

Ace of Cakes

Junior nutrition major recognized for service, scholarship and carrot cakes

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HAYLEE COLANNINO

Earlier this month, several undergraduates were recognized at the 2016 Student Awards Presentation. Haylee Colannino '17 was called out for her carrot cake.

OK, not *only* for her carrot cake. Actually, the cake was only a quick mention in a long list of impressive accolades. But apparently it's very good.

Really, Colannino was nominated for one of the 12 awards presented because of, in the words of her nominator, her hard

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work, service to others and exceptional leadership skills. She received the Parents Association Award and Scholarship, which recognizes “students who have shown an understanding and appreciation of the value of a university education and who have accepted the responsibility to share their education to better the community in which they live.”

It’s easy to understand why the Warwick, Rhode Island, native received the award. In the three years since she came here to study [nutrition](#) and join the [synchronized skating team](#), she has had two internships and multiple volunteer gigs while managing a full course load in a rigorous program plus the demands of a competitive club sport.

“She is an excellent organizer and time manager and a constant source of energy, inspiration and knowledge,” wrote her nominator.

This past semester, Colannino put that knowledge to work conducting body composition assessments on UNH football players using a machine called the BODPOD. “For football players, this is key. Depending on their position, they need to weigh a certain amount,” she says. Colannino administered the tests, collecting each player’s height, weight, lean mass versus fat mass, oxygen output and other factors.

“We measured them in March and then again in May, and a lot of them, after spring ball, had made major changes and were really

Baker's Dozen

Haylee Colannino was one of 13 students honored at the 2016 Student Awards Presentation. Here’s a recap of the other winners, and what their nominators had to say about them.

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excited about it. It was really cool to witness that,” says Colannino, who would like to work with a professional sports team one day. “Knowing how to administer the BODPOD test is a good skill to have for this field because not a lot of people going into sports nutrition can say they know how to use one.”

Colannino has also worked with UNH sports dietitian Sarah McLaughlin to open the [Wildcat Fueling Station](#) at the Field House, developing healthy snack offerings for Wildcat athletes, and she completed an internship as a dietary aide at the Dover Center for Health and Rehabilitation. As co-president of the Student Nutrition Association (SNA), during the past year she has organized fundraisers to benefit the American Heart Association and the Haitian Health Foundation’s work on malnutrition.

In her spare time, the certified personal trainer teaches fitness classes at the Whitt and at a gym in Portsmouth.

It’s like Thanksgiving every Friday.”

This year — and this is where the carrot cake comes in — she began volunteering at the [Waysmeet Center](#), home of the Campus Ministry and Cornucopia Food Pantry, which hosts free community dinners regularly during the school year.

“I did one and fell in love with it instantly,” she says. “You work in the kitchen together with other student volunteers for a few hours to put this meal together. It’s for a bunch of people you don’t know, but it still feels like home away from home for the night. It’s like Thanksgiving every Friday.”

Soon after that first dinner, she made a spreadsheet and encouraged her classmates in the SNA to sign up to volunteer.

“One night, Larry (Brickner-Wood, university chaplain) had all these carrots, so I was like, I guess we’re making carrot cake.”

It was a big hit.

“After that, we made one every week,” Colannino says.

So, how does a soon-to-be-registered dietitian, personal trainer and competitive athlete feel about eating the cake that she, herself, describes as “not that healthy”?

“Everything in moderation,” she says. “You let yourself have it every once in a while; nothing to feel bad about there.”

Haylee Colannino's Carrot Cake

For the cake:

1½ C. oil
1½ C. sugar
2 C. shredded carrots
4 eggs
2½ C. flour
1 tsp. baking soda
2 T. cinnamon
½ C. brown sugar
¼ C. maple syrup



For the frosting:

1 8-oz. package cream cheese
½ C. melted butter
1 lb. powdered sugar
2 T. vanilla



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