Kailee A. Brickner-McDonald exemplifies kindness and acceptance and always expects the best from people. As the director of the Dewey House for Community Engagement, she consistently demonstrates Our Common Ground values by respecting colleagues and students, accepting others, and welcoming different opinions and perspectives. As a supervisor, she provides excellent guidance and relates to her staff on a personal and professional level. In her daily professional life, she personifies integrity and demonstrates that she clearly understands what it means to be an effective leader.

In her leadership role, she works hard to build positive and productive relationships with community partners including Hunger Free Vermont, which has welcomed a Dewey House Team to participate in their annual fundraising event for three years, and Hike for Hunger. As a supportive team member, she encourages the Dewey House staff to take the lead on projects such as transitioning the Racing Revolution to become a Volunteers in Action club on campus. She is an excellent professional role model, because her enthusiasm for creating positive change inspires students to tackle social issues in their communities. She is deeply invested in creating an inclusive, welcoming, and fun community for the Dewey House.

Kailee is a true innovator, because she combines service-learning methods and practices with academic analysis from the field of social work. She uses her unique combination of service-learning methods and social work analysis to facilitate a greater understanding of social identities, privilege, and respect. By creating a heightened awareness in the Dewey House, she helps students approach community service with empathy that fosters personal development and social responsibility. Kailee’s leadership is wonderful example of practicing genuine social justice and creating a foundation for a more compassionate and just society.

Kailee is more than the Director of a Residential Life Community – she is an inspiration to her students and the campus community. As a caring and highly motivated leader, she is involved with every aspect of the programming for Dewey House and actively participates in public service activities with the students. For example, she recently joined the Dewey Team for the second annual National Eating Disorder Association walk on UVM campus. She is dedicated to the social issues that most concern members of the Dewey House, and she is committed to tackling social challenges through service, advocacy, and education. For those who are fortunate enough to work with her, she is a leader, supervisor, mentor, and, most importantly, a friend.