

**The Center for Orientation, Transitions and Leadership, in partnership with SAIL, is excited to announce the winners of our monthly Student Leadership Recognition program for October.**

**Juanjose Cabrera '26-** is a sophomore biochemistry major. He is from Lawrence, MA. Juanjose is involved in numerous programs, clubs, and organizations, most notably as the treasurer of Motherland Dance Group, a Horizons mentor, as well as a Transitions Dream Coach. JJ is described by Amori Washington as someone whose “positive energy, compassion, and humor would completely light up a room” and has emerged as a beacon of leadership and inspiration to many on campus.

During his tenure as a Dream Coach with Transitions, JJ served on a panel this summer to discuss the experiences of students of color at Providence College. He was the only undergraduate student on the panel and has been described as demonstrating an impressive authenticity and a great willingness to share his own experiences. This left a “lasting impact” that helped to uplift and encourage incoming students. Throughout the semester, JJ continues to lead by example inside and outside of the classroom, through mentoring, community building, and his overall dedication.

A highlight JJ describes during his time at Providence College was joining the Transitions program last year as a freshman, which allowed him to “meet all the POC students and faculty on campus that [he] could always count on throughout the year”. After returning this year as a mentor to give other students the same experiences and opportunities he was provided, he calls it a “full-circle moment”.

In his leadership roles, JJ hopes to continue to lift up others. He mentions his position on Motherland specifically, where he aspires to plan and execute putting on an end of the year showcase to “elevate” the group to a new level and highlight its performers.

**St. Pius Clean Up-** Occurred on Sunday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> at St. Pius School in Providence. This event was created and run by members of The Class of 2026 Congress, specifically President Jack Brodin, Vice President Conor Ollendike, and Secretary Caroline Stanton. Their roles inside the event included the planning, organization, and execution of the event to involve as many students as possible in the class to participate in the event.

This event was described by Sam Loranger as having “demonstrated exceptional leadership qualities, leaving a lasting, positive impact within our college community”. The St. Pius Clean Up displayed students’ commitment to service as well as creating meaningful and engaging experiences for other members of their class. The organizers made deliberate efforts to ensure that the event was both accessible and enjoyable for all students, regardless of their backgrounds or interests. The impact of this Clean Up has also been described as serving as a “catalyst for bringing students together, encouraging collaboration, and sparking creativity”.

The students involved in the event describe the highlight as “getting to see the Sisters’ faces and reactions” after the competition of their efforts, as well as “seeing how quickly our class came together to work towards a good goal”. Going forward, The Class of 2026 Congress hopes to do a similar event in the spring and is excited to continue to bring their class together to make a positive impact on the Providence College community.

**BELIEVE**- This organization is a student-led disability advocacy club on campus. BELIEVE stands for Be Educated Live with Inspiration and Evaluate Equity. Members assist students by connecting them with various accessibility resources on campus as well as proposing new policies with the goal of creating a safe space for students to live out their college experiences fully. All students in the Providence College community are invited to join as allies and attend meetings, whether identifying as having a disability or not. BELIEVE is overseen by its president, Avery Budnik '24, an elementary and special education major.

Avery states that her favorite events with the club have been their Disability Discussions panel, as well as their accessibility services meet and greet. The Disability Discussions panel, which took place in December 2022, was composed of three students and three faculty members with one student moderator. Avery says that she served on the panel as a student and “had an open conversation about the realities of accessibility on campus and what professors can do to create inclusive courses”. The accessibility services meet and greet took place this September, with representatives for each of the accessibility services on campus, including transportation, housing, advising, academic accommodations, and more. This event provided Providence College students the opportunity to come by and meet the different representatives, as well as learn more about the accessibility resources available to them on campus. Avery says that “This event was particularly helpful for new students who are navigating the college accommodations process”.

One upcoming BELIEVE event that Avery is excited about is Advocacy at the Intersections: Amplifying Women with Disabilities, which will be a speaker event in the spring. Events such as these have been made possible as a result of the Providentia Grant, which was established to celebrate 50 Years of Women at Providence College to “underwrite projects, programs, and activities that promote, empower, and amplify women of all ages”.

BELIEVE is eager to keep growing their membership. This organization provides students with the opportunity to become allies for others by educating the Providence College community about people with disabilities to make campus a more inclusive space for those living with disabilities by removing barriers that separate those who identify as able-bodied/minded and those who identify as disabled/differently-abled.

*To learn more about BELIEVE, visit @friars\_believe on Instagram.*