

The Campaign to Keep Guns Off Campus Honors School and Student Leaders in Dramatic Fashion



New York City, New York Oct 8, 2026 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - The Campaign to Keep Guns Off Campus (The Campaign) bestowed the 2026 Conscientious Campus Award this evening during its annual benefit to Wesleyan University's Center for the Study of Guns & Society (CSGS).

The Conscientious Campus Award honors a school, college or university for exhibiting extraordinary commitment to the examination of firearms and their impact across history, culture and society. CSGS achieved the honor as the first academic center in the United States dedicated to interdisciplinary humanities research on the social and cultural history of firearms.

Founded in 2022 by Tucker, the center's mission is to unpack durable myths, explore the historical and cultural underpinnings of gun ownership and provide empirical historical evidence to inform public discourse and legal debates. In just four years the center's production has been vibrant. Its key research projects include deep studies into gun transport and ownership across the nation's formative years as well as pivotal and often misunderstood or misinterpreted 18th and 19th-century firearm law. These are

serving as essential field guides in wake of the major shifts brought forth by the U.S. Supreme Court's Bruen decision.

"There are several outstanding universities across the nation to be commended for dedicating resources and expertise into gun violence research," said John McKenna, executive director of the Campaign. "Wesleyan's center is unique in that its efforts feed and gift the entire academic and judicial ecosystem, a vault of information like no other in circulation."

Recipient of the 2026 Youth Advocacy Award was New Hampshire Youth Movement for its effective organization and mobilization of students and faculty in pushing back on House Bill 1793 introduced early in the 2026 legislative session. The law would have greatly eased restrictions on guns on campuses and effectively dismantled gun-free zones. The grassroots effort led by NHYM was instrumental in defeating the bill.

"I am honored to accept this award on behalf of the Center for the Study of Guns & Society at Wesleyan and its recognition of the work of the faculty, students and researchers who are trying to uncover the true history of efforts by American society, since the nation's founding, to limit the scourge of gun violence," Director Jennifer Tucker said.

The 2026 annual benefit, Dramatic Change, was staged at the newly designed People's Theatre in historic Upper Manhattan. In addition to the presenting of the awards, the evening included a special live performance of GUAC. Written and performed by Manuel Oliver, the gripping and moving production is a dramatic tribute to Oliver's son, Joaquin, killed in the Parkland, Florida campus shooting.

The gallery space leading to the theater included a homage to Joaquin Oliver and a colorful collage of art themed in gun violence-prevention imaging and messaging.

About the Campaign to Keep Guns Off Campus

"Every year, the Campaign to Keep Guns Off Campus brings people together around a simple but urgent belief: our schools, our children and our communities deserve to be places where people can learn, create and thrive without the threat of gun violence," said President of the Board of Directors Dina Siciliano. "This year's benefit is especially meaningful because we're gathering to experience Manny Oliver's creative advocacy, a powerful reminder of how art can open difficult conversations and move us toward action."

"We're grateful to Manny Oliver, the People's Theatre and everyone joining us in turning remembrance into purpose and using our collective voices to demand safer campuses and communities," Siciliano said.

The mission of The Campaign to Keep Guns Off Campus (The Campaign) is to support safe educational spaces nationwide by opposing the presence of concealed firearms in all levels of education. The organization fosters collaborative networks through community engagement to amplify local voices that stimulate state-level action, ultimately impacting gun violence prevention nationwide. Through comprehensive advocacy, education and legal action, the Campaign strives to promote effective measures that keep guns off campus and safeguard the educational experience for all.

Since 2008, The Campaign has helped stop guns-on-campus legislation in over 20 states and is the only national organization of its kind charged specifically in protecting higher educational institutions and the communities they serve. The Campaign has effectively rallied over 400 colleges and universities across the country in opposing the gun lobby's agenda to push guns into college campus environments

by signing onto a unifying resolution.

About the Center for the Study of Guns & Society

Established in April 2022, the Center for the Study of Guns & Society (CSGS) is a hub for pioneering interdisciplinary research on a wide variety of topics in firearms history, including the technologies, manufacture, possession and use of firearms; the social and cultural underpinnings of gun ownership; and the tolerance of high levels of gun violence in the U.S. relative to other countries. The center promotes academic reflection on the role history plays in making categories of contemporary debate around guns appear inevitable, natural or culturally necessary, and supports scholarship and pedagogies that uncover hidden conflicts and contexts as a means of better understanding contemporary phenomena.

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