

Mobile Home Project Wins Service Learning Award

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The service learning and community-based research partnership between the Department of Community Development and Applied Economics and the Mobile Home Project at the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity received the Vermont Campus Compact Exemplary Campus-Community Partnership Award on April 14 at the Compact's Statewide Recognition Reception Ceremony.

Dan Baker, assistant professor in CDAE, was presented with the award at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center along with winners from the CVOE office.

"This initiative harnesses the research expertise of the university with the student-power of service-learning classes to help further the excellent work of the Champlain Valley Office of Economic opportunity's Mobile Home Project," said UVM President Daniel Fogel. "Affordable housing is among the most fundamental and pressing needs for the citizens of Vermont. And many -- some 22,000 Vermonters -- find that housing in mobile home parks. This initiative has helped the residents of several of those parks in Chittenden and Addison counties to build empowered communities, united neighborhoods where people have a voice and a hand in shaping the place where they live."

The Exemplary Campus-Community Partnership Award is intended to highlight a model partnership characterized by "rich and meaningful relationships that has enriched the outcomes for both campus and community in a number of ways and over a number of months or years." Since 2006, this partnership has engaged more than 140 students in understanding the issues affecting mobile home park communities in Addison and Chittenden counties. [Read more about Baker's mobile home project at UVM.](#)³

UVM was represented by a handful of other finalists at the ceremony, which served as the culmination of the two-day New England Regional Campus Compact Conference titled "Higher Education and the Greater Good: Meeting the Challenges of the 21st Century." Julie Richards, a senior lecturer in social work, and Jon Erickson, associate professor in the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources, were named finalists for the Award for Excellence in Community Based Teaching, and the Engaged Scholar Award, respectively. Senior Dana Gulley, who graduates in May, was a finalist for the Madeleine M. Kunin Public Service Award.