult issues with others, Utica College is a better place, and you will be missed.

For all that you've done to encourage others to fulfill their potential and step up to support others, and for contributing in so many ways across campus, we thank you. Congratulations on your award!

Sincerely,

Timothy Ecklund, Ph.D.  
Assistant Vice President of  
Student Affairs and Dean of  
Students and Campus Life

Alane Varga, M.A.  
Dean of Diversity and  
Inclusion

Scott Nonemaker, M.S.  
Executive Director for Student  
Living & College Engagement