

APRIL 22 6-7PM Carl J. Shapiro Theater

RECEPTION TO FOLLOW







DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT



Social Justice Awards

**Community Awards** 

Leadership Awards

Commitment to Service Awards

**Award Recipient Bios** 

# PROGRAM

Welcome

# Michelle Puls

Director, Department of Student Engagement

# Andrea Dine

Vice President, Student Affairs



# Student Speaker: Tori Lajous '25

# **Community Service Award for Social Justice**

The Community Service Award for Social Justice is given to a student who is dedicated to taking action towards a just, anti-racist, and equitable community.

Alejandro Bracamontes Norzagaray '25

# **Bruce R. Mayper Memorial Award**

The Bruce R. Mayper Memorial Award is given "To two students for general activities promoting interracial amity or for individual work in the field of interracial relations."

David Cahn '26 Justine Sarkodie '25

# David A. Alexander '79 Memorial Award for Social Consciousness and Activism

The David A. Alexander '79 Memorial Award is given "For social consciousness and activism."

Cameron Samuels '25 Caitlin Iris Anthony Samson '25

#### Robert B. Sherman '67 Memorial Prize

The Robert B. Sherman '67 Memorial Prize is awarded to a "student [who has] demonstrated a strong commitment to enhancing social diversity & cooperation, to promoting social welfare through political thought & activism, & to helping people achieve their rights & benefits within Brandeis or larger community."

#### Kamila Haieva MBA '25

#### Maurice L. Shaer Memorial Prize

The Maurice L. Shaer Memorial Prize is given "To deserving first-years, sophomores, and/or juniors at Brandeis who have demonstrated a commitment to the University's ideals of social justice and community service."

Gustavo Nascimento '27
Abygail Francis '26
Serenity Dimatulac '27
Samantha Przybisiki '27
Alanis Gonzalez '27
Deepika Muthuswamy '26
Zahira Ramirez Cáceres '27
Ria Escamilla-Gil '27



# Student Speaker: Natalie Saltzman '25

## **Brandeis National Committee Presidential Award**

The Brandeis National Committee Presidential Award is given "to a student who demonstrates leadership in campus activities and who through academic achievement, exemplifies the well-rounded student, a library work student."

Xan Maddock-Mark '25

#### **Edwin E Hokin Memorial Prize**

The Edwin E Hokin Memorial Prize is given to a "student who represents the ideals of community service and good citizenship."

Xan Maddock-Mark '25

# Joseph and Ida Butman Award

The Joseph and Ida Butman Award is given "To a student who displays scholarship and general leadership."

Ivy Tran '26

#### **Textile Veterans Association Honor Award**

The Textile Veterans Association Honor Award is given "To a graduating senior who has evidenced outstanding extracurricular activities and leadership."

Gerald Deng '25

# Kappa Eta Sigma Award

The Kappa Eta Sigma Award is "awarded to two sophomores who, by thoughtfulness and kindness, have contributed to the well-being of their fellow students."

Aishwarya Ramesh '27 Syon Lewis '27

# Jacob & Bella Thurman Award for Social Citizenship

The Jacob & Bella Thurman Award for Social Citizenship is given "to a student or students who have demonstrated the highest type of social citizenship."

Nemma Kalra '26 Cooper Gottfried '25 Riley Genevieve Miner '25

#### Herman and Bessie Blum Memorial Award

The Herman and Bessie Blum Memorial Award is given "to juniors who contribute to the well-being of their fellow students through kindness and consideration."

Victoria Mei '26 Wesley Wei '26

#### **Student Life Award**

The Student Life Award is "given to students who work to improve the student experience, promote community among peers, and demonstrate good citizenship."

## Leah Goldstein '25 Shamsi Mumtahina Momo '27

# **Community Service Award for Community Builder**

The Community Service Award for Community Builder is presented to a student "who demonstrates an instance when they have brought groups of people together to build a sense of community."

Samra Khalid '25

# **Community Service Award for Social Responsibility**

The Community Service Award for Social Responsibility is given to a student "who assists others in improving their communities through volunteer programs, social groups, outreach centers, sports programs, or after-school groups."

Natalie Saltzman '25



# Student Speaker: Xan Maddock-Mark '25

#### **Kukin Moskowitz Prize for Excellence**

The Kukin Moskowitz Prize for Excellence is given "to graduating seniors for outstanding academic achievement, excellent character, and leadership w/ commitment to excellence."

Ligia Azevado '25 Miles Goldstein '25

#### **Rose Schlow Award**

The Rose Schlow Award goes "to students whose good citizenship, thoughtfulness and kindness on campus contributes to the well-being of his/her fellow students."

Adhithri Rajaragupathi '25 Samuel Siaw MA '25

# Harry S. Levitan Prize

The Harry S. Levitan Prize is given "to a student who displays kindliness, sympathetic understanding, and high moral character."

Rani Dhanda Balakrishna '25

#### Michael Kalafatas '65 Admissions Prize

The Michael Kalafatas '65 Admissions Prize is awarded "to an outstanding Brandeis senior who has greatly contributed to the admissions process throughout their time at the University."

Zachary Mayer '25

# Outstanding Undergraduate Departmental Representatives Awards

The Outstanding Undergraduate Departmental Representatives Awards are given to students who are proactive in responding to the needs of the program, promote community among students and faculty within the program, create a presence for the program throughout the Brandeis community and serve as an advocate for the major/minor.

Mia Nydam '26, Biochemistry UDR Alicia Tsao '25, French and Francophone Studies UDR Shaolong (Steve) Yan '26, East Asian Studies UDR Cooper Gottfried '25, Hispanic Studies UDR Jon Standlee '25, Business UDR

# Katharine A. Chernosky Memorial Award for Conscientious and Creative Living

The Katharine A. Chernosky Memorial Award for Conscientious and Creative Living is given "To individuals whose manner of living embodies mature, conscientious dedication to duty, to family, and to friends as well as a demonstrated academic ambition."

Derek Oluchukwu Ibeagha MA '25 Gracious Kajah MA '26

## **Community Service Award for Leadership**

We present the Community Service Award for Leadership to a "student who makes significant contributions to building a sense of unity and purpose in their community."

#### Destiny Kluck '25

# **Community Service Award for Mentorship**

The Community Service Award for Mentorship is given to a student "who demonstrates positive values and behaviors that influence others to emulate or aspire to emulate, they have mentored community members in a positive way."

Jimena Martinez-Dominguez '25

#### Linda Heller Kamm '61 Endowed Prize

The Linda Heller Kamm '61 Endowed Prize is given to "a student who has demonstrated leadership in the advocacy of social justice."

Ananya Kadwe '26

# Commitment to Service

Student Speaker: Eva Smith '25

Award Presentation: Talia Feinsod '25

#### **Gold Level Medals**

For gold level medals, the students contributed an incredible 900+ hours of service while they were at Brandeis.

Eva Smith
Tingzhen Liu
Molly Zimmerman
Krish Bhut
Cooper Gottfried
Samra Khalid
Carol Lu
Natalie Saltzman
Gabby Wernick
Annetta Venford

#### Silver Level Medals

Our silver level medal recipients contributed 600+ hours of community service.

Thalya Sylos Dhruv Reddy
McKenna Costello Shachi Prasad
Caitlin Samson Elena Soranno
Alex Stanley Yohana Otto
Kyle Pandiscio Gaya Malka

#### **Bronze Level Medals**

The following students are receiving bronze medals for contributing 300+ service hours and submitting a reflection on their experience.

Aishwarya Surendran Dani Kohorn **Dalia Skolnick** Sophie Glassman Sarah Shiffman Ilana Schwartz **Sneha Prasad** Nonie McColgan Isabelle Ziegler **Zachary Mayer Riley Miner** Talia Feinsod Kai Kibilko Najla Khan Miriam Fisch **Angel Kuang** Caterina Cajrati Crivelli Mesmer Nobili Sam Brower Joseph Levine **Shelby Levine** Liora Katz Samara Glazer **Molly Brown Anya Lefkowitz Noa Brudny** 

Closing Remarks Monique Gnanaratnam Dean of Students Reception in the SCC Atrium

# Award Recipient Bios

Each of these award recipients was nominated or selected for an award by one or more members of the Brandeis community. The following bios are in the words of the nominator(s).

#### Ligia Azevedo

As a computer science and biology double major, Ligia serves on the first eboard of Girls Who Code, where she works to create more opportunities for women in technology and establish the club in the Brandeis Community. She has played a key role in organizing events that empower female students in computer science, making the field more inclusive and supportive. Ligia is also an incredibly active and engaged Wien Scholar, always seeking ways to support our community. She helps other Wien scholars find opportunities and organizes events that bring them together. Ligia co-founded the Brandeis Brazilian Student Association (BRASA), which she now leads as co-president. Thanks to her leadership, BRASA has hosted numerous events with over 50 attendees, enriching campus life and strengthening the diversity that the Wien Scholars program values. On top of that, Ligia has been a dedicated part of the Brandeis Library team for over three years, rising to the position of Senior Supervisor at the Information and Borrowing Desk. She takes her role seriously, not only ensuring everything runs smoothly but also mentoring newer team members and always being available to answer questions.

#### Rani Dhanda Balakrishna

Rani works hard every day to better the Brandeis community. Rani is an incredible leader on campus. She is a change maker and does so with a gentle kindness coupled with a fierce dedication to serving her peers. Rani drives projects forward and sees efforts to fruition (but never does so in a dominating way and never makes others feel bad for not moving at the same pace at which she is moving - she truly strikes a beautiful balance). She is a founding member of Student Athletes of Color, and she started the Athlete Ally chapter at Brandeis. She is currently President of the Student Union, where she has bolstered student voices and worked to foster meaningful change. Her previous role as the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion showcased her passion for advocacy, ensuring that underrepresented students feel seen and supported. She was also sports editor of the Justice for three years, merging her love of journalism with her love of athletics. She is an integral part of the Brandeis softball team, always supporting her teammates and serving as a mentor to the freshmen. With everything she does, Rani always talks about building something that will outlast her, and I honestly believe that she's done just that, ten times over.

#### Alejandro Bracamontes Norzagaray

Alejandro has volunteered with The Right to Immigration Institute (TRII), and inspired other Brandeis students, faculty and staff to volunteer. He has served as the executive director of TRII for the past four years and is a valued leader in immigrant and houseless communities, as well as a published academic who has presented and organized sessions at scholarly conferences, such as the Law and Society Association. As a Department of Justice accredited representative, Alejandro draws from both his professional and personal experience in his advocacy work, and has represented forced migrants in immigration proceedings, trials and appeals. He leads TRII's wraparound program which provides representation and advice related to immigration, as well as housing, public benefits, family, criminal, and employment matters affected by immigration status, as part of the Wraparound Waltham Initiative. Alejandro has also served as a prestigious Soros Justice Fellow and is teaching a course in immigration practice at Tufts.

#### **David Cahn**

David serves as co-president of the Disabled Students' Network. David has worked diligently to support disabled students and to improve accessibility on campus as an SAS Fellow and through his leadership on the Disabled Students' Network. This academic year and last, David, along with Christina Waring, took the lead on a student-driven push to increase high-visibility indoor and outdoor stair markings on campus. David and Christina met with fellow students and examined campus to identify the staircases where the addition of high-visibility markings would most improve campus accessibility and worked with the Campus Accessibility Committee and Facility Services to get markings in place. In addition, David helped organize a panel presentation for students discussing self-advocacy, recruiting staff members with disabilities as panelists. David was also among those who worked with the Provost's Office to ensure that when community input is included in the University's hiring process, community members with disabilities are able to meaningfully participate. Thanks to David's efforts and those who worked with him, Brandeis is a more accessible place.

#### **Gerald Deng**

As a POSSE Scholar, Gerald's discipline and dedication inspire everyone around him. During the NSF-funded I-Corps program, Gerald's dual studies in HSSP and Business allowed him to guide the team in understanding the complex subject of cancer medication research. His ability to bridge technical knowledge with strategic thinking made the process more accessible and impactful for everyone involved. Beyond academics, Gerald's commitment to improving Brandeis is unmatched. As VP of Human Resources for the Branda App, Gerald created a thriving and inclusive space where every team member felt supported. He mentored underclassmen, regularly checked in with team members, and became the go-to person for advice. His genuine care for others' well-being made a lasting impact on the team and the campus community. Gerald's leadership extends to BETA, where he played a key role in strengthening Brandeis' entrepreneurship community. His efforts have encouraged countless students to explore their ideas and collaborate on innovative projects. Gerald's ability to listen, take action, and deliver meaningful results defines him as a transformative leader. Gerald is the kind of person every school dreams of having. He is a leader who constantly finds ways to make his environment better.

#### **Serenity Dimatulac**

Serenity Dimatulac's commitment to community and positive change is evident in her diverse activities. As Social Media Coordinator for Girls Who Code at Brandeis, Serenity fosters a supportive community for women in technology, promoting inclusivity in STEM. She also photographs and videographs events, amplifying the organization's reach. As Hawaii Club Coordinator, she cultivates cultural awareness and belonging, further evidenced by her ongoing photography project with Africano Waltham called, Through Our Lens: Reflecting on things that bring us joy. Serenity's leadership extends to her roles as a Samuel Scholar and Community Engaged Scholar, where she actively participates in programs promoting civic responsibility. Her involvement in the Summit for First-Gen Students, creating nationwide conferences, demonstrates her dedication to empowering peers. Her photography for The Justice further highlights her commitment to engaging the student body. Serenity embodies a compassionate, active, and driven citizen, inspiring through her dedication to making a difference.

#### Ria Escamilla-Gil

Ria has dedicated many hours to promoting civic engagement at Brandeis with VoteDeis. They hosted our Vice Presidential Debate Watch Party -- as the Brandeis Student Union Vice President -- and hosted our Presidential Debate Watch Party as well. Just as critically, Ria has helped out in any way they were needed: helping to design events, tabling for voter registration and club signup, taking VoteGoat photos, distributing advertising, promoting via social media, even rearranging chairs. Ria is quick to thank others for their support and equally quick to serve as that support. It is hard to believe she is only a sophomore. Her positive impact on the Brandeis community will surely only grow.

#### **Abygail Francis**

As the Waltham Group Community & Social Justice Coordinator, Abygail is a conscientious leader who consistently emphasizes the importance of advocating for diversity, cultural awareness, and inclusivity in all aspects of her work. Her deep commitment to connecting with others, particularly as an international student herself, highlights her understanding of the power of community-building and the need for meaningful connections. In addition to her work with Waltham Group, Abygail also serves as a coordinator for Community Connections, where she continues to impact and inspire those around her. Her drive to create spaces for underrepresented communities in the Greater Boston Area showcases her passion for social justice and her unwavering dedication to creating a more inclusive world.

#### Leah Goldstein

I am honored to nominate Leah Goldstein in recognition of her outstanding dedication, leadership, and positivity as a Bridge to Wellness (BTW) Peer Educator. Leah is an essential part of the team, consistently going above and beyond to support her peers and uphold the mission of BTW. She radiates positivity and enthusiasm, uplifting everyone around her. Her presence at events energizes the entire team, and her commitment to our collective success is unmatched. From the very start, Leah hit the ground running, never hesitating to step up when extra help is needed. She volunteers willingly, covers for teammates when necessary, and bridges communication between committees by attending multiple meetings—ensuring seamless collaboration. Leah's work ethic and dedication serve as an example for all of us. She has played a pivotal role in strengthening team relationships and increasing awareness of BTW's work on campus. Her unwavering support, reliability, and passion make her truly deserving of this recognition. Leah doesn't just contribute to the team—she elevates it.

#### Miles Goldstein

Miles has been involved in more initiatives and behind the scenes happenings at Brandeis than I can count. Most notably, he has been a huge part of the Brandeis IT help desk for most of his time here. He has worked with countless students and staff, going above and beyond to offer everyone all the help he can. Miles has been involved in many student clubs and is an active and well known member of our community. He has written for the Justice and Gravity Magazine, he has done award winning research in his Urban Worlds Anthropology class, is part of the improv group False Ad, and has been a part of numerous musical performances on campus. Miles has been known to create friendly and impromptu jam sessions on campus by playing music and encouraging passerby to play and sing along. In his academic pursuits, I have always known him to be exemplary. His research and writing are always quality, and he has cultivated creative and technical skills as well during his time at Brandeis through coursework at the SIMS lab.

#### **Alanis Gonzalez**

Alanis is truly passionate about her community engagement, even as a sophomore. As a Community Engaged Scholars Fellow at COMPACT, she has actively worked to involve other students into the Community Engaged Scholars Program, and to support her Samuels Scholars peers. She works with the Waltham Family School as a Rich/Collins Fellow, is active in spiritual life clubs and initiatives on campus, and has helped to involve others in community service as a Community Engagement Ambassador with DSE. In all of her activities, Alanis remains focused on her mission to better the world.

#### Kamila Haieva

Kamila is a Global Fellow at Brandeis, bringing her curiosity about the world (and love of travel, food and running, including the Boston Marathon) to our community. Last year she and International Business School classmates, also from Ukraine, put together a photo exhibition on campus about Ukrainian young people who never got to finish their university studies, because of the war. Kamila met visitors to the exhibition, engaging with them sensitively and respectfully in conversations about the lived experience of war and loss. Recently granted a Karpf & Hahn Peace Award, Kamila identified a Ukraine-focused conference to be held at the University of Notre Dame in March of this year as a focal point for research and networking related to issues of hope and resiliency among people experiencing the unimaginable in Ukraine. She is preparing for attendance and engagement at that conference through research about how people meet chaos, danger, and tremendous upheaval and loss head-on, creatively, in discrete regions of the world. By focusing on hope, Kamila offers a way for us to think about places of violent conflict, imagining possible futures free from violence. By exploring how one might nurture hope, while staying grounded in the reality of the situation, they/we are offered a way forward.

#### Derek Oluchukwu Ibeagha

Derek embodies the essence of leadership characterized by compassion, integrity, and impact. His transformative presence and tireless dedication have left an indelible mark on every community he has touched. In the classroom, Derek was a beacon of energy and engagement. His insightful contributions, rooted in a wealth of experience, enriched discussions and fostered an inclusive learning environment. His absence was always felt—a testament to his unique ability to inspire and unite his peers. Beyond the classroom, he co-initiated the Brandeis Grad Campus Fellowship, addressing the spiritual and emotional needs of graduate students. Derek's leadership extended further to deeply personal moments, such as organizing baby showers for classmates, ensuring these events were meaningful celebrations even when he could not attend. As a cornerstone of the Brandeis African Forum, he brought his wealth of experience to its most successful seminar to date. Derek's selflessness, inclusivity, and tireless dedication make him an outstanding candidate for this leadership award. He inspires and unites everyone around him, leaving a lasting legacy of excellence and connection.

#### **Cooper Gottfried**

Cooper has effectively elevated the presence of the Hispanic Studies program at Brandeis. He served as a UDR for three years and the faculty noted the strength of his intuition and ability to sense the pulse of students' feelings. They also noted his enthusiastic ideas about how to create community in such a small program. Cooper has effectively preserved the continuity for the high standards he set in his leadership for the coming years and effectively mentored the two other UDRs. One faculty member noted that he "has even advised the faculty on how to transform the major and minor" and the program will miss his leadership. (for Outstanding UDR Award)

#### **Cooper Gottfreid**

Cooper has been involved with the Brandeis Hoot since his freshman year; under his leadership the paper has been continually publishing campus happenings and making sure students are informed—he has written hundreds of articles for the paper during his time at Brandeis. During his junior and senior years, he has been its Editor in Chief. From well–renowned coverage of political protests on campus to timely coverage of breaking news, The Hoot has continued to be a respected institution of Brandeis' campus largely due to Cooper's efforts. Cooper has invested hundreds of hours into Brandeis' community newspaper, ensuring that The Hoot's team is confident in the articles they publish, that The Hoot's reputation as a part of the Brandeis community remains stellar, and that the Brandeis community feels represented in the newspaper's work. Both in his work for The Hoot and in his life and academic career outside of the paper, Cooper has always lived up to the highest standards for ethics. He makes sure that The Hoot's coverage is fair and unbiased and that all sides have a chance to be heard. (Jacob & Bella Thurman Award for Social Citizenship)

#### **Gracious Kajah**

Gracious Kajah exemplifies the qualities of academic excellence, high moral character, kindness, and student involvement. Gracious consistently demonstrates a commitment to scholarship through outstanding academic performance and engagement in research projects. Their dedication to learning extends beyond the classroom, as they actively participate in academic seminars and support their peers. Gracious's high moral character is evident in their integrity, honesty, and ethical behavior. They have earned respect and admiration from the university community through their interactions with faculty and fellow students. Kindness is a hallmark of Gracious's character. They are always ready to help, offer encouragement, and support those in need. Gracious has been an active member of various student organizations, including the Student Government Association, where they have taken on leadership roles. They have been instrumental in organizing events that promote inclusivity and diversity on campus, enhancing social diversity and cooperation. Their dedication to promoting social welfare is evident in their political thought and activism, as they advocate for marginalized communities and work tirelessly to help individuals achieve their rights. Gracious's ability to blend thoughtful scholarship with action-oriented leadership sets them apart as a true changemaker.

#### **Ananya Kadwe**

Ananya's multifaceted involvement in Brandeis and her determination and dedication to working on Mela, the largest student-run show on campus as well as Rewiring the Code and Girls Who Code is incredibly admirable. As a leader who is committed to equity and diversity, Ananya's involvement in Rewiring the Code and Girls Who Code activities highlight an understanding that there's an industry in need of female perspectives, experience, and engagement. Additionally, her work at the library has been lauded as building a foundation for a safe, diverse learning environment, treating everyone with patience and kindness. She creates a warm and welcoming environment for both the patrons and the team of students and staff with whom she works. Her commitment to social justice is also evident in her academic commitments, and she is considered a true advocate for change on campus.

#### Nemma Kalra

Nemma has been involved with many experiential opportunities offered by the Legal Studies Program. Nemma has been an extraordinary volunteer immigration and immigrant rights advocate at The Right to Immigration Institute (TRII). Nemma quickly established herself as a leader in TRII's sustained community-based movement law shop. She has worked with formerly incarcerated students through the Brandeis Educational Justice Initiative, and she currently works with ENACT. She demonstrates maturity, professionalism, and empathy in her work with vulnerable populations, and a determination to achieve a more just and humane world. She gives her own time freely to help others, and she inspires her fellow students. Nemma has been a standout student since she was a first year, and I have always admired her commitment and passion to social justice. I know that she will make the world a better place.

#### Samra Khalid

Samra is dedicated to community service and empowering others, both through direct service and by helping organizations run smoothly. As the Treasurer of Waltham Group for three consecutive years, she has gained extensive experience in managing finances and collaborating with other organizations to ensure the success of their programs. Her leadership extends to her role as a coordinator for Advocates for Health, where she actively volunteers in a healthcare setting. Samra's consistent dedication to serving others, along with her organizational skills and ability to work across different groups, makes her an invaluable asset to both Waltham Group and the wider community.

#### **Destiny Kluck**

Destiny has consistently demonstrated a commitment to academic excellence, scholarship and fostering a supportive community on campus. Destiny serves as a Student Ambassador for the Intercultural Center (ICC), where they champion diversity, equity, and inclusion. They have not only assisted with ICC professional staff in new initiatives for several years, but also fostered strong connections with our 17 clubs affiliated with the ICC. With each interaction, whether it's a student, staff or faculty, Destiny leads with kindness and inspires collaboration in our community. Destiny is also a Research Assistant in the Paradis Lab at Brandeis, showcasing her intellectual curiosity and determination in her career field of interest. Her commitment to advancing knowledge is further evident in their role as a COMPACT Digital Specialist, where they have skillfully bridged the gap between technology and community engagement, demonstrating creativity and innovation. Lastly, Destiny exemplifies compassion for everyone around her. She is deeply invested in the well-being of others, always willing to go the extra mile to check in with people and provide any support that she can. Her genuine kindness and empathetic nature inspires those around her to do the same.

#### **Syon Najee Lewis**

Anyone who meets Syon knows that he is one of those individuals who, once you get to know him, you are rooting for him. He is a very passionate individual in the work that he does. Syon is a Posse scholar, active ICC club member/ ICC Ambassador, and interning at one of the Museums in Boston. As a member of the ICC community, Syon strives to create positive spaces on campus where students feel welcomed and seen. Syon is an asset to the Brandeis community where he is actively learning how to support and uplift his peers.

#### Xan Maddock-Mark

Xan has been an invaluable member of the Library's BDI department since her sophomore year, making significant contributions to our work and the broader Brandeis community. She played a key role in developing workshops and refining workflows for emerging technologies -including the vinyl cutter, laser cutter, and contour cutting-helping to expand access and opportunities for makers across campus. Xan has been a model of reliability, time management, and professionalism, balancing a full schedule of commitments with grace and clear communication. Beyond her contributions to BDI, she has enriched student life at Brandeis through her deep involvement in the Student Activities Fund and the archery team. She has also provided thoughtful and constructive feedback to improve department culture for student workers and future MakerLab users. Her impact will be felt long after she graduates, and we are deeply grateful for her contributions to the MakerLab, BDI, and the Library. We will miss her greatly. (for the Brandeis National Committee Presidential Award)

#### Xan Maddock-Mark

Xan Maddock-Mark is nothing short of a transformative leader at Brandeis University, known for her extensive involvement, passion for serving her community, and putting the needs of others first. As a leader of Student Production Services (SPS), Xan has reshaped the team and put in place many structures that make for a much more efficient unit. Her behind-the-scenes contributions have been essential to the success of numerous student-run initiatives over the past three years, making her an indispensable figure in campus life. As President of the Brandeis Archery Team, Xan exemplifies vision, integrity, and an unwavering commitment to excellence. As Head Treasurer for the past two years, Xan has taken on one of the most demanding & highstakes roles in student government. She oversees the financial operations for over 200 student clubs, managing the day-to-day spending of \$2 million in student funds. This monumental responsibility requires not just financial expertise but also a deep sense of integrity, transparency, and leadership. Xan leads a team of 10 deputy treasurers, providing training and ensuring that the entire system runs efficiently and equitably. From processing expenditures to navigating complex procurement systems, she oversees an intricate operation that directly impacts the success of every student organization on campus. Xan has made an indelible impact on campus. (for the Edwin E Hokin Memorial Prize)

#### Jimena Martinez-Dominguez

Jimena has been involved for two and a half years with the Campus Activities Board (CAB). Throughout her time on the executive board, and now more than ever as President, Jimena has demonstrated her leadership skills and compassion towards others. One of her major goals as President has been to build community within the organization to increase student body involvement in CAB and connection between all members. In leading the team, Jimena provides guidance and support, while challenging the committee chairs to think creatively and reminding them to take care of themselves. Jimena also takes the time to meet individually with each committee chair to ensure they feel supported and can provide feedback on their experiences. In addition, Jimena has worked as a Peer Mentor to incoming first-years for the Student Support Services Program for 3 years. She plays a pivotal role in helping students transition to college. Under her mentorship, students gain a better understanding of Brandeis resources, become more involved on campus, and develop social relationships with other peers. Through these activities, she helps build a sense of community among Brandeis students.

#### **Zachary Mayer**

Zachary has been a tremendous part of the Admissions student team since his first year on campus and is a quintessential member of the Brandeis Admissions Office. Zach has grown from being an Admissions Fellow, performing standard duties, to a core Executive Board member, helping guide the team through a full program overhaul that occurred last year. That being said, Zach was never just a standard Admissions Fellow. From the beginning of his career in the Admissions Office, Zach's enthusiasm for recruiting and interacting with prospective students and sharing his passion and love for Brandeis was to be noted. Zach has always been one to step up and jump in to give an extra interview, tour, or information session. Zach is a trusted member of the Admissions team due to his strong work ethic and experience across his four years at Brandeis. Zach's vision, organization, and ability to connect with prospective and admitted students is unmatched. Upon joining the Executive Board for the Admissions Fellows, Zach jumped straight into action, working to improve the program. It's often we hear from current students that Zach's interview or tour is the reason they chose to enroll. Zach's impact on the Admissions office will last past his four years at Brandeis, and we are so fortunate to have had him as a member of our staff.

#### Victoria Mei

I am honored to nominate Victoria Mei in recognition of her leadership, creativity, and dedication as a Bridge to Wellness (BTW) Peer Educator. Though new to our team this year, Victoria has already made a lasting impact through her hard work, kindness, and commitment to making a difference. Her involvement in cultural clubs reflects her deep passion for fostering community and inclusivity, and she carries that same spirit into her work with BTW. Even in a short time, Victoria has proven to be an invaluable member of the team. She consistently steps up to help, collaborates with others, and brings a thoughtful and creative approach to her work on the Media Team, creating videos and graphics to educate and engage her peers.

#### **Riley Genevieve Miner**

Riley served as the Hillel president in 2024, the Hillel VP in 2023, is a student rep to the Board of Trustees, a DCL Community Advisor, and was a fellow with COMPACT. Riley has spent four years at Brandeis serving others, building community, and making sure that everyone feels included and welcomed at Brandeis. Riley has dedicated huge portions of her time to 1-1 support of first years, planning large scale events for 300+ students, and representing the student body to the Board of Trustees. Riley has always gone out of her way to be kind, helpful, and a community leader. She puts the wellbeing of others, especially underclassmen struggling to navigate campus life, before her own without a second thought and without fail.

#### Shamsi Mumtahina Momo

Shamsi Mumtahina Momo was instrumental in designing the Social Media Campaign Proposal for COSI MS program; she proposed a social media strategy for the Computer Science Department to showcase faculty and student achievements, fostering stronger external engagement. She is Vice President of Girls Who Code: Leadership and was involved in bringing renowned tech professionals and recruiters to connect with the community. She is currently organizing a career panel featuring Brandeis alumni working in big tech. As Media Coordinator of the Brandeis Robotics Club, she initiated the Industry Visit Series and independently arranged a tour for our club members at Amazon Robotics last semester. In all these activities Momo demonstrated genuine leadership and willingness to go the extra mile to guarantee success of the event. She comes from a politically engaged family and often talks about world issues especially related to her home country of Bangladesh. She is always on the go, actively seeking opportunities and was recently accepted to work in James Pustejovsky's lab. Momo is a valued member of the Brandeis community and embodies the spirit of a community organizer and leader.

#### Deepika Muthuswamy

Deepika is a Team Coordinator of Partners in Health Engage Brandeis. Deepika is a deep thinker and consistent leader in planning and effecting change in public and global health. She works tirelessly behind the scenes, and cares more about the work being done than whether she will get recognition for it. In the past two years, Deepika has helped to grow the size of the club significantly, holding incredibly successful community events, and meeting regularly with members of Congress. Deepika helps to plan these events and supports and guides younger and newer members in building their own leadership abilities and confidence. She is calm and collected, a quality that has made her a trusted confidant and member for those in our community.

#### **Gustavo Nascimento**

Gustavo is an exemplary student leader whose activism spans Brandeis and beyond. As co-president of the Brazilian Student Association, he fosters cultural exchange by organizing events that celebrate Brazilian traditions, creating a welcoming space for both Brazilian students and the broader community. He also serves on the Gen One Advisory Committee, supporting 500+ first-gen students through mentorship and academic events, and helped organize the National First-Generation Summit to promote equitable opportunities nationwide. Beyond Brandeis, Gustavo's impact is global. As a Youth Advisory Committee member of the Science Panel for the Amazon, he contributes to environmental policy discussions. He founded a reforestation project in São Paulo, mobilizing 100+ volunteers to plant over 9,000 trees, including endangered species. As an Environmental Law Advocate with Amazônia de Pé, he led efforts to collect 5,000+ signatures supporting Amazon conservation policies. Additionally, as Thematic Focal Point on Nature and Ecosystems for UNEP's Children and Youth Major Group, he has represented youth voices in international policy discussions across 20+ countries. Gustavo's commitment to scholarship, community engagement, and global advocacy demonstrates his dedication to making a meaningful impact.

#### Mia Nydam

Mia is an accommodating and enthusiastic advocate for the Biochemistry major. In her work as a UDR she has collaborated with her Undergraduate Advising Head to assist future majors in charting their pathways through the department and accessing research opportunities. This led her to create extensive resources for current and prospective students. While in the role, Mia has also improved the email notification for students by creating bi-weekly newsletters that inform the students relevant events, opportunities, and reminders. Mia's peers noted her responsiveness and the amount of effort she also put into the Biochemistry Club. We look forward to seeing what Mia brings to the Biochemistry department in the future!

#### Samantha Przybisiki

Samantha is an incredibly motivated and accomplished student when it comes to speaking up for her community and being an active and vocal participant in the conversation of equity in education. She is an active member of Jewish life on campus, serving on Hillel's BaRuCh board as an education and T'filah coordinator, and spending the past semester founding and running a Brandeis Jewish on Campus chapter. Her passion for activism does not end here, as she's spent the duration of her college career dedicating time and energy to internships with the ADL, Foundation to Combat Antisemitism, and BBYO to learn more about efforts to combat hate in all forms, write curriculum, create social media campaigns, and teach young Jewish leaders to embrace their Judaism and stand up for what they believe in. Her work has been recognized by groups all over the country, with past speaking engagements at the Department of Education, meetings with Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff to discuss the situation of antisemitism in education, and panels alongside notable activists Deborah Lipstadt, David Hogg, Reverend Steven Green, and Jodi Kantor. Wherever Samantha is she makes sure her voice is heard, and takes pride in lifting others voices alongside her.

#### Adhithri Rajaragupathi

Adhithri has held leadership positions in many clubs at Brandeis, such as the South Asian Students Association (SASA), BeWISE, and Brandeis Science Research Connection Club (BSRCC). She is also a part of the dance team KAOS. She works very hard in all these roles while still committing time to her studies, friendships, and community. She is the type of leader who makes sure everyone's voice is heard while also being mature and responsible when her guidance is needed. She is incredibly committed, very hardworking, and is always the kindest to everyone.

#### Aishwarya Ramesh

Aish is an exceptional student who is committed to community engagement in all varieties at Brandeis. As an aspiring pediatrician and resident of Waltham, her passion in this work stems from supporting her community and advocating for youth education programs. After serving as a Samuels Scholar in AY 24, we invited her to join the team as a Samuels Scholars Peer Mentor this year because of her leadership, empathy, and commitment to her community. She actively participated in organizing service projects with Healthy Waltham, mentoring her peers on community engagement pathways, and more broadly, how to manage the many expectations of civic leadership as a busy undergraduate student. She is one of the most caring students I've come across in my time here, and her commitment to her community is tremendous and deserves to be recognized and celebrated by her home institution.

#### Zahira Ramirez Cáceres

Zahira is an outstanding Wien Scholar whose dedication to learning, leadership, and inclusivity makes her an invaluable part of the Brandeis community. Academically, Zahira exemplifies intellectual curiosity and a deep commitment to scholarship. She challenges herself and those around her, striving for excellence in her studies while uplifting others through her work. As an intern for the Black Action Plan as a part of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Brandeis, she actively works to create a more inclusive and welcoming campus environment for all groups. Through her leadership in various student organizations and initiatives, such as the Brandeis Latinx Student Organization, the Girls Who Code chapter at Brandeis, and other initiatives she is currently working on creating to foster the international student community at Brandeis, she ensures that underrepresented voices are heard and valued. As a Community Engaged Scholar and actively involved as a member of Brandeis COMPACT, Zahira is committed to mentorship, advocacy, and meaningful dialogue that promotes positive change. Whether through her leadership, advocacy, or dedication to fostering belonging, her contributions to Brandeis are undeniable. Zahira's leadership, resilience, and heartfelt dedication truly set her apart.

#### Natalie Saltzman

As the President of Waltham Group and a program coordinator for Hunger and Homelessness, Natalie has demonstrated unwavering compassion for community service and a strong commitment to leadership development. Her passion for giving back, which started in high school with local food pantries, continues to drive her work with these volunteer organizations at Brandeis. Throughout her time with Waltham Group, she has shown a deep dedication to supporting those in need, while also inspiring and guiding others in their own community service journeys. Natalie's leadership and service to both her peers and the larger community make her an outstanding candidate for this recognition.

#### **Caitlin Iris Anthony Samson**

Caitlin is a Field Supervisor on the Brandeis Emergency Medical Corps (BEMCo), a leader of the Brandeis Asian American Students Association, an SI leader for General Chemistry, a pottery instructor, a Rosevelt Fellow, and a member of the astronomy club, among many other roles. Her work on BEMCo has made her a friendly, welcoming face on campus, and even in times of crisis, She leads with a unique combination of skill, warmth, and dedication. Even at 3 a.m., she brings positivity to every interaction, teaching new EMTs with a rare blend of kindness and clarity. Caitlin's passion for helping others also shines through in her work as the Diversity Chair for BEMCo, where she spearheaded initiatives like toolkits on "Transgender Healthcare in EMS," multilingual communication cards, and an accessibility guide for social media posts. Caitlin's contributions to BEMCo and the Brandeis community have been transformative. Her efforts have made our campus more inclusive and supportive. Caitlin is an exemplary role model, remaining calm, organized, and compassionate. She is thoughtful about the many diverse perspectives in the room as leaders in several different spaces, and truly takes an activist perspective with her everywhere she goes on this campus.

#### **Cameron Samuels**

Cameron is dedicated to activism and their life is committed to public service already even at a young age. They are so steadfast in starting their career that they are graduating a year early to obtain an MPP. On campus, Cameron is very involved with COMPACT as a Samuels Scholar, deepening their understanding of the ethics of community engagement. Outside of the classroom, Cameron is constantly advocating. Whether it be leading a non-profit organization – Students Engaged in Advancing Texas (SEAT)– which they helped found, challenging unjust policies at the Texas legislature related to banned books or LGBTQ+ youth, testifying in front of state or Congressional legislators, or advocating for their peers right here at Brandeis, Cameron is a fierce advocate for social change. They have been a featured speaker in forums and webinars conducted by the Library of Congress and the Eleanor Roosevelt Center, helping policy makers and the public grasp what is at stake when the reading of certain books is proscribed.

#### Justine Sarkodie

Justine Sarkodie is a scholar, leader, community builder, and role model in the Brandeis community. As a STEM Posse scholar with majors in Biology and SSSP, she pursues academics and scientific research at the highest level. As a member of the GenOne Network Advisory Board for 3 years, Justine has shown leadership in the community of first-generation students on campus, helping to build a network of support, mentorship, mutual respect, and fun. As a TA for the summer Posse STEM immersion program, Justine served as a combination of an academic tutor, a community adviser, and a peer mentor for incoming Posse scholars during the past two summers. Justine also serves as a mentor to scholars in the Student Support Services Program, and engages in activities that build community among participants. Justine works with underclass students from under-resourced backgrounds advising them on classes, life and providing them support. Justine is a true example of how someone can make a difference in our community.

#### **Samuel Siaw**

Samuel Siaw is an exceptional student leader whose dedication to service, academic excellence, and community engagement has significantly enriched the Brandeis and Heller communities. Samuel's service as a Heller SID Senate representative with the Heller Student Association highlights his dedication to student governance, ensuring that student voices are heard in decision-making processes. His academic contributions are equally impressive, he served as an Economics Teaching Assistant, stepping up to lead class discussions during the professor's maternity leave, and currently works as a Course Assistant for former Heller Dean David Weil, demonstrating both academic excellence and a willingness to support faculty and students alike. His contributions extend beyond academics. As the Communications Director for the Graduate School, he plays a key role in ensuring effective engagement among students. Additionally, his appointment to the Student Conduct Board by the Graduate School Executive Board reflects the trust placed in his integrity and leadership. Samuel's passion for community-building is evident in his role as an organizer for the Brandeis Union of African Students and in founding the Graduate Christian Fellowship (The African Fire). His ability to balance leadership, academics, and service makes him a role model for his peers. His humility and dedication embody the values of service and excellence, inspiring those around him.

#### Jon Standlee

Jon has been a UDR for Business since his sophomore year and continues to be a tireless advocate for the program. Multiple peers cite his "amazing leader[ship]" and his ease in going above and beyond for the students in the program to provide resources to further a student's career or their investment in the major. Jon's collaboration with others helped run several successful events, namely an alumni interview panel. He also created effective resources such as an internship application tracker, class schedule template, and an overview of the internship process. Each of these ideas were well received by the students and the department will miss his entrepreneurial spirit.

#### **Ivy Tran**

Through Ivy's work with the Brandeis I-Corps Science Foundation, she contributed to groundbreaking cancer research while also developing a water filtration system through her startup. Her efforts earned her the Asper Family Summer Startup Competition and led to a collaboration with UNICEF, exemplifying her ability to transform ideas into solutions that address global challenges. As previous president of Branda, Ivy demonstrated visionary leadership by spearheading the Apple Vision Pro project, securing \$11,000 in funding, and fostering an environment where collaboration thrived. She consistently ensured every team member's voice was heard and valued, driving the project forward with innovation and inclusivity. Her proactive approach extends to building alumni relations. Ivy regularly attends alumni events to share the innovative work of current students, bridging the gap between generations. By showcasing student achievements, she fosters meaningful connections and inspires alumni to contribute to the university's growth and future. Ivy is dedicated to helping others. She serves as a mentor and guide, offering academic and career advice with genuine care and encouragement. Whether working on initiatives like BETA or supporting her peers, Ivy's focus is never solely on her own success but on uplifting those around her.

#### Alicia Tsao

Alicia brings a thoughtful and considered approach to her role as a UDR. During the Fall 2024 semester, Alicia took the lead in planning a French film festival on campus, with a grant from Villa Albertine—The French Institute for Culture and Education. This festival, the Albertine French Film Festival at Brandeis, was open to the public and contained six showings and attracted over 600 attendees. For each department, Alicia sent a tailored message with film titles that may appeal to the given student group. Her peers and faculty members often commented how "dedicated" she was to the work and "the best UDR ever" in the program. Alicia went "above and beyond" to create community in the department and is a testament to her "passion for teaching and learning."

#### Wesley Wei

Wesley has been an excellent Orientation Leader / Head Orientation Leader. It is his second year being involved with orientation, with this year being the first time he was promoted to head OL. Not only have I witnessed the hard work, dedication, and effort he put into orientation training, but I've also witnessed firsthand the impact he's had on midyears and first years just arriving to campus. He goes above and beyond in this role, checking in and grabbing a meal with first years/midyears that he has met during orientation, giving parents and students driving tours of the campus, helping students who need mobile services by driving a branvan around campus to assist, and creating an overall welcoming atmosphere on campus. He helped organize the midyear Academic Exploration day and tabled for the Economics department, and has helped organize various outing events like scavenger hunts, trips, and bonding activities not only for new students, but also for the OL team. He is a person who is always willing to help, always willing to be of service, and never lets anyone feel like they are lost or alone.

#### Shaolong (Steve) Yan

Steve exhibits a great commitment to the East Asian Studies program and credits Yamamaka Yukimori, a Samurai warrior from the Amago clan during the Sengoku period as one of the inspirations for his involvement in the program, as well as a past UDR. Faculty and students alike commented on his effective cooperation with his peer UDRs in EAS and beyond; Steve helped contribute to making the program more dynamic and vibrant. This semester Steve organized a collaborative event with the Religious Studies program, where he noted that more connections could be made between the programs. We look forward to seeing what Steve brings to the program in the future!

# Thank you to:

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Department of Student Engagement
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Institutional Advancement
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