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**TWO NIAGARA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS WIN THE**

**2022 WOMEN’S STUDIES PROGRAM WRITING AWARD**

In this year’s Women’s Studies Program Writing Contest, two Niagara University students earned awards for their research papers. The Women’s Studies Program has been holding an annual writing contest for twenty years, encouraging students to enter their work that examines gender, sexuality, race and ethnicity, disability, and other diversity-related topics.

Dr. Shannon Risk, Chair of the Department of History and Director of the Women’s Studies Minor, welcomed guests at the awards ceremony, held in Dunleavy Hall on the Niagara University campus on Wednesday, March 9, 2022, at 6 p.m. Dr. Peter Butera, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences discussed the impact of student leaders on society, embodied by the two student winners of this year’s contest. Dr. Hope Russell, Women’s Studies Program Professor, reflected on the history of the Women’s Studies Program at Niagara University. First conceived in the 1990s, Dr. Russell stated, the program has grown to average twenty-five majors each semester. The Writing Contest has flourished over twenty years, recognizing the best and brightest at the university.

 Dr. Paula Kot, Associate Professor of English, was delighted to introduce the first student contest winner. Oneida, New York, resident Madison Carroll, an English Education and Special Education, Grades 7-12 major and Literacy minor, saw her paper, titled, “Critiques of the Patriarchal Home within the American Female Gothic: Analyzing Alice Cary’s ‘Uncle Christopher’s,’” win the first-year student award. Carroll said that she feels it is important to look for those in the background of any story because their experience, while seemingly overlooked, is crucial to better understanding humanity, especially for women and girls. Her paper was written for Dr. Paula Kot’s course, ENG 201—Special Topics in American Literature. Dr. Kot noted that Madison’s winning paper “demonstrates her excellence as a student and as a writer. Madison uses the scholarship on the American Female Gothic and an 1847 Lecture by Dr. Charles Meigs, a medical school professor, to build a sophisticated argument about women’s entrapment in Alice Cary’s 1853 story. I am so pleased that Madison won this award for her insightful and truly outstanding analysis.”

 In the upper-level student category, the top prize went to senior Adam Kiedrowski, a double major in History and Political Science, and a member of the Honors Program, who hails from North Tonawanda, New York. Dr. Risk introduced Kiedrowski, commenting on his growth as a student in his four years at Niagara University, and how he continually challenges himself to greater excellence in his work. His paper, “The Dilemma of Somali American Women Post 9/11: Origins, Life, and Dichotomy of Identity in the Diaspora,” was written for Dr. Shannon Risk’s course, HIS 360—African American Women’s History. Risk says that “Adam wanted to write about issues faced by modern-day Black women in the U.S. and felt that the immigration story of Somali American women was compelling. He wrote an incredibly complex paper, highlighting the strength and ingenuity of this group of U.S. American women.” Risk also mentioned that Adam was a previous winner of this contest, earning recognition in his sophomore year as well.

 Dr. Butera’s office provides the prize money each year to support this important contest. For more information about the Women’s Studies Program at Niagara University, please email Dr. Shannon Risk at or visit our website: <https://www.niagara.edu/womensstudies>.