The Department of Biology has three 2016-17 recipients of Utah State University's Diversity Award. Congratulations Dr. Alan Savitzky, Emily Sadler, and Kathryn M. Weglarz!

The following text is copied from “Utah State Today,” http://www.usu.edu/today/index.cfm?id=56593. The awards recognize individuals and/or organizations on campus and in communities served by USU who have made significant contributions to affirmative action, equal opportunity and diversity.

Administrator
Alan Savitzky

Alan Savitzky serves as department head of Biology in the USU College of Science, where he has promoted inclusiveness and acceptance of underrepresented minorities at USU.

Savitzky is a consistent supporter of and contributor to the Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Sciences (SACNAS) and was the driving force of its USU re-establishment in 2013. He garnered institutional support and continues to engage USU faculty and students (undergraduate and graduate) from diverse backgrounds, and in different science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields, to participate in the organization. While encouraging others, he also personally contributes by recruiting and mentoring students.

A compassionate leader, Savitzky’s commitment to diversity and inclusiveness was demonstrated as he helped one student’s transition in coming out as a transgender in the department. Under his guidance, he carefully met the student’s needs, while empowering identity integration among peers, faculty and staff. He further nurtured the value of acceptance by encouraging the entirety of the USU Biology Department to attend the USU “Allies on Campus” seminars. His colleagues value his efforts spend in embracing and cultivating diversity.

Students
Emily Sadler and Kathryn M. Weglarz
With an enthusiast embrace of the concept of providing science, technology, engineering and mathematics research experiences for students from diverse backgrounds, Department of Biology graduate students Emily Sadler and Kathryn M. Weglarz, have distinguished themselves as champions for providing educational opportunities to students from Utah State University Eastern in Blanding.

After showing interest in a small internship program that gave a Native American from USU Eastern's Blanding Campus a chance to do research on the Logan campus in 2013, Sadler and Weglarz helped transition and grow the program to its current success that now hosts 25 Native American students. In summer 2014, the duo arranged for four students to attend and rotate in pairs, through several research labs while providing mentoring, social activities, enrichment experiences and advising about academic life at a larger university campus. In 2015, with the assistance of another two graduate students, Sadler and Weglarz arranged for 21 students to come to the Logan campus in what would become to be known as the Native American Summer Mentorship Program (NASMP).

In 2016, the program continued to grow in stature and complexity, with 25 students attending under the watchful eyes of Sadler and Weglarz, and an additional four graduate facilitators. Enthusiastic faculty mentors from the previous year vied to gain new student teams and additional faculty were added to mentor roles. The program's success springs directly from the energy and vision of Sadler and Weglarz and has spurred continued educational goals for those attending the program. More than 10 students from the 2015 and 2016 cohorts have transferred to the USU Logan campus to further their education.

To read about the other recipients, go to the "Utah State Today" article by Stacy Sturgeon