Ten students who attended Explore UAlbany, an academic orientation program organized by Student Engagement offered to transfer students and freshmen, were lucky enough to win a $100 gift card to the university bookstore thanks to a generous donation from SEFCU bank. Jared Chua, Roxane Grieggs, Asha Smith, Salvatore Cuce, Emily Gilot, Diante Beadle, Jason Clare, Daniel Barkan, and Gareth Moores now have $100 less to worry about when it comes to textbooks and starting classes at their new institution.

The Explore UAlbany program was a lecture series designed to include presentations from a variety of disciplines with some of the highest profile professors on campus. The program helped first-year students get a feel for the classroom setting here at UAlbany while engaging them in diverse and fascinating subjects. The topics ranged from the morality of the death penalty with Dr. James Acker to why people believe in Bigfoot with Dr. Sean Rafferty.

“This seminar was the perfect opportunity to see if psychology and neuroscience would be good fit for me. It introduced me to the different subtopics in the fields and it also gave me the opportunity to speak to the professor about possible careers.”

-Asha Smith (“Welcome to Your Brain” lecture)

“I used to have a passion for photography. Every weekend I would explore my neighborhood with an old, hand-me-down camera that had a screen the size of a thumbprint. I was hoping the lecture would reestablish my love for photography, and there's definitely a spark.”

-Gareth Moores (“Picturing the Future” lecture)

“After getting to be the lucky winner of the gift card, I've used it all to purchase needed textbooks for my classes. This gift card helped me without a doubt!”

-Jared Chua (“You Ain’t Seen Nothing Yet” lecture)
One of the benefits of the program is that it encourages interaction between professors and students outside of the conventional classroom. This year Associate Dean for General Education and history professor Rick Fogarty had the pleasure of meeting Elizabeth Brigham, a local social activist and blogger. Over lunch (sponsored by Student Engagement’s “Food For Thought” program http://www.albany.edu/student_engagement/food_for_thought.php) Elizabeth explained her part in the controversy over the Whitesboro Town Seal, a story that received international attention. Along with writing an illuminating post on the question of political correctness, the seal she designed for her hometown may very well be the replacement for the controversial image.

Explore UAlbany is one of a number of programs that Student Engagement organizes to help new students find their bearings in their new institution, and SEFCU is a regular contributor to this endeavor. UAlbany Alum Michael J. Castellana, president and CEO of SEFCU explained, “SEFCU is a proud member of the UAlbany community. We know how important the university is not only to its students and alumni, but to the entire Capital Region. We wish the Class of 2020 the best and look forward to another outstanding academic and athletic year. Go Great Danes.

Elizabeth Brigham’s new design of the Whitesboro seal

Read her article here: https://www.theodysseyonline.com/political-correctness-morality

Sponsors of the Explore UAlbany Lecture Series