

Hartwick College – President’s Leadership Awards
April 2023
Remarks by President Reisberg

Congratulations to every person who was nominated for an award tonight.

You have changed the Hartwick experience for all of us because of your investment of your time and talent. Thank you for making this community better through the personal gifts you have shared.

Anyone can find their way into a leadership role. But simply winning the opportunity to lead does not make you a leader. You are a leader not because you have a title or because you are infallible. You become a leader when you earn the respect of the people who are counting on you to make life better for them and for the people they care about.

The President's Leadership Award was created with the challenges of leadership in mind. It is given to the graduating senior who, through scholarship, leadership and service, most exemplifies our shared values and whose passionate leadership has led directly to positive change within the Hartwick community. This leadership can be expressed in advocacy for an issue, idea or cause within the campus-based community, or as a representative of the college within the greater Oneonta community. The winner demonstrates success through transformational leadership that educates and engages others, with a positive outcome that may take the form of greater awareness, greater engagement, greater philanthropy, or greater wellness within our community.

Twelve students were nominated for the 2023 President's Leadership Award.

They are, in alphabetical order:

- Cierra Barkley
- Madison Corso
- Paige Eaton
- Alexa Matarazzo
- Pauller Awino Musyoka
- Tayler McDonald
- Serinah Palafox
- Shamalia Robinson
- Michael Suter
- Leah Tolley
- Emily Weglein
- Sharhea Wright-Havens

These are twelve extremely talented individuals. I know that, not just from their tremendously impressive resumes, or their glowing recommendations from faculty and staff, but because, in just my one year with them, I have seen firsthand the positive impact that they have had on the community – in the classroom, in their clubs, on the athletic field or court.

- Each is intellectually gifted
- Each leads by example
- Each has faced adversity with courage
- Each owns the responsibility to create their future
- Each positively impacts others through acts of compassion and the sharing of her knowledge; and,
- Each inspires confidence

I am so impressed with what you all have accomplished.

Congratulations on your nomination for this award....

I also want to thank those who nominated these leaders – your confidence in them fuels their success.

While each of these nominees is deserving of our admiration, I have selected one nominee as the winner of the 2023 Presidents Leadership Award.

The winner of this award is Awino Muskoya.

I had the opportunity to meet Awino during my interview process for the presidency in early 2022. Even via Zoom, I was able to see that Awino had established herself on that Presidential Search Committee, not just as “the student representative,” but as a trusted peer to the trustees, faculty and staff – a mature, confident voice that was sought and heard. I thought to myself, if this is how Hartwick supports and prepares student leaders, this is a place I

want to be and I want to do my part in supporting and preparing more.

Once I arrived on campus late last Summer, I quickly saw and felt how Awino's leadership manifested and was felt on campus. She is...everywhere! She exudes Hartwick pride and when she sees Hartwick falling short, she constructively and productively works with her peers and staff to bring forward actionable solutions.

I am certainly not alone in recognizing Awino's talents and leadership. One of her recommenders said the following:

“When Awino speaks, people simply listen.”

“Due to her confidence, and her wit, she has gone quicker than any undergraduate student from feeling like a mentee, to feeling like a colleague.”

And, “When I ask a question about how we should proceed with some dilemma in lab, everyone's eyes literally move to Awino. And she doesn't hesitate.

Like all of our other nominees, I know Awino is destined for greatness and I am so excited to watch her further spread her wings and continue to soar.

Awino, I am delighted to present you with the 2023 Hartwick college President's Leadership Award. Congratulations.