

Dominic Cooper, Wins 2015-2016 Outstanding EXL Student Award

The Outstanding EXL Student Award is given annually to a student who holds a distinguished record of service in the EXL Scholars Program. Organizational Communication major Dominic Cooper completed 14 Experiential Learning courses that helped prepare him for a career after graduation. These courses included hands-on class projects that provided Cooper with a variety of skills and experiences. In Organizational Communication in Communities, Cooper assisted students with disabilities in making Christmas ornaments for the National Christmas Tree in Washington D.C. In other courses, Cooper interviewed a Business Operations Division Director concerning leadership theories and conducted field observations in two local grocery stores. Cooper's involvement extends beyond the classroom, however. In order to help freshman men in their academic and professional lives, Cooper co-founded an on-campus organization known as "The Young and Educated." Members of this group receive professional photos, business cards, and advice from role-models and mentors. Cooper's dedication to helping those in the community fit perfectly within the Experiential Learning Program, which provided him with new opportunities for service. Referring to the ways EXL has benefited him, Cooper stated, "My leadership skills were developed in ways that they would not have been if I was not able to learn by that of service learning. I too would be completing a degree in a way in which I had yet to be able to use my skills outside the classroom. This program is so beneficial that I feel that each department, college, and major should include an EXL service learning component into their student's academic plan as a degree requirement. As I reflect upon my collegiate career here as a EXL scholar, I can genuinely say that the EXL program has shaped me into a valuable contributor to my university, community, and others in the way a Blue Raider should academically."