

Presenter: Dr. Melissa Hinten

The second **Student Environmental Leadership Award** is given to a student who is actively involved in environmental leadership on campus through **student engagement**. Here are our nominees:

Wyatt Miner

Wyatt has demonstrated unwavering dedication to environmental work here at UTK, first as a student worker, and now as an AmeriCorps member, all while maintaining a full class schedule. Wyatt has contributed greatly to the Compost Facility and UT Recycles.

Reace Hummell

Reace has been involved with SPEAK, the oldest environmental club on campus, for 4 years. She continues to excel in her leadership position in SPEAK as the garden chair. The SPEAK garden produces fruits, vegetables, and herbs for students to enjoy, as well as occasionally donating to the Big Orange Pantry. Reace not only leads the garden volunteer and workdays, but also she has created a community at the garden. Reace also used her studies in architecture to design the most efficient space at the garden.

Aaliyah Kherani

Aaliyah has put in countless hours of volunteer work dedicated to the betterment of the UTK and Knoxville communities.

Julia Craven

Julia is the co-founder of Plastic Free UT and is the president of the Compost Coalition, and an active member of the Sustainable Business Organization. She has worked with campus leadership to drive changes on campus, including launching composting in new areas and reducing plastics in dining and concessions.

Daria Baker

Daria has worked for the Office of Sustainability for 3 years, and she has been instrumental in improving the operations of the Free Store and food recovery. Her passion for and commitment to building a sustainable UTK economy is inspiring. This is Daria's last semester at UTK, but her impact on this community will not soon be forgotten.

Ellen Barnes

Ellen has worked tirelessly to promote SPEAK, and to make progress on environmentally related projects on campus. She has collaborated with the Compost Coalition to host events with SPEAK. She is truly determined in everything she does.

Luke Cornelius

Luke has had an amazing impact with his efforts to work with UTK Procurement in order to establish more sustainable policies. Luke is also the founder and leader of the Sustainable Business Organization. He has also been involved in promoting sustainable dining practices across campus.

Ethan Crawford

Ethan planned and brought to fruition an event to bring together students in residence halls. Through their involvement in this event, students learned the importance of recycling, what can and cannot be recycled, the importance of volunteering, and the impacts of waste on the environment. Students also collected over 45 pounds of trash and recyclables on Cumberland Avenue. Ethan worked with Keep Knoxville Beautiful, from whom he won Volunteer of the Month for this event.

Hayley Simpson

Hayley is incredibly engaged with the environmental and sustainability community at UTK. She is working on a project that ties all the environmental student organizations together so that information is not lost as students graduate. Her work will leave a legacy of cooperation and support among the environmental student organizations.

Michael Kyriakoudes

Through his research on microplastics in the McKinney lab, his leadership in the on-campus chapter of The Society for Ecological Restoration, and his participation in guiding campus policy through the Green Fee Committee, Michael approaches the complex issue of sustainability through a multifaceted lens, both through synthesizing new knowledge and through creating new spaces for collaboration.

Moreover, as a member of Student Alumni Associates and UT Ambassadors, Michael seeks to engage communities beyond those at UTK and excite the world about the amazing initiatives in sustainability that are actively occurring at this institution.

Hope Hutchinson

Hope Hutchinson is a double major in Geography and Sustainability. For her sustainability capstone project her group worked on a solar feasibility project with Clayton Homes. The project looked at 60 manufacturing sites across the US to determine the costs and feasibility of installing ground solar at the sites. Additionally, this semester Hope is doing an independent sustainability/GIS study to develop a paper, digital map, and web application for Beardsley Community Farm. These maps will provide patrons of the farm with the locations to pick up produce and provide them the best KAT routes to access the produce pick up locations.

AND THE WINNER IS: JULIA CRAVEN. Congratulations, Julia!

Julia is a College Scholars senior. She has been a leader in sustainability since she arrived on campus. She is the co-founder of Plastic Free UT and is the president of the Compost Coalition, and an active member of the Sustainable Business Organization. She has worked with campus leadership to drive changes on campus, including launching composting in new areas and reducing plastics in dining and concessions. Julia has been a regular volunteer on campus sustainability projects, including Zero Waste Game Days, Zero Waste Softball games, and creek cleanups. She also volunteers at Food4VOLS. Her dedication and contributions to helping push UT toward a more sustainable future are inspiring. Julia's engagement in creating sustainable change on campus goes beyond the classroom- she has had various meetings with Vol Dining, compost site visits, has represented UT in sustainability conferences across the US, has participated in nationwide sustainability competitions, and has shared and learned from others how to create sustainable change in the university/business fields. Julia truly stands out as an exemplar of involvement in and dedication to making real change happen at UTK.