

Rutgers Graduate Amy Albert Has Dispelled Myths Through Community Service; Honored with 2015 Riki Jacobs Livingston Pride Award



Amy Albert (pictured) has been selected as the recipient of the 2015 Riki Jacobs Livingston Pride Award, given by the Livingston Alumni Association (LAA) of Rutgers University.

Shortly after arriving at Rutgers as a transfer student in 2012, Albert began a

journey of community service. Albert, a 2015 graduate of the School of Arts and Sciences at Rutgers University-New Brunswick, set out to effect change, which she has accomplished in many roles including those of student leader, tutor, counselor, and legal services intern.

Among many examples of her service, Albert has worked as a counselor with a hotline for suicidal youth.

Through the Rutgers University Alternative Breaks program, Albert has volunteered at an animal refuge in Florida and a no-kill animal sanctuary in Virginia. At the Virginia sanctuary, named Paris Barns, Albert led eight participants “on a life-changing trip ... [where] they learned the value of service, organic eating, and that animals aren’t on this earth solely to benefit humans.”

Closer to home, Albert worked with 20 incoming first-year students throughout New Brunswick working with the community at a farmer’s market and gardens.

At Rutgers, Albert has served as a tutor for student athletes and served on the Scarlet Honor Council’s appeals committee for academic integrity cases.


In the legal services community, Albert has tutored women prisoners and also worked on programs related to documentation of domestic violence weapons and to client services.

In her award application essay, Albert wrote: “While I worked to create change here, words cannot describe how Rutgers created change in me. Because of this university, I learned so much about myself and was given opportunities others will never have.”

A theme throughout Albert’s community service has been dispelling stereotypes – about the relationship of humans to animals, about students’ relationship with their community, and about prisons and inmates.

Albert, a resident of Waldwick, New Jersey, maintained a grade-point average at Rutgers and majored in psychology and criminal justice. Among other academic honors, she was named to the dean’s list at both Rutgers and the University of New Haven in Connecticut through her four years of college. In fall 2015 she will enter the University of Virginia Law School.

Albert was honored at the Rutgers Student Life awards, called “The Scarlets,” on Tuesday, May 5, 2015.


 The Riki Jacobs Livingston Pride Award is given annually to the Rutgers-New Brunswick graduating senior who most embodies the spirit of Livingston College and its attributes of leadership and social action.

The award is named after Riki Jacobs (1957-2009), a guiding light in the fight against HIV/AIDS in New Jersey for more than 25 years. At the time of her

passing, New Jersey Governor Jon Corzine called Jacobs “an articulate and compassionate voice who was highly respected for her efforts to ensure health care access for those living with, infected with, and affected by HIV.”

Photo: Amy Albert accepts the Riki Jacobs Livingston Pride Award from LAA Past President Marty Siederer (left) and LAA President Jason Goldstein, on May 5, 2015.

LAA Honors Emilie Transue as Winner of 2014 Riki Jacobs Livingston Pride Award

Emilie Transue has been selected as the recipient of the 2014 Riki Jacobs Livingston Pride Award, given by the Livingston Alumni Association (LAA) at Rutgers University. 

Throughout her college career, Transue has merged her studies with awareness and action related to understanding and helping those in the community with medical or neurological challenges, including children and their families, and her fellow students.

For almost two years Transue has worked as a peer mentor for Rutgers students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), through the College Support Program (CSP). Transue has worked extensively with two mentees, help them achieve social, academic and professional success.

Transue wrote in her application essay that her work with CSP has helped her to educate others about the struggles faced by people with ASD and disability, particularly resident and apartment assistants, who are taught to recognize students who need additional services and how to create appropriate social support systems.

For two years Transue also has been the Rutgers chapter leader of Project Sunshine, a nonprofit organization that provides free educational, recreational and social programs to children and families living with medical challenges. For example, Rutgers students visit with the children and plan parties or other activities for the children, helping the children to focus on personal development as well as medical treatment.

She has also served as a classroom aide or assistant at the New Brunswick Free Public Library and at Rutgers’ Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center.

For three years Transue has developed her honors thesis by investigating two neuronal proteins involved in dendritogenesis and neural networking, at

Rutgers' Firestein Laboratory. She also has shadowed physicians at the Child Health Institute of New Jersey and the Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital.

Transue maintained a 3.9 grade-point average and earned multiple scholarships and dean's list recognitions in her college career at Rutgers-New Brunswick's School of Arts and Sciences, from which she graduated in 2014. She dual-majored in cell biology and neuroscience, and Spanish, with a minor in psychology. She began studies at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine in fall 2014.



Transue was honored at the Rutgers Student Life Scarlet Awards on Tuesday, May 6, 2014.

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The award is named after Riki Jacobs (1957-2009), a guiding light in the fight against HIV/AIDS in New Jersey for more than 25 years. At the time of her passing, New Jersey Governor Jon Corzine called Jacobs "an articulate and compassionate voice who was highly respected for her efforts to ensure health care access for those living with, infected with, and affected by HIV."

"Emilie Transue has brought attention and has lead efforts at Rutgers to help individuals with developmental disabilities and medical challenges," said Jason Goldstein, LAA president (pictured above with Transue), who presented the award. "Her exemplary achievements have shaped lives."

"Livingston College was focused on building communities by engaging diverse perspectives," Goldstein noted. "We are proud to present Emilie Transue with this Pride Award for her efforts in serving those individuals who require a voice and assistance."

[LAA Honors Melanie Davila as 2013 Recipient of Riki Jacobs Livingston Pride Award](#)



Melanie Davila was selected as the recipient of the 2013 Riki Jacobs Livingston Pride Award, given by the Livingston Alumni Association (LAA) of Rutgers University. [Read her winning essay.]

Davila, of Hackettstown, N.J., graduated from Rutgers University's School of Arts and Sciences in May 2013 with a degree in genetics, with minors in public health and nutrition.

In June 2013 Davila headed to rural Xerem, Brazil, as a volunteer with the organization Casa do Caminho for six months. This organization supports an orphanage, community center, organic farm and language school. Before leaving for Brazil, Davila said her main duties would be orphanage-related and involve providing close supervision for children ages 4 to 12, planning activities that foster personal growth for the children, offering educational support/tutoring, and providing English lessons. She also planned to tend the organic farm a few times a week.

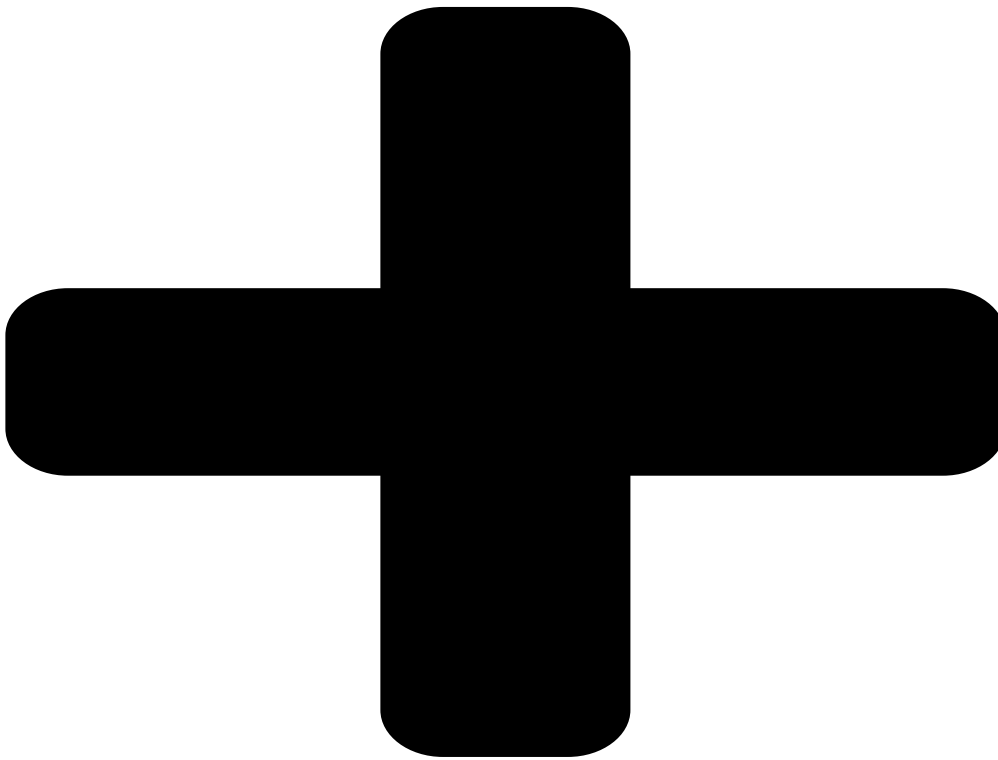
Some highlights of Davila's college career included:

- Serving as a research assistant at the Rutgers Cell and DNA Repository.
- Serving as a founding executive board member and fundraising director for the National Society of Leadership and Success.
- Writing the article The Incomprehensible Nature of the Origin of Life for the student journal, Dialogues@RU.
- Being honored as a James Dickson Carr Scholar, and winning the National Excellence in Leadership Award and the School of Arts and Sciences Excellence Award.

Marty Siederer, LAA past president, recognized Melanie as the Pride Award winner Tuesday, May 7, 2013, at the ROSCARs student life awards. Davila also was recognized at the LAA's annual meeting on Saturday, May 18, 2013.


"Livingston College was an innovator in a number of areas, such as developing student leadership and social action programs, and for being the birthplace of a number of Rutgers SAS major fields of student such as computer sciences, women's studies and philosophy," Siederer told the audience in presenting the award to Davila.

"One of the most innovative graduates from Livingston was Riki Jacobs, who was a guiding light in the fight against HIV/AIDS in New Jersey for more than 25 years. She was an articulate and compassionate voice who was highly respected for her efforts to ensure health care access for those living with, infected with, and affected by HIV. Under Riki's direction, the Hyacinth AIDS Foundation in New Brunswick became the only organization in New Jersey with a public policy and community organizing staff dedicated to protecting the rights and benefits of people living with HIV/AIDS in New Jersey. In earlier jobs, she



Bottom photo: Melanie Davila (Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences, 2013), third left, is congratulated as the winner of the 2013 Riki Jacobs Livingston Pride Award, by LAA past president Marty Siederer, left, and 2013 president Jason Goldstein, second left, and her family, at the Livingston Student Center, Saturday, May 18, 2013.

[Matthew Cortland \(SAS'11\) Earns Mitchell Scholarship to Study in Ireland; Honored with LAA's Livingston Pride Award as a Student](#)

Matthew P. Cortland, a 2011 graduate of Rutgers' School of Arts and Sciences-New Brunswick, earned a coveted George J. Mitchell Scholarship to do a year of graduate study in Ireland or Northern Ireland. In 2014 he studied mobile, tablet, and dynamic web application design at the Dublin Institute of Technology in Ireland's capital city. He was also Rutgers' first Luce Scholar, studying in Taiwan from 2011 to 2013. 


Cortland, a native of Marlton, New Jersey, was the 2011 recipient of the Riki

Jacobs Livingston Pride Award given by the Livingston Alumni Association (LAA) of Rutgers University. The LAA presented the Pride Award to Cortland on May 14, 2011, as part of the Distinguished Alumni and Livingston Legacy Awards ceremony.

Read more about Cortland from *Rutgers Today*.

Photo of Matthew Cortland courtesy of Henry Luce Foundation.


[LAA Honors Amy Tran as 2012 Recipient of Riki Jacobs Livingston Pride Award](#)

Amy Tran, SAS '12, was the recipient of the 2012 Riki Jacobs Livingston Pride award, given by the Livingston Alumni Association of Rutgers University. At Rutgers, Amy majored in cell biology and neurology, and was a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society. At the time of the award, Amy was active in the Rutgers Vietnamese Student Association and Operation Smile, and she mentored tenth-graders at Piscataway High School. 

Marty Siederer, LAA past president, recognized Amy as the Pride Award winner May 1, 2012, at the ROSCARs student award ceremony. (See photo.)

The LAA also recognized Amy at its annual meeting on Saturday, May 12, 2012.

[Riki Jacobs Livingston Pride Award](#)

The **Riki Jacobs Livingston Pride Award** is given annually by the Livingston Alumni Association (LAA) to the Rutgers-New Brunswick graduating senior who most embodies the spirit of Livingston College and its attributes of leadership and social action. 

All Rutgers University-New Brunswick undergraduate seniors with a minimum cumulative GPA of are eligible to apply for the award.

Riki E. Jacobs (1957-2009, pictured at right) was the director of the Hyacinth

Foundation, an AIDS support organization, among many roles she fulfilled to assist vulnerable populations.

Jacobs (LC'80) also was one of LAA's first Livingston College Distinguished Alumni, honored in 2000.





















Recipients of the Livingston Pride Award (renamed for Riki Jacobs in 2010)

Honorees from 1990 through 2010 graduated from Livingston College. Since 2011, honorees may be graduates of any undergraduate college at Rutgers University-New Brunswick/Piscataway.

The years in the list below link to the Livingston College yearbook page where each student is pictured. / * Photo not available.

The names link to more information about each awardee, as available.

1990: Yantra E. Zavala *	1999: Irene Shenouda	2006: Keith A. Gottesman	2014: Emilie Transue	
1991: Stephanie Heitman	2000: Geraldine Burgos	2007: Zuleima Feliciano *	2015: Amy Albert	
1992: Daniel Malloie	2001: Randall Gordon Stamm	2008: Jacqui Whitfield *	2016: Victor A. Mensah	2021: Amanda Wells
1993: Harry R. Knabe	2002: Michael Lawrence	2009: Rob Drucker *	2017: Maria Alba	2022: Tara Krishna
1994: Janel C. Patti	2003: Kazim A. Rizvi	2010: Victoria Rowland *	2018: Lucy Anne Blevins	2022: Anthony Rivera-Rosario
1995: Ayana D. Gee	2004: Gregory Ordun	2011: Matthew Cortland	2019: Eshan Kaul	2023: Divon Pender
1996: Caren A. Tinney	2005: Lisa M. Lattanzi	2012: Amy Tran	2021: Janelle L. Taliaferro	2023: Sara Rubiano
1997: Connie Liauw		2013: Melanie Davila		
1998: Ashwini Reddy				

Stephanie Heitman, LC'91 	Daniel Malloie, LC'92 	Harry R. Knabe, LC'93 	Janel C. Patti, LC'94 	Ayana D. Gee, LC'95 
Caren A. Tinney, LC'96 	Connie Liauw, LC'97 	Ashwini Reddy, LC'98 	Irene Shenouda, LC'99 	Geraldine Burgos, LC'00 
Randall Gordon Stamm, LC'01 	Michael Lawrence Dimond, LC'02 	Kazim A. Rizvi, LC'03 	Gregory Ordun, LC'04 	Lisa M. Lattanzi, LC'05 
Keith A. Gottesman, LC'06 	Matthew Cortland, SAS'11 	Amy Tran, SAS'12 	Melanie Davila, SAS'13 	Emilie Transue, SAS'14 

Amy Albert,
SAS'15

Victor A.
Mensah, SAS'16

Maria Alba,
SAS'17

Lucy Anne
Blevins, SAS'18

Eshan Kaul,
SEBS'19



Janelle L. Taliaferro, RBS'21 Amanda Wells, SAS'21 Tara Krishna, SAS'22



Anthony Rivera-Rosario, SAS'22 Divon Pender, SMLR'23 Sara Rubiano, SAS/EJB'23

