



HONOR THE PAST,  
*Build* THE FUTURE

# THE DIANE SIERPINA AWARD FOR EMERGING LEADERSHIP

ACADEMIC YEAR 2023-2024





# ALICIA LIND-WINDHAM

Diane Sierpina Award for  
Emerging Leadership



## WHAT DOES RECEIVING THE DIANE SIERPINA AWARD MEAN TO YOU?

To me, receiving this award means more than financial security in my tuition. This is a celebration of my commitment to youth justice reform work and a means of honoring the path I have chosen to go towards. My grandma had said to me before she passed, "You need to celebrate yourself more." I am proud to be able to feel the love and acknowledgment of the work I am doing and going to do through receiving this award.

It is with great honor that I receive this award. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my loved ones, my friends, family, and chosen family who have helped me get to where I am and supported me through my endeavors. To my grandma, a special thank you for reminding me that I am worth celebrating and deserving of recognition for my triumphs.

## WHAT ARE YOUR ACADEMIC INTERESTS?

I am a Criminal Justice major concentrating in Juvenile Justice and Delinquency, with a minor in History, and a Critical Criminology Certificate. Academically, I am interested in history. I found a love for history from my late relative, my Uncle Joe. He was a history professor at NOVA College, and he taught me the importance of history in our everyday life. I am also academically interested in critical thinking and being critically conscious in my everyday life and academic studies.

ALICIA LIND-WINDHAM

### HOMETOWN

Westminster, CO

### CLASS

2025

### CLASS YEAR

Junior

### SCHOOL/COLLEGE

Lee College

### MAJOR

Criminal Justice

My family has always encouraged me to be as educated as possible in what I am interested in, and after finding my new-found interest in studying Criminal Justice, I discovered my passion for youth justice. To be passionate about youth justice is to fiercely believe in young people's potential for rehabilitation and redemption while actively fighting against systems that harm them and advocating for restorative solutions that nurture their growth and rebuild communities. This is something William Carbone taught me after speaking with him.

This passion about youth justice is something I have always had in my time in high school, where I was in a series of organizations and committees. I was a part of groups like the Lafayette Peer Empowerment Program, where we sought to empower youth to use arts as a vehicle for social change, as well as the Lafayette Youth Advisory Committee, where I used my voice to engage Lafayette youth in outreach, advisory, and educational opportunities through solutions-based discourse and action in their community and reciprocally, to promote understanding in the greater community as to the importance of youth leadership and civic participation. At a young age, I was already acquainted with the need for youth leadership and support which has fueled my passion for youth justice and lead me to my major and concentration today.

### **WHAT PROMPTED YOU TO GET INVOLVED WITH YOUTH JUSTICE REFORM?**

Having a strong commitment to juvenile justice does not imply taking a passive position; rather, it means committing one's life to promoting policies that promote every young person's chances for assistance, rehabilitation, and opportunity. It's about having faith in their abilities, standing up to the status quo, and putting in endless effort to build a society where justice genuinely means that everyone has an equal opportunity. To ensure fairness, equity, and rehabilitation for young people who come into contact with the legal system, one must have a strong and steadfast dedication to youth justice. You have a burning desire to improve the world for all young people, regardless of their background or current situation. This is an internal fire that one day is sparked within you and can never be put out. What prompted me to get involved in youth justice reform was the spark William Carbone brought upon me, inspiring me through his dedication to youth justice reform and his commitment to the impeccable work we are just starting to commence.

### **HOW ARE YOU TAKING A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN YOUR EFFORTS TOWARD YOUTH JUSTICE REFORM?**

I am taking a leadership role in my efforts towards youth justice reform by developing my vision and values during my college career at the University of New Haven. I believe in youth justice reform, and I want to see the carceral system for youths dissipate in the criminal legal system. Having these clear goals, values and visions will help me in my path working in youth justice reform.

I am stepping into a leadership role in my efforts towards youth justice reform by being proactive and taking initiative in my passion. I am not waiting for someone else to take charge in this realm as I identify problems and opportunities in the juvenile justice system in my education and then step up to propose solutions to lead the way. I am lighting the way by taking a leadership role in my efforts toward youth justice reform by empowering and motivating others along the way. As much as this award recognizes and celebrates my achievements, it is also a reflection of my college and the work this college has done to produce students like me who are incredibly dedicated and passionate about their causes to lead the way.

**WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR WORK ON YOUTH JUSTICE REFORM?**

I am most proud of my internship experience thus far. I am an intern with the Radical Advocates for Cross Cultural Education (RACCE) in Waterbury, CT. This internship is a reflection of my passion for youth justice, as the work I am doing within this role is community organizing and campaigning to dismantle the school to prison pipeline and over militarization of schools in the Waterbury area. This is something near and dear to me as I personally have witnessed people being arrested in my high school and have grappled with the injustice of over policing in my school first-hand. This internship has provided me with a new-found purpose in youth justice reform and provided me with the necessary platform to make meaningful changes to our youth justice system.

**"IT IS WITH GREAT HONOR THAT I RECEIVE  
THIS AWARD."**



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**If you have any questions about this report, please contact**

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