



Nov. 7, 2016

Dear Faculty, Staff and Community Members,

Create Your Own Story is an annual program that recognizes current students who have made their UNH experience into stories of success. This initiative exists not only to highlight dedicated students who have an impact on the university community, but also to inspire others to take advantage of all that UNH has to offer.

It is my great privilege to write this letter seeking nominations for this year's Create Your Own Story celebration. **Nominations are now open, and will be accepted through January 27, 2017. The preferred deadline is December 23, 2016.**

The CYOS Committee selects 10 students from the pool of nominations. We interview them and write their stories with them. Those stories are presented at a luncheon in the spring, both through our work, and through a video that each selected student creates about their UNH experience. It is an incredible showcase of stellar students, and a powerful, inspirational event for everyone.

Last year, CYOS highlighted 10 students based on your thoughtful nominations. We shared stories like that of Cecilia Martins, who one nominator said, "sees the value in service and leadership... and has a wonderful combination of brilliant intellect, a sparkling personality and a hopeful perspective on the challenges that face us." We also heard Aboubacar Konate's story of growing up in Guinea, and how he has become a strong leader at his home-away-from-home of UNH, in organizations such as MOS DEF and the UNH chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers. Since 2004, each of the award recipients has had a compelling and inspirational story, and nominators like you helped bring those stories to the larger UNH community.

I ask you to please take a few moments to recognize a student who has truly taken strides in shaping his or her own education. We are looking for vibrant, unique and inspiring stories. We hope to gather a diverse pool of nominees so the variety of stories inspire a wide range of students to work toward creating their own amazing stories.

I recognize this is a busy time of the academic year, and with that in mind, I encourage you to reach out to a fellow member of the staff, faculty or community with whom you could co-nominate a student. If you have written a reference or letter of recommendation for the student for a different purpose, this can serve as the basis for your CYOS nomination — another time-saver!

To learn more about CYOS, please visit unhmub.com/createyourownstory, and be sure to read the FAQs attached to this letter. Thank you in advance for your help in highlighting our students, and please feel free to contact me at 862-2268 with any questions. On behalf of the committee, we look forward to reading your nominations!

Thank you again,
Ruth Abelmann
Associate Director of Residential Life

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS FORM

BY DECEMBER 23, 2016

VIA EMAIL: CYOS.nominations@unh.edu



2016-2017 Create Your Own Story NOMINATION FORM

Your name: _____

Your position/job title: _____

Phone number (either work, home or cell, whichever is the best way to reach you): _____

Email: _____

NOMINATION

Student's name: _____

Describe briefly how you know this student:

Please write two to four paragraphs detailing why you believe this student's story should be highlighted. You may use a pre-existing recommendation letter as the basis for your nomination. In addition to considering a student's involvement, academic achievements, personal history and character, below are some questions or ideas to think about when making your nomination:

Has this student created a change at UNH? (Starting an organization, for example)

What challenges or barriers have they overcome?

Have they taken an innovative approach to their education — if so, how?

How have they made the most of their time here? How have they created their own 'UNH story'?

Tell us a little bit about this student's personality, and how it fits into their story.

What unique contributions have they made to the university community?

What makes them inspiring people to know?

We know there are a lot of great Wildcats out there — in your opinion, why does this student stand out to you among others?

Frequently Asked Questions

How does CYOS work?

The CYOS Committee works year-round to highlight the stories of those current UNH students who have truly taken command of their education. We start with nominations from faculty, staff and community members, who share with us the stories of students they know who are achieving great things. We review the nominations, and select 10 students to represent this year's CYOS award recipients. Committee members interview the 10 students, and work with them to write their story — which are then turned into a traveling display. We also ask them to create a short video detailing their UNH experiences. The video and posters with each story are shared at a luncheon in April, which students, their faculty/staff mentors and their families or friends attend. Their stories are also published online.

What are some things I should be thinking about when I'm nominating a student?

We all work with so many great students, but often there are some who stand out above the others. Perhaps because they've overcome great challenges in their pursuit of an education, or perhaps because they are a unique contributor to the greater university community. Be sure to check out the nomination form included in this packet for some questions to ask yourself when writing a nomination.

Does the student have to be a high academic achiever?

While these awards are not based solely on academic achievement, it is an important part of any successful student story at UNH. Students being nominated should be well-rounded, contributing members of the UNH community, and academics is just one part of that picture.

I want to nominate a student, but I'm not sure I know enough about them — what should I do?

You may feel you know some of a student's story but not their entire life story. We recognize this and welcome your nomination with this understand. You can also ask a student to share with you the part of their life or their UNH experience you are less familiar with before completing the nomination.

I'd love to talk to someone on the committee before I make my nomination — who can I reach out to?

Absolutely! We're available to talk with you about this process. Feel free to reach out to the committee via email at cyos.nominations@unh.edu, or by phone at 2-2268.