

# THE SAMUEL HUNTINGTON PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

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## Milestones

### *Dear Friends of the Samuel Huntington Award,*

First, a huge thank you to all of our generous donors who helped us celebrate the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Samuel Huntington Award. This was a big milestone for us, representing not only the wonderful work of our 94 winners, but also the financial support of Sam’s friends, colleagues, and family, who have made these 35 years so successful. The projects you have helped to fund continue to bring medical care, legal representation, care for the environment, and educational opportunities to literally millions around the world. The return on your investment is truly fantastic. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Three other milestones stand out this year:

First, **Dr. Vivek Murthy** stepped down as the Surgeon General of the United States. In a colorful ceremony, filled with military honors, watched by his

family, Vivek paid tribute to all those who have supported him on this journey. Vivek, who has accomplished so much as Surgeon General, has previously acknowledged that winning the Samuel Huntington Award was “a pivotal moment in my life.” We all wish him the best for the next stage of his journey!

Second, another of our prior winners **Matthew Meyer** ran a very positive campaign for governor of Delaware – and he won! He, and his wife and baby son, now have to juggle family commitments and running the state! I think he is the first Samuel Huntington winner to be elected to public office at that level. Good luck Matt!

Finally, **Alex Freid’s** efforts on behalf of our planet, keeping items out of our landfills, has exceeded all our expectations when he won the award in 2013. His project, which he called Post Landfill Action Network, (PLAN) is now active on over 400 campuses across the country. Under



**Jennifer Huntington  
Chair**

his leadership, and the leadership of the students at the College of the Atlantic, the college has broken free from plastic! They have announced that, due to their efforts, it is the first campus in the country to fully eliminate disposable plastic from all food operations, saving over 50,000 pieces of plastic each year! Thank you Alex!

There are so many other wonderful stories, and we are very proud both of our record of picking wonderful winners, and their efforts, which truly give me hope for our future. Thank you for helping to make all these, and many other milestones, possible!

*Jennifer Huntington*

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Your donations make all that we do Possible!



## Update on 2024 Award Recipients

We normally use two newsletters to report on our Award winners—in the fall, we report on their selection, and in the following spring, we report on their performance. Because of the 35th Anniversary letter, we were unable to tell you about the 2024 Award winners, so this edition of the Newsletter reports on both their selection and their progress.

In 2024, we selected three outstanding projects from an array of worthy proposals, and we added two new colleges—Notre Dame and Rochester—to our list of Award winning institutions. As usual, the projects are all over the map. Grace Clinton from Notre Dame will build a holistic development center for young women in the Kgalagada district of Botswana; Logan Danker from Brown will assist students and enhance the implementation of new statewide civics requirements in Rhode Island; and Laith Mohamed from Rochester will implement a community health care worker program in rural Puerto Rico.

### Kgalagadi Women's Empowerment Center in Botswana

**Grace Clinton** became familiar with the needs of young women in Kgalagada through a research project sponsored by the Kellogg Institute for International Studies at Notre Dame. These women face severe discrimination and sexual violence. While in Botswana, Grace and a small group of local secondary school teachers started the Kgalagadi Women's Empowerment Centre, and Grace became a director. She also became a member of the community. As one of her collaborators explains, "We bestowed upon Grace a local name: Naldi, meaning 'star.' I gave her my own surname as she is now a member of my family."



The Centre needed a building to serve as a gathering place and safe house for women. The leaders of the Centre, including Grace, responded by raising funds to buy the land and design the Centre. Grace proposed to use our Award to construct the building at a cost of \$18,500. The Award money would also support three programs offered by the Centre: 1) focused postpartum care to reduce maternal mortality, complications, and depression through education, checkups, and social support from fellow moms; 2) comprehensive sex education offered to 1500 students in cooperation with the local high school; and 3) training for young women in entrepreneurial ventures, the fruits of which will be used to sustain the Centre. Several key partnerships have been formed with the Ministry of Health, Fulbright, and USAID. As Grace concludes: "The next logical step is to build this center and expand our programming, which would be the result of the Samuel Huntington Public Service Award."

Grace has made excellent progress on all fronts. Construction of the building is complete. The Centre has begun meetings with mothers to improve post partum care, and held a women's summit to identify programs that aid women in the community. It has also engaged in a broad partnership with the local high school beginning with tutoring and computer programming (reaching 1500 students) and continuing with sex education in the spring. Finally, the first course training young women for employment has been completed and others are underway. As a result, young mothers are trained and working in sewing, food, house cleaning, and hair care services.

As Grace reports: "Things here are going very well. . . . On behalf of the community, we cannot thank you enough! The effects of this award are being felt by all those who interact with KWEC and we really appreciate it."

### Civic Engagement by RI High School Students

In 2021, Rhode Island passed the Civics Literacy Act, which requires high school students to achieve civics literacy and complete a student led civics project by graduation. However, the statute failed to provide sufficient funding or direction for its implementation—only 21% of the schools have a civics course and only 10% of schools have tried to integrate the program into their curricula.

**Logan Danker's** project addresses this gap. In 2022, while studying at Brown, Logan co-founded Time to Advocate Change, and began by focusing on the civics education requirement of the statute. Specifically, the group created five short animated videos on the fundamentals of civics which have been shared with over 17,000 Rhode Islanders.

It is now time to address the second part of the statute. That portion requires all high school graduates to complete a civics project by graduation. Logan's proposal provides both guidance and incentives to meet the civics project requirement. First, he identifies five actions that will comply with the statute: 1) registering to vote; 2) contacting local, state, and federal officials about a local issue of concern; 3) writing or signing a petition; 4) testifying at a public hearing; and 5) creating a voting plan to reach your voting location or to vote by absentee ballot.



Second he provides incentives for students to actually take the actions. Working with the Rhode Island Department of Education, stakeholders have concluded that students who have completed three of the actions will fulfill the statutory requirements. However, Time to Advocate Change goes further and provides an incentive for students to complete all five actions. In that event, the student will be entered into a lottery and 30 students will be selected for a trip to Washington for a weekend to meet with Rhode Island Representatives or Senators. The Public Service Award will be used to fund the trips as well as an extensive outreach program including a youth committee, social media materials, communications with high schools, and coordination with the Rhode Island Department of Education and other state agencies.

Logan reports outstanding progress. He established his youth committee at the beginning of the project year. He has also designed the curriculum and course materials. Because of limits on in-class time, program outreach and teaching have been mainly on-line, but the on-line approach has been quite successful, reaching over 32,000 students, well above the project goal of 20,000. Logan is now making the arrangements and plans for the trip to Washington for the students who completed all five civic actions and have won the lottery. In short, Logan has successfully designed and implemented a state-wide civics education program within the space of a year—a pretty remarkable achievement.

## Community Health Workers in Rural Puerto Rico



**Laith Awad Mohamad**, from the University of Rochester, came to his project through a visit to Rwanda. During the visit he met with various stakeholders to understand the Rwanda health care system. He discovered that the system relies on Community Health Care workers in rural areas, greatly improving health care outcomes when doctors and hospitals are not readily accessible. He decided that this approach could be replicated in rural Puerto Rico. Working in strategic partnership with HealthProMed, he is using the Public Service Award to fund a pilot program that can be replicated in other isolated areas.

The pilot program began with two rural communities, three Community Health Care Workers, and a target of 50 patients. Laith began with a community assessment of needs, and the recruitment, training, and certification of Health Care Workers to work in the program. In the second phase the Health Care Workers go into the field, make home visits, and assist patients with care, education, and referrals. The focus is on patients with chronic conditions who need ongoing care. The second phase will be followed by an assessment and report. Sustainability and program expansion will be achieved through NUR Salud Comunitaria, which will do longer term fundraising; partnerships with government, NGOs, and medical care providers; program replication and expansion; hiring of Community Health Care Workers and professional staff; and community engagement.

Laith's progress has been slower than the schedule in his original proposal. He reports that because Puerto Rico does not have a Community Health Care Program, the review and approval process for applications and the certification of health care workers has taken longer than he expected. However, the pilot program is now in place, Laith has secured additional funding, and he is committed to continuing with the project when in graduate school. Laith has developed and is implementing a careful approach to help underserved patients in rural communities. His pilot program, when fully developed, will be an important component of health care throughout Puerto Rico. Though it has taken longer than planned, the approval and buy-in by authorities is critical to the implementation of the larger project.

## Thank You to Our Supporters!

The Samuel Huntington Fund was established in 1989 and, thanks to you, has now granted 94 Public Service Awards. Please keep the Fund in mind as you consider your charitable giving. You can make a tax deductible contribution at any time by visiting our website ([www.samuelhuntingtonaward.org](http://www.samuelhuntingtonaward.org)) or sending a check to: The Samuel Huntington Fund, c/o Ms. Amy Stacy, National Grid, 170 Data Drive, Waltham, MA 02451. For your convenience, a pre-addressed envelope is enclosed with this newsletter. Thank you for your consideration!

A list of donors to the Fund since our Spring/Summer 2024 newsletter was published follows:

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