



The University of Vermont

President's *Our Common Ground* Award 2014

William Valliere

May 5, 2014

I was honored to be part of the team that nominated Bill Valliere for the President's Our Common Ground Staff Award. I've had the pleasure of working with Bill for more than 20 years. Bill received his Master of Science degree in the Rubenstein School and he was so proficient in research that we hired him as a staff member in the newly created Park Studies Laboratory. Bill has been instrumental in making the Park Studies Laboratory an important component of the Rubenstein School's program of research, playing an integral role in dozens of research projects, co-authoring a remarkable 18 papers in the scholarly and professional literature, presenting papers at multiple academic and professional conferences each year, and helping to inform management of our iconic national park system. The Park Studies Lab couldn't have prospered without Bill's consistent and high level contributions.

But in particular, it's Bill's personal qualities and his service that make him so deserving of this award. His strong sense of **responsibility** is reflected in the accomplishments I just noted. In my nomination letter, I wrote about Bill's manifold contributions to the Park Studies Lab. But Professor Dan Krymkowski in the Department of Sociology, an important collaborator with the Lab, says it better: "Bill is the glue that holds the Lab together." Graduate and undergraduate students in the Lab know Bill for his caring and effective mentoring. Nathan Reigner, who recently earned his Ph.D. in the Rubenstein School, writes that "While mentoring is not a part of Bill's job description, he devotes substantial effort and passion to mentoring undergraduate students, graduate students, and research staff. Whether training them to conduct research, helping them to adapt their work to serve academic purposes, or encouraging good work habits, Bill treats others at all times with respect." Kate Hovanes is a graduate student in UVM's Historic Preservation Program and has worked with us in the Park Studies Lab this academic year. She writes that "Bill has invariably gone out of his way to educate me and to make me feel welcome."

Bill is a person of great **integrity** who has gained the **respect** of everyone in the Park Studies Laboratory and the Rubenstein School. This is manifested in the fact that he is often asked to serve on School standing and search committees, which he gladly does. He has an especially strong sense of **justice**. For example, he frequently volunteers his time to be a facilitator in the Rubenstein School's first-year course, NR 6, Race and Culture in Natural Resources. In this important role, he is **open** and welcoming of diverse ideas and perspectives. Professor Clare Ginger, lead instructor for NR 6, writes that "Bill's contributions have been exemplary" and that "he has shown interest and concern for student experience and has been a strong contributor as a member of the team that delivers this class." Moreover, she says that "Bill is a person who acts on his conscience and a sense of obligation to make the world a better place" and that "he does so persistently, cheerfully, and to good effect." Bill is **innovative** in his pursuit of justice that goes well beyond the university campus. For example, he has been instrumental in the work of the Good News Garage, which repairs donated cars and provides them to families in need; he's the Vermont Congressional District Leader for the ONE campaign, an advocacy group of more than 3 million people taking action to end poverty and preventable disease; and he helped plan and facilitate an interfaith seminar series entitled "Greening our Religions."

Responsibility, respect, integrity, innovation, openness, justice: these are the aspirations and values of the UVM Community. Bill exemplifies these pillars of UVM's Our Common Ground. Thanks for all your good work, Bill, and congratulations on this well-deserved award.

Robert Manning,
Steven Rubenstein Professor of Environment and Natural Resources