Nominee Profile

Jacob Goodwin

Major/Minor: Biochemistry and Catholic Studies

Leadership: I lead a small group and organize Tommie Catholic events with the Catholic Leadership Interns.

Scholarship: I received the Chemistry Catalyst CRC Press Achievement Award for top performance in General Chemistry.

Campus Involvement: I am heavily involved with music through the Summit Singers and the Chamber Singers.

Scholarship: I developed diabetes-treating drugs in chemistry research.

Scholarship: I participated in the Catholic Studies in Rome study abroad experience.
Testimonial

Jacob’s combination of intelligence, compassion, and involvement make him an ideal candidate for the Tommie of the Year Award. He truly exemplifies the ideals of Thomas Aquinas. If one considers some of the convictions of St. Thomas’s mission, Jacob embodies each of them in outstanding ways.

First is the pursuit of truth; Jacob ardently accomplishes this conviction through the research he did in my lab in the field of synthetic organic chemistry. The new organic compounds he synthesized are currently being tested for their ability to lower blood sugar by Eli Lilly. His impressive accomplishments are the result of his ability to understand what he does as well as his disciplined work. Jacob gave a seminar on his research that demonstrated his ability to understand and explain his research. It is an example of his exceptional ability to communicate and a sign of a true leader that he can explain his complicated findings to those outside of the sciences.

The second conviction is academic excellence. Jacob’s performance in all of his classes is outstanding. I can speak firsthand about his academic performance in Organic Chemistry, since he was my student in both Organic Chemistry I and II. Not only did he get an A in both of these courses but he also got the highest score on every exam. This is no easy task; as anyone who has taken the course knows, it is an extremely challenging class. This exhibits not only his intelligence but also his strong work ethic.

As a Catholic Studies minor Jacob demonstrates his conviction of Faith and Reason. He is committed to the practice of faith, which is clearly evident through his involvement with Catholic Leadership Interns. He is a senior intern and, as a small group leader, he coordinates their group events. All of these are strong evidence of his leadership qualities.

Jacob’s compassion for others was clearly demonstrated in the lab when he would always take time to assist other researchers with any problems they were having. He shows respect for all of his fellow students and is extremely patient in helping others. These skills shine in Jacob’s role as a department tutor in organic chemistry. His patience and compassion allows him to get through to students that may be struggling.

Finally, one of Jacob’s extraordinary talents outside of his academic interests is the ability to sing. Jacob is a member of the St. Thomas a cappella group called the Summit Singers. This demonstrates his wide range of abilities and interests and exhibits the idea of a UST student as a well-rounded person. I have attended numerous performances of the Summit Singers and Jacob obviously puts all of his personality, as well as his talent, into his singing. In fact, his shining presence on stage reveals him as the ideal Tommie.

What better way for a student to live up to the ideal of St. Thomas than to fulfill the elements of the prayer to St. Thomas Aquinas. “Grant, o merciful God, that I may ardently desire, prudently examine, truthfully acknowledge, and perfectly accomplish what is pleasing to Thee for the praise and glory of Thy name.” It is clear that Jacob Goodwin ardently desires to learn and experience through his study abroad experience, prudently examines through his extensive research, truthfully acknowledges through his Catholic faith and service, and perfectly accomplishes through his academic performance.

J. Thomas Ippoliti

Relationship to Nominee: Professor and Research Advisor
Testimonial

Jake is a man extremely worthy of an award such as the Tommie Award. He is a man of great character, discipline, selflessness, and love. He is attentive to those around him and is a very loyal friend and man. He not only excels in school, he also takes such an interest in his classes and the opportunity to learn. He is always looking beyond the mere information as to how his studies and what he’s learning can help him to view the world more positively and live more attentively. I remember a time where he was telling me that he didn’t just want to study science because he was good at it, but because he loved it. It really inspired me, because it was clear that he was pursuing what he was called to, not just something he was good at.

Jake has a number of different leadership roles, such as the music leader of Communion and Liberation at the University and a Senior Leader in the Leadership Interns Program. As any leadership role does, these require sacrifices, but Jake does it with great sincerity and love for those whom he is serving. While leadership roles like these are impressive, people are blown away by the leadership that he exemplifies in his daily life, even under no leadership title. The way he approaches life is so inspiring and attractive to people that people follow him in that way. I am a first-hand example of someone who looks to him as a leader, even though he has no title or position over me. His leadership is a model of how to live in a more beautiful way.

Jake is a very talented man, and he has responded by using them for the benefit of others here in St. Paul. He is in choir and the Summit Singers, as well as Communion and Liberation at the University, pre-health club, volunteering weekly, and has also done research and tutoring in the science department. In all of these, he uses his gifts for the sake of others.

It would be a great testament to this University if Jake were selected to receive this award.

Tony Klein

Relationship to Nominee: Friend
Testimonial

It is impossible to capture with words the goodness and presence of Jacob Goodwin. Many people are struck by how gifted he is. He sings for the Chamber Choir and Summit Singers, plays guitar, is an athlete, excels in his classes, earns leadership roles in all the groups he is involved in, and the list goes on. From afar he looks like a great and accomplished man but, through our friendship, I have seen that he is so much more. I was a quiet and shy little freshman when he first approached me and introduced himself. I was sure that no friendship would ensue because I had nothing to offer to this cool, loved, and talented man. But he reached out to me and is now one of my most treasured friends. He pursues nothing selfishly or because it would look good on a resume, but because he is passionate for life and full of love.

His passion animates all of his daily activities. He studies not for the grade or even to understand the class material, but to find truth. Once we had been given a list of all the potential questions and their answers for our Moral Theology final, so we just had to memorize them. We studied together for hours but never memorized a thing, instead we would read one of the answers and then talk about how amazing the truth of it was and about ways to integrate it into our lives. I'm excited when he shows up in the library to study with me. We don’t talk at all, but simply witnessing how actively and joyfully he is pursuing his studies changes how I approach mine. In everything from singing and playing games to joking around and talking nonsense, he is always completely engaged and full of joy.

His care for people is also fueled by this passion and love. When something is bothering me he makes time to talk about it. It's hard for me to express my worries, but he gives me his full attention, never interrupting or finishing my sentences. Then he offers advice, leading with concern and gentleness. He is a strong man, ready to spend himself for others. Once our classmate was struggling and he insisted on seeking out and helping her. His care also extends far beyond UST. He speaks with joy about serving his family, nursing home residents, and people at the hospital where he volunteers. I saw this during our semester in Rome in the way he loved the homeless. He would sit down on the ground next to them and listen intently to their stories. He would embrace them and they would be moved to tears by his love.

Jacob is a strong and involved student and leader because of his joyful passion for life and ardent love for people. He truly embodies the ideals of St. Thomas Aquinas and has been a huge blessing to all who have encountered him here.

Maya Audi

Relationship to Nominee: Friend