



HUMAN ECOLOGY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION 2012 OUTSTANDING SENIOR AWARD

GILAD MERON '12



An exceptional student, campus leader, and community volunteer, Gilad exemplifies the College's mission to integrate academics and outreach to improve the human condition.

PUBLIC SERVICE:

From India to Central New York, Gilad has applied his design knowledge to serve those in need. As a board member and team manager with Design Connect, Gilad helped devise a plan to redevelop a vacant lot in downtown Owego, N.Y., and facilitated meetings among community leaders, business owners, and homeowners to gain support for the project. He also helped lead a fundraising drive for the plan. As a volunteer and board member with Muse America, he developed and led art education lessons for students at Beverly J. Martin Elementary School and helped expand the program more broadly. While spending a year in India, he acted as a schoolhouse design consultant to Mumbai Mobile Creches and designed preliminary floor plans and classroom layouts for future sites.

AT CORNELL:

A design and environmental analysis major, Gilad is on track to graduate in May 2012 and pursue a masters in Human Environment Relations at Cornell. He serves as a student representative for the College of Human Ecology Educational Policy Committee and also on the service team of the Dean's Undergraduate Advisory Council. In 2011, he designed an extensive exhibit showcasing the history of the College of Human Ecology and installed grass in the Mann Library lobby to highlight the research of DEA professors. He is a weekend build volunteer for Habitat for Humanity.

Gilad stands out as a researcher, too. Working under professor Alan Hedge and lecturer Leah Scolere, he and a team of students used eye-tracking software to uncover new insights on how people view infographics – visual representations of data. The team used their results to write a research paper, which has been accepted for presentation and publication at a major international conference. In addition, Gilad created a poster explaining the eye tracking research and it won best in category at the Cornell Undergraduate Research Board Symposium.

Gilad is a member of the board for The Knitting Club (formerly Students for Service Learning), a network and platform dedicated to the cultivation of community engaged learning at Cornell University. His most recent initiative was to be a part of organizing a symposium called "Creating a Culture of Community Engagement" which was jointly sponsored by the Center for Community Engaged Learning and Research and the Public Service Center. At the symposium, Gilad served as panel moderator for a discussion on "Higher Education as a Catalyst for Social Change."

In 2012, Gilad received fourth place in the Elsie Van Buren Rice Award in Public Speaking competition in the College of Human Ecology.