



**College of Humanities & Social Sciences**

# **Seniors of Distinction Awards Ceremony**



**April 17, 2015**





## Dean's Message

Welcome, Class of 2015 distinguished seniors, faculty, and guests. The Dean's Seniors of Distinction Awards Ceremony is an annual event celebrating the achievements of the most outstanding graduating seniors in the College of Humanities & Social Sciences. Awardees are seniors who have not only demonstrated academic excellence but have also made significant contributions to their department, university, and/or surrounding community. Faculty from each of the College's programs select one graduating senior who best represents their discipline to receive this honor. This year's awards ceremony marks the third year of the Seniors of Distinction ceremony and the 15th year of the ceremony previously known as the Dean's Senior Recognition Awards within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Thank you for celebrating with us,



Dr. Cindy Vitto  
Dean, College of Humanities & Social Sciences

# CHSS Departments & Programs

## **English**

English (B.A.)

## **Foreign Languages & Literatures**

Spanish (B.A.)

## **Geography & Environment**

Environmental Studies (B.A.)

Geography (B.A.)

GIS (B.S.)

Planning (B.S.)

## **History**

History (B.A.)

## **Interdisciplinary Studies**

Africana Studies (B.A.)

American Studies (B.A.)

General Studies (B.A.)

Liberal Studies: Humanities/Social Science (B.A.)

## **Law & Justice Studies**

Law & Justice Studies (B.A.)

## **Philosophy & Religion Studies**

Philosophy & Religion Studies (B.A.)

## **Political Science & Economics**

Economics (B.A.)

Political Science (B.A.)

## **Sociology & Anthropology**

Sociology (B.A.)

# PROGRAM

**Reception**

**Dean's Welcome**

**Office of Alumni Relations**

**Guest Speaker:**

**Nic Esposito**

Author, Publisher, Urban farmer,  
English Alumnus '05

**Presentation of Awards**

# RECIPIENTS

## AFRICANA STUDIES

## JENNA SIEGEL



**J**enna has a major in Sociology and concentration in African American Studies. Over the past four years, she has worked on several initiatives on campus to improve the collegiate experience of students of color, women, and LGBTQ undergraduates. In 2013, Jenna joined a group of students that fought for a women's center, LGBTQ+ center, and multicultural center on campus. In fact, she served as a student representative on the steering committee and worked with other students to ensure a space was opened. Her tireless efforts alongside the work of other students who sought assistance from various administrators, faculty, and staff led to the establishment of the Office of Social Justice, Inclusion, and Conflict Resolution. Moreover, in 2015, Jenna and several other students testified at the Board of Trustees meeting about the need for more resources for survivors of sexual assault on campus. The group also collaborated with a Title IX coordinator to gain more support, and the students played an instrumental role in securing the university's commitment to hiring a full-time sexual assault investigator/consent educator in June 2015. Even though a cohort of Rowan students helped to get these initiatives passed, Jenna's dynamic leadership was invaluable. She exemplifies the spirit, passion, and dedication of students who are committed to social justice issues on campus.



## AMERICAN STUDIES

## MONIQUE O'CONNELL



**M**onique has displayed leadership and perseverance her whole time at Rowan University. A very bright student, Monique has served as an officer of KDP, the Education Honor Society, and American Studies Club. Two years ago, she was inducted into EAK, the American Studies Honor Society. In addition, Monique has worked at Bancroft School with children with developmental and intellectual disabilities as well as substitute teaches. Next year, she will become a teacher at the elementary or middle school level.

# RECIPIENTS

## ECONOMICS

## TAYLOR LEE



**T**aylor Lee is a senior double major in Economics and Philosophy. Although Taylor has been at Rowan for just two years, he has been very active in the university community. He is currently the CHSS academic senator, Vice President of the Economics society, President of Phi Sigma Tau, Scholarship Chair for his fraternity Tau Epsilon Phi, and an active member of Mortar Board, Golden Key, Sigma Alpha Lambda, Tau Sigma, and Order of Omega. Despite having studied economics for only two years, Taylor has been able to complete the Economics program at Rowan and spark a budding quest for knowledge in the field. As a result, Taylor has decided to pursue a master's, and then hopefully a Ph.D. program in Economics, with a specialization in financial economics.



## ENGLISH

## ASIA KOLAKOWSKI



**A**sia is an outstanding student as well as a warm and generous person. Always a pleasure to have in class, she displays a genuine intellectual curiosity and an admirable willingness to work constructively with others. She interned this spring at Friends School of Mullica Hill, and she is heavily involved in theater, stage-managing two productions in 2014 and directing Rowan's Murder Mystery in 2015. The English Department awarded her the Nathan Carb award last year for her scholarly enthusiasm and her appreciation for Shakespeare. Asia is an Honors student with a concentration in Women's and Gender Studies and a minor in History (in addition to her major in English). The English Department invited her to serve on the Student Hiring Committee for new tenure-track professors in 2013, 2014, and 2015, and she was repeatedly nominated by faculty to work in the Tutoring Center. Asia has also served as an active member of the CHSS Student Advisory Council since its inception.

# RECIPIENTS

## FOREIGN LANGUAGES & LITERATURES

## RAQUEL CINTRÓN-CARDOZO



**R**aquel is a Spanish major who will be graduating in May 2015. As a mother of two amazing boys, her goal is to teach them to persevere until they achieve their dreams. Thanks to her strong faith in God and a supportive family, especially her husband and mother, she has been able to complete her bachelor's degree in Spanish and will continue to further her education until becoming an educator just like the many educators who have inspired her throughout her academic career. It will be her greatest honor to make a difference in the community where she will teach and above all be a positive role model to every one of her students. The Department of Foreign Languages is proud to have had a hand in Raquel's pursuit of excellence in Spanish, and we are confident that she will continue to represent the best that Rowan has to offer the community.



## GENERAL STUDIES

## GAILA WAITERS



**G**aila Waiters is a General Studies major who, like many students, has worked diligently to overcome obstacles. What makes Gaila a graduate of distinction is her dedication and resiliency. Gaila entered Glassboro State College as a Business major in 1976. During her senior year, she injured her back and had to leave school. Work and family responsibilities made her return difficult. Nearly 30 years later, after making a promise to her mother and to herself, she has returned to complete her degree. Gaila was chosen for this award not only for her dedication but also for the many obstacles she has overcome. Returning to the classroom after 30 years, and having to learn new technology skills, was difficult. Gaila has used the services of our Academic Success Center and Writing Center not only to complete an online class, but also to develop new skills which she will apply in the workforce and in life.

# RECIPIENTS

## GEOGRAPHY & ENVIRONMENT

## ANTHONY DEON



**A**nthony comes to us from Vineland, New Jersey. Originally a student at Rutgers-New Brunswick, Anthony joined the Department of Geography & Environment as a transfer student in Fall 2013, where he declaring major in Environmental Studies. To say that Anthony is a strong student would be a gross understatement; in his time at Rowan he has earned an 'A' in every course he's taken but one (in which he earned a B+). Anthony has a sincere and long-standing interest in environmental issues and

has demonstrated strong abilities in solving environmental problems from natural science, social science, and humanistic perspectives. He has even conducted independent research on solid waste management alongside Department of Geography & Environment faculty members. After graduating from Rowan, Anthony hopes to build a career in the area of environmental protection, and specifically through positions within state and federal government agencies.



## HISTORY

## KATELYN SULLIVAN



**K**atelyn Sullivan is earning double majors in History with a Specialization in Global History and Philosophy and Religion in addition to a minor in Anthropology and concentrations in Honors, Asian Studies, and International Studies - all in four years! Katelyn's professors have been impressed by her deep intellectual curiosity, thoughtful and perceptive writing, and outstanding scholarship. In 2013, she won an extremely competitive Fulbright grant to participate in a summer institute in the United

Kingdom. Katelyn has had several poems published in *Avant*, Rowan's literary magazine, and in 2014, she won the Edward Czwartacki Award for Fiction as well as the History Department's Livingston Award. Katelyn is an active member and officer of History's honor society and student association, and she has presented her research at three Phi Alpha Theta regional conferences. She is also a member of the Philosophy Honor Society and Rowan's Equestrian Team. After graduation, Katelyn plans to continue studying Asia, especially Japan, on a graduate level, ultimately hoping to engage in government or academic work related to Japan and Asia.

# RECIPIENTS

## LAW & JUSTICE STUDIES

## ELIZABETH CASTAÑEDA



**E**lizabeth Castañeda is an exceptional student who represents the best and brightest of the Law and Justice Department. The Law and Justice Department is incredibly proud of Elizabeth's many impressive accomplishments throughout her time at Rowan University in addition to her outstanding academic achievement. Elizabeth is a member of Alpha Phi Sigma, the Law and Justice Honor Society, as well as Tau Sigma National Honor Society, which recognizes transfer students for their impres-

sive academic accomplishments. Elizabeth's dedication and commitment to the Rowan community is evident through her work as a campus security officer. In addition to her achievements at Rowan University as a full-time student and employee, Elizabeth is also a loving and dedicated mother to her 2 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>-year-old son and the first person in her family to earn a bachelor's degree. We wish Elizabeth the best of luck as she plans to pursue a career as a juvenile probation officer after graduation.



## LIBERAL STUDIES: HUMANITIES/ SOCIAL SCIENCE

## CARLY E. FRANCIS



**C**arly is a dual LS:HSS (English and American Studies sequences) and Elementary Education major. She is currently completing her student teaching in Collingswood. Carly also has been a PRO (Orientation leader) during her time at Rowan, working with the office of Orientation & Leadership under Drew Tinnin. As a PRO, Carly offered assistance through countless Freshmen and Transfer Orientations and was instrumental in helping with the successful process of advising over 600

students. As a LS:HSS major, she was able to guide students through the registration process, and even clarify nuances of the program. Additionally, Carly has taken her studies very seriously, earning a high GPA throughout her time at Rowan. She now is at a point in her life where she is trying to decide if she would like to pursue K-12 education or perhaps go towards a career in higher education, since she has had rich experiences in both fields. Carly's overall strength lies in her character, which can only be described as brilliant, honest, and kind.

# RECIPIENTS

## PHILOSOPHY & RELIGION STUDIES

## KELLY LYNCH



**T**he Philosophy and Religion Studies Department is proud to recommend Kelly for the Senior of Distinction Award. Kelly is a double major in Philosophy and Religion Studies and Communication Studies. She has always loved studying religions from all over the world and is especially interested in the way religions and their rituals are constructed and reconstructed to create meaning. Kelly is a member of Phi Sigma Tau, the National Philosophy Honor Society. In addition, she has presented her original research at our annual Student Ethics Conference. Her senior seminar research topic involves the way interfaith families handle and interpret high holy days to create meaningful dual identities. She is excited to continue studying and researching communicative aspects of religion in graduate school next year. She has been accepted to the Rhetoric program at Wake Forest University in North Carolina and is waiting to hear from other programs. Her writing, analytical skills, dedication, and creativity make her an asset to our department and Rowan University.



## POLITICAL SCIENCE

## ROBERT RUBIANO



**R**obert Rubiano is a 22-year-old transfer student from Brookdale Community College who is currently pursuing a major in Political Science and a minor in History. During his first year at Rowan University, Robert earned a place on the Dean's List, and was accepted into the Tau Sigma and Pi Sigma Alpha honor societies. Robert is currently assigned to the 114th Infantry Regiment, and is honored to be serving in the Army National Guard. In September 2014, he joined the Army ROTC program, and was awarded a commissioning contract. Upon becoming an officer, Robert hopes to enter Active Duty and commission into the Army's Adjutant General Corps. Among his many interests outside of school, Robert particularly enjoys weight lifting, studying martial arts, drawing, and DJ-ing. He attributes much of his success to the support of his family, friends, and loved ones.

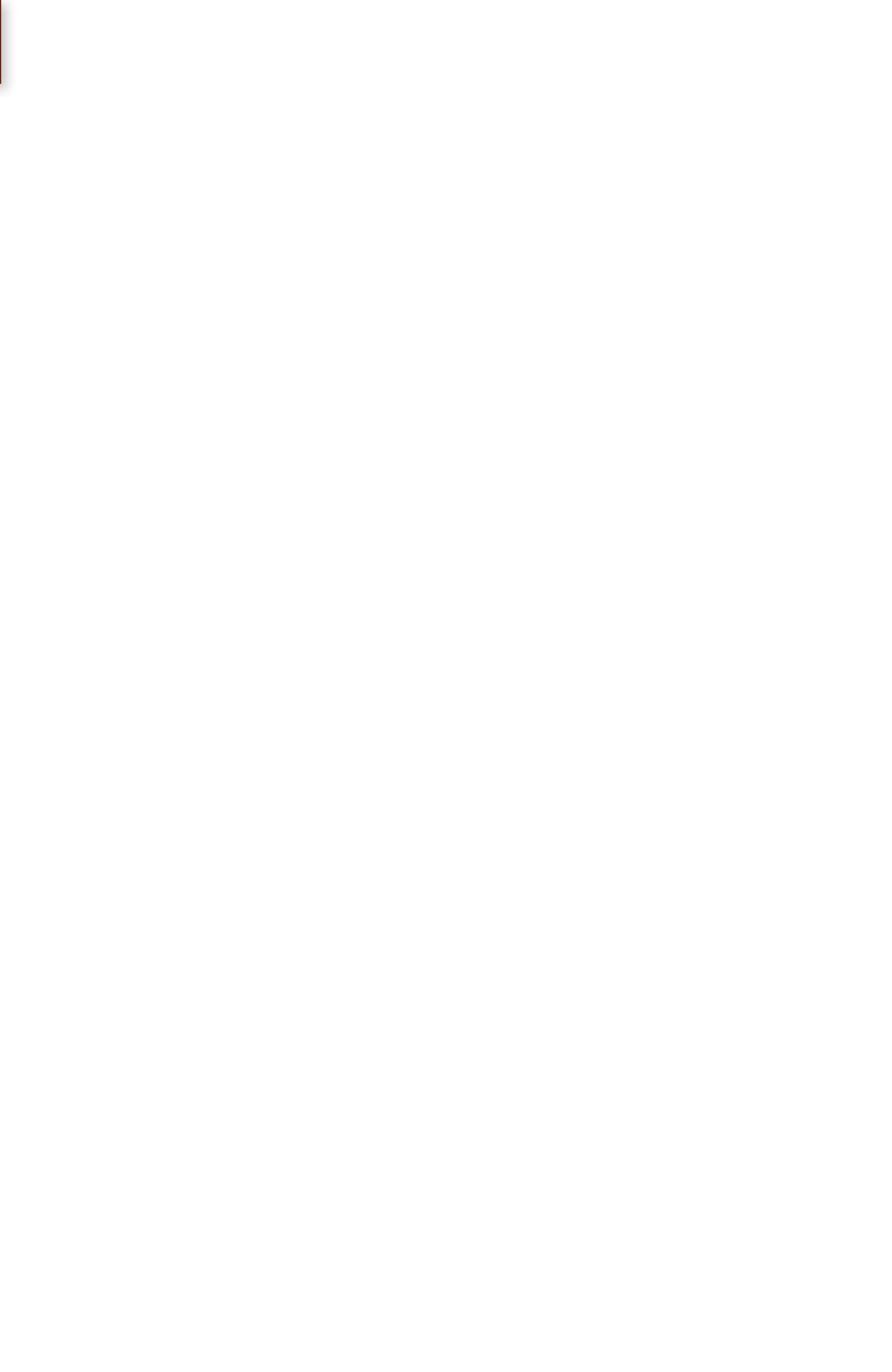
# RECIPIENTS

## SOCIOLOGY & ANTHROPOLOGY

## CODY BLAKLEY



Cody is a truly gifted student whose accomplishments are seen both through his academic excellence and his various extracurricular activities that provide evidence of his dedication to service. Prior to coming to Rowan, Cody worked as a Corps Member with AmeriCorps NCCC with City Year Philadelphia, where he tutored and mentored inner city youth. Currently, Cody works as a Resident Assistant, a trip leader with Sprout (organization that leads senior citizens with disabilities on vacation trips), a Volunteer Staff Member with Autism on the Seas (organization that assists families that have children with Autism on their cruise vacations), a volunteer tutor at South Woods State Prison, where he helps inmates earn their GED, and he also interns at a group home that houses adolescents with developmental disabilities. This summer Cody plans to work at The Center for Talented Youth, organized on behalf of academically gifted youth and sponsored by Johns Hopkins University. He will travel to Hong Kong to work with these youth as a resident assistant, setting up various activities and events. After he leaves Rowan, Cody plans to attend graduate school to pursue a degree that further allows him to utilize his academic talents and dedication to serving others. His ultimate goal is to pursue a Ph.D. in Sociology and become a Sociology Professor at a college or university.



Office of the Dean  
College of Humanities  
& Social Sciences  
201 Mullica Hill Road  
Glassboro, NJ 08028  
856.256.5840  
[www.rowan.edu/chss](http://www.rowan.edu/chss)