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The 2021 NCHC Founders Award: Samuel Schuman

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Abstract: Samuel Schuman (*Beginning in Honors*) is the 2021 recipient of the National Collegiate Honors Council's Founders Award, recognized for his outstanding contributions to both the NCHC and to the professional and scholarly practices of honors education.

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(What follows is a slightly revised version of Bernice Braid's remarks on the Founders Award recipient, delivered at the Annual NCHC Conference in Orlando on Saturday, October 30, 2021.)

I am delighted to introduce Dr. Samuel Schuman. Sam was one of the most talented and most unusual members of NCHC. He was a classicist, a modernist, a scholar, an athlete, an outdoorsman, a teacher, and an exceptional officer of this organization. Few people are so gifted at so many things or can strengthen and serve so multi-faceted a group as this one.

I had the pleasure of meeting Sam while he was still running the honors program at the University of Maine in Orono, where I witnessed the generosity and intelligence with which he directed NCHC's only summer Honors Semester in 1978. One of my students participated in that semester and to this day has not forgotten his role in her life. He has been similarly memorable to thousands of NCHC members who experienced the imagination and gusto of his participation in annual conferences, co-inventing *Beginning in*

Honors because he understood early on that honors education is a craft, not an assignment, and always a challenge.

Sam's handbooks, *Beginning in Honors: A Handbook* and *Honors Programs at Smaller Colleges*, and later his monograph, *If Honors Students Were People: Holistic Honors Education*, have been canonical in the burgeoning of honors programs and colleges during the past decades. Like everything Sam did, the books he authored are genuinely useful, designed not to bring credit to himself but to the people fortunate enough to make use of them. They are tucked under the arms and onto the bookshelves of thousands of teachers and administrators across the country.

Through the mutations of his life as scholar, writer, teacher, and administrator, he gave his all to the rest of us as we sought to develop a fabulous idea into a solid enterprise: a deep, broad, and open-ended opportunity for students. He believed in "the whole person," as he argued in print and in person, and was in the deepest sense a humanist. We are all beneficiaries of his largesse, his imagination, and his efforts on our behalf.

Sam may not be with us in person, but he is certainly with us in every other way. He deserves the NCHC's most important award, as I am happy to acknowledge by presenting to him the 2021 NCHC Founders Award. We are honored that his son Daniel Schuman—himself currently an honors director, not surprisingly—is here with us tonight to accept this award on his behalf.

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