There are very few university organizations where general body meetings consist of various props being thrown at other members, swung at high speeds, and lit on fire. Serving as the Vice President of the University of Florida Juggling Club has been one of my major commitments outside of academia as an undergraduate. Besides having the opportunity to learn new patterns and skills from other members, build the club’s reputation in the international juggling community, and participate in regional competitions, I have gained a much deeper understanding of effective leadership. My official roles included recruitment, organizing club meetings, and choreographing and managing performances. The process of creating and performing a group routine invariably proved to be a highly stressful but rewarding task. I was constantly getting better at micromanaging teams, inspiring camaraderie, and resolving conflicts. Furthermore, performing in front of groups such as the children with disabilities at the local hospital was one of the most rewarding experiences I have ever had, as many of the children were seeing juggling for the first time and were tremendously excited about being able to hold and play with the equipment.

Another organization that I participated in as an undergraduate was the Dynamo, a student-run public policy think-tank that was the University of Florida’s chapter of the Roosevelt Institute. After working under the club’s founder and Director of Energy and Environment when I was a freshman to co-publish a report on smart grid technology in Florida, I was promoted to be the next Director of Energy and Environment. This gave me the chance to practice public speaking and debating, as well as conduct various discussions on issues relating to energy and engineering. This taught me the importance of making sure every opinion and idea is given a fair chance.