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Recognizing a Student Leader

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Toledo resident J.W. Rayson Terry III's name is synonymous with leadership and African-American students at the University of Dayton.

It's among the many reasons Amy Lopez-Matthews, director of UD's Kennedy Union; Mark Albers, Kennedy Union assistant director of operation; and fellow student Jimmy Orack nominated him for the University of Dayton's Riley Award.

"He is connected to so many students in important ways," Lopez-Matthews said about Terry, this year's Riley Award winner. The award goes to a UD junior who exercises sustained leadership through involvement with student initiatives and exemplifies the values of Ohio's largest private university. The winner receives an \$1,800 scholarship.

The UD Office of Admission has asked him to provide support to minority students. He is part of the UD Office of Diverse Student Population's efforts to retain black students.

"I feel my leadership has made the University of Dayton a more enjoyable campus for students of color," said Terry, a business economics major. "I've always been an advocate for all students, especially for those considered to be disadvantaged. My learning is now geared towards how I can help people, whereas in the past my focus and goals were money-oriented."

As the president of UD's Black Action Through Unity (BATU), he has increased the organization's membership by 300 percent. He also has served as a mentor at the Dayton Early College Academy, a partnership between UD and Dayton Public Schools.

Besides his volunteer activities, Terry works as an operations manager at Kennedy Union.

"Rather than just being a supervisor, J.W. chooses to form a mentorship with the students he manages," Lopez-Matthews said. "Whether they have a question about class registration or adjusting to college life, he is always willing to take the time to listen and offer advice. When it comes to work related tasks, J.W. can always be counted on to go the extra mile."

Terry is the son of J.W. and Tina Terry.