



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Awards Convocation 2025

ALL-UNIVERSITY AWARDS 2025

MICHIGAN STATE
U N I V E R S I T Y

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ALL-UNIVERSITY AWARDS CEREMONY

April 2025

Presentation of Awards

William J. Beal Outstanding Faculty Awards

Teacher-Scholar Awards

Community Engagement Scholarship Award

The President's Distinguished Teaching Award

Simmons Chivukula Award for Academic Leadership

Distinguished Academic Staff Awards

Excellence-in-Teaching Citations

Robert F. Banks Award for Institutional Leadership

Donald F. Koch Award for Quality in Undergraduate Teaching

Faculty Emeriti Association Award for

"Outstanding Contributions by an Individual or Team of Faculty"

WILLIAM J. BEAL OUTSTANDING FACULTY AWARDS



Awards are based on a comprehensive and sustained record of scholarly excellence in research and/or creative activities, instruction, and outreach.

Christoph Adami

Steven Chermak

Michael Dease

Walter Hawthorne

Hui Li

Xiaoming Liu

Richard Lunt

Anna Moore

Karin Allor Pfeiffer

Shin-Han Shiu

The William J. Beal Outstanding Faculty Awards are supported by the Office of University Advancement at Michigan State University.

WILLIAM J. BEAL OUTSTANDING FACULTY AWARD RECIPIENTS IN ACTION

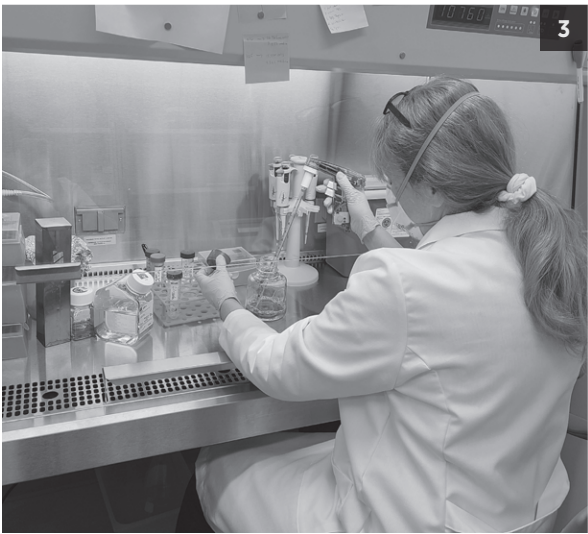


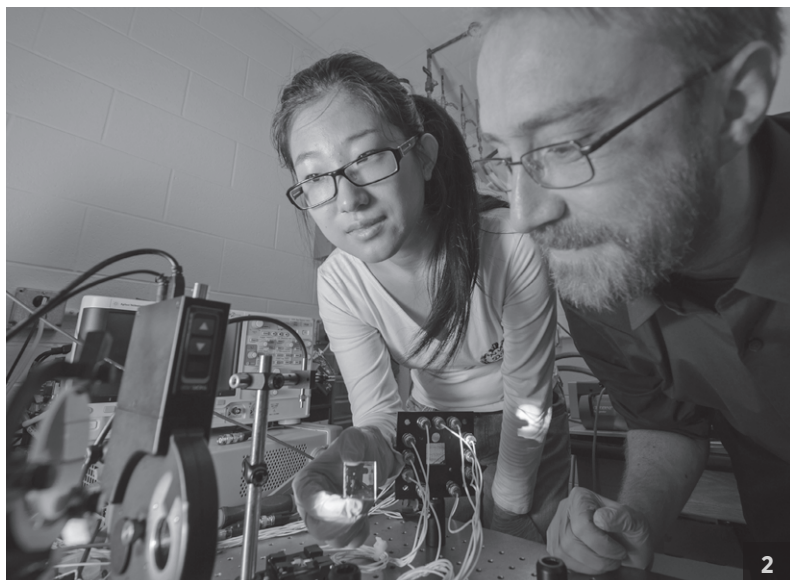
- 1. Christoph Adami
- 2. Steven Chermak
- 3. Michael Dease
- 4. Walter Hawthorne
- 5. Hui Li





- 1. Xiaoming Liu
- 2. Richard Lunt
- 3. Anna Moore
- 4. Karin Allor Pfeiffer
- 5. Shin-Han Shiu







**Microbiology, Genetics and Immunology & Physics and Astronomy
College of Natural Science**

CHRISTOPH ADAMI

Dr. Christoph Adami is a trailblazer in theoretical physics, computational biology and information theory. As a computational biologist, he focuses on Darwinian evolution, which he studies theoretically, experimentally and computationally at different levels of organization (from simple molecules to brains).

In the physical realm, Dr. Adami's research has contributed to our understanding of information states in quantum mechanics and black holes. He is renowned for using information theory to understand biological principles such as evolution and the nature of life itself. Dr. Adami spearheaded the development of Avida, an Artificial Life simulator that uses mutating and adapting computer viruses as a tool for investigating evolutionary biology.

Beyond developing unique applications of his work, Dr. Adami continuously draws deep connections that unify distinct areas of science. Dating back to the mid-1990s, he made significant contributions that led to one of MSU's major scientific successes. Dr. Adami's collaborative work supported the National Science Foundation's BEACON Center for the Study of Evolution in Action, a

Science and Technology Center that secured more than \$50 million in research funding for MSU and its partners.

As the author of two books and more than 170 peer-reviewed articles, Dr. Adami is widely recognized as a world leader in several fields of science. He has mentored nearly 30 Ph.D. students and postdoctoral researchers, many of whom have gone on to faculty positions at top institutions and facilities, including the University of Texas, the University of Chicago, the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center and MSU. One mentee who worked alongside Dr. Adami, Charles Ofria, was honored with the William J. Beal Outstanding Faculty Award in 2017.

Dr. Adami's achievements have also been recognized with numerous honors, including NASA's Exceptional Achievement Medal, a Fellowship in the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Society for Artificial Life.

For his thought-provoking research, ideation and support of future scientists, Dr. Adami is highly deserving of the Michigan State University William J. Beal Outstanding Faculty Award.



Criminal Justice
College of Social Science

STEVEN CHERMAK

Dr. Steven Chermak has exhibited expertise in a range of areas, including targeted violence, hate crimes, domestic terrorism, and media and criminal justice. Beyond noted impacts in research, teaching and service, he is widely regarded as a valuable instructor in the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University and a sought-after mentor for undergraduate and graduate students.

As a renowned criminologist, Dr. Chermak has engaged in cross-disciplinary research including his pioneering work on the use of open-source data collection to understand the life course of violent extremists, school shooters and youth coming of age in high crime communities. His ability to raise the methodological bar in studying hard-to-reach populations and hard-to-document phenomena has distinctively shaped the field.

Dr. Chermak and several colleagues built the Extremist Crime Database (ECDB) and the Risk and Protective Factor Database (RPFDB), which focus on domestic extremism activities in the U.S. The ECDB has allowed him to publish articles understanding patterns of violence of far right, far left, and al-Qaeda-inspired extremists, documenting how lone wolf attacks are different from group-inspired terrorist attacks and examining the characteristics of foiled terrorist plots. Funding has also been secured for the team to build another database on fatal and non-fatal school shootings.

Dr. Chermak's research has been funded by the Department of Homeland Security, the National Institute of Justice, and the Michigan State Police, surpassing \$4.5 million in support since arriving at MSU in 2005. He has published two books, seven edited volumes and numerous research reports. His research has appeared in leading criminological journals including "The Annual Review of Criminology," the "Journal of Quantitative Criminology," "Criminology and Public Policy" and "Justice Quarterly."

Given his ability to connect with students and raise the intellectual bar for those entering graduate studies, Dr. Chermak is consistently assigned to teach two impactful courses that serve as a gateway into the criminal justice field. In 2021, he received the Outstanding Mentor Award from the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences for his exceptional mentorship of students in the academy and beyond. That same year, he was awarded the Distinguished Scholar Award from the American Society of Criminology's Division of Terrorism and Bias Crime.

For his advancement of criminal justice studies and dedication to advancing student learning and careers, Dr. Chermak is highly deserving of the Michigan State University William J. Beal Outstanding Faculty Award.



Jazz Studies
College of Music

MICHAEL DEASE

Mr. Michael Dease is widely recognized as one of the finest jazz trombonists in the world. An artist who combines intense creativity and artistry with a versatile sound, he leads the way for trombonists and continues to reshape instrument possibilities. Throughout his career, Dease has profoundly influenced and expanded the technique and approach of professional trombonists who perform widely disparate genres such as jazz, world, folk and popular music.

As a leading recording artist, Dease has been featured on more than 20 albums. His discography as a collaborative artist extends to more than 250 additional recordings with artists such as Paul Simon, Wynton Marsalis, René Fleming, David Sanborn and Michael Bublé. Dease's first Grammy was with Alicia Keys and his second was as lead trombonist and soloist in the Christian McBride Big Band with whom he performed with at the White House for a Salute to Ray Charles, broadcast and recorded live on PBS/CSPAN.

His recordings have received universal praise in jazz press with critic Jim Macnie commenting about his recording *All These Hands*, "this

robust affair is not only a fun glance at the music's diversity, but an entertaining study in blues permutations." *DownBeat* magazine, regarded by many as the premiere jazz journal, conducts an annual poll of international critics who have selected Dease as Trombonist of the Year for four consecutive years.

As a teacher, Dease has established one of the top collegiate jazz trombone studios nationwide. Under his leadership, the MSU Jazz Trombone ensemble won a competition sponsored by the International Trombone Association. His current and past students have found a welcome audience among jazz fans across the country and have won many significant honors. His teaching prowess extends from North Carolina to Tokyo where Dease founded and leads the prestigious Jazz Institute at the Brevard Music Center and the Seiko Summer Jazz Camp in Japan.

For his international reputation, sustained level of excellence as a teacher, and groundbreaking accomplishments as a performing artist, Dease is highly deserving of the Michigan State University William J. Beal Outstanding Faculty Award.



History
College of Social Science

WALTER HAWTHORNE

Dr. Walter Hawthorne continues to show excellence and impact in his fields of study and among industry peers. Over the past 20 years, he has demonstrated leadership as a dedicated teacher to undergraduates and graduates, a recognized pioneer in African history and digital humanities, and an avid supporter of MSU's mission and values.

As a scholar, Dr. Hawthorne used a variety of languages and methodologies to recover the past of the Balanta peoples of West Africa, sharing their stories of resistance and cultural survival and reshaping the field of African History. He has created and developed several projects in the digital humanities that are explicitly aimed at scholars and audiences nationwide.

Dr. Hawthorne secured large grants from the Mellon Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities to create a large, multi-phase digital humanities project devoted to preserving the memory of the Transatlantic slave trade, an effort aimed at ensuring that people anywhere can access and utilize historical data about slavery. Enslaved.org, the most recent and ongoing endeavor, accounts for the lives of named enslaved individuals of African descent in the Atlantic world, revealing their stories to scholars, educators and genealogists. These

efforts have made MSU an internationally recognized leader in the digital humanities.

Dr. Hawthorne has published several books, most recently examining the slave trade from Africa to Amazonia, Brazil in "From Africa to Brazil: Culture, Identity, and an Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600-1830." Furthermore, his exceptional studies have been featured in various scholarly publications and he serves as an editor of the "Journal of Slavery and Data Preservation."

In addition to helping create the Lab for Education and Advancement in Digital Research at MSU, Dr. Hawthorne has enhanced student knowledge and revealed the richness of African history, urging students to consider the generational legacies of the slave trade. As a mentor, he has trained master's and doctoral students at the most demanding and respected graduate program in African history anywhere in the country. During his years as chair of the Department of History and associate dean in the College of Social Science, Dr. Hawthorne used his positions to foster excellence among faculty, staff and students.

For his national leadership in advancing historical and digital fields and his impact as an exceptional mentor and teacher, Dr. Hawthorne is highly deserving of the Michigan State University William J. Beal Outstanding Faculty Award.



**Plant, Soil and Microbial Sciences
College of Agriculture and Natural Resources**

HUI LI

Dr. Hui Li is a renowned environmental soil scientist with enduring research, teaching and service accomplishments. His outstanding reputation as a leading soil and environmental chemist has led to international recognition as an authority on the fate of emerging contaminants such as pharmaceuticals and personal care products (PPCPs).

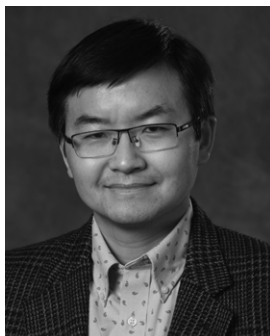
Dr. Li's laboratory has led pioneering research through advancing fundamental knowledge in analysis, plant uptake, sorption, transformation, bioavailability, and environmental remediation of emerging and legacy organic contaminants. Additionally, his program has earned more than \$15 million in competitive federal grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Environmental Protection Agency, National Science Foundation and National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences.

Among other applications, Dr. Li has expanded his research program to focus on quantifying and understanding plant uptake of PPCPs from soil and water, which is vital to food safety. Furthermore, his works have extended knowledge of the sorption and transformation of organic contaminants in soils using a combination of complex and complimentary methodologies. These efforts have resulted in more than 170 peer-reviewed journal articles, and Dr. Li's research has led to licensed patents and innovative remediation strategies.

At Michigan State University, Dr. Li plays a central role in teaching soil and environmental chemistry and mentoring graduate students and postdoctoral research associates. He has taught more than 1,100 undergraduate and graduate students and mentored more than 30 Ph.D. students and postdoctoral researchers. Dr. Li designed unique laboratory modules to reinforce associated lectures and provide a hands-on experience.

Dr. Li is also deeply involved in services to the university, professional societies and committees expanding to an international level. His contributions have been recognized with prestigious awards, including the Jackson Soil Chemistry and Mineralogy Award from the Soil Science Society of America (SSSA) and the Environmental Quality Research Award from the American Society of Agronomy (ASA). He has been elected as a Fellow of both ASA and SSSA and received the inaugural Research Fellow (Career) Award from MSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources in 2023.

For his significant contributions to environmental chemistry and soil science, his excellence in teaching, and his dedication to service in professional societies and national committees, Dr. Li is highly deserving of the Michigan State University William J. Beal Outstanding Faculty Award.



**Computer Science & Engineering
College of Engineering**

XIAOMING LIU

Dr. Xiaoming Liu is an internationally renowned researcher in computer vision, machine learning and biometric recognition. Through his contributions in developing state-of-the-art algorithms, Dr. Liu has been acknowledged by academia and industry peers, increasing MSU's prominence in the computer vision field.

His research focuses on developing robust computer vision algorithms in image alignment, object recognition, 3D object reconstruction from 2D image(s), and their applications to biometrics, robotics and autonomous driving. A key highlight of Dr. Liu's achievements has helped place MSU as one of the centers of excellence in computer vision.

Over the course of his career, he has published 87 papers in three of the most prestigious computer vision conferences, most of which were published since he joined MSU in 2012. The university continues to climb ranks in this competitive field on csrankings.com, a widely consulted source for computer science Ph.D. candidates.

In addition to publishing his scholarly research, Dr. Liu serves as an associate editor of "Pattern Recognition" and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) "Transactions on Image Processing." Additionally, he is an elected fellow of the IEEE and the International Association for Pattern Recognitions.

In the teaching and advising realm, Dr. Liu continues improving course content for a computer vision class at Michigan State, growing the number of students enrolled. Outside the classroom, he offers non-credit opportunities through tutorials at international conferences and seasonal programming on biometrics and deep learning. Dr. Liu also devotes quality time to mentoring and his former students received offers from top companies, including Adobe, Google, Meta and Amazon.

His commitment to advancing the field extends beyond his university role, as evidenced by Dr. Liu's engagement in professional service within his research community, serving as the program chair and general chair for numerous international conferences and receiving more than 80 invitations to speak at different venues over the past five years.

For his prominence in computer vision that has lifted the university's stature and his commitment to student success and service, Dr. Liu is highly deserving of the Michigan State University William J. Beal Outstanding Faculty Award.



**Chemical Engineering and Materials Science
College of Engineering**

RICHARD LUNT

Dr. Richard Lunt is a prolific scholar and entrepreneur who brings a deep passion for renewable energy research and education to MSU. He is a pioneer in solar energy and energy efficiency, producing many key scientific achievements that have been followed worldwide. Most notably, Dr. Lunt exhibited the first demonstration of transparent solar cells, which are creating a new paradigm for building integrated photovoltaics.

His research is expanding possibilities for the seamless deployment of energy harvesting systems, efficient light emitting systems and the potential of excitonic electronic device functionality. These efforts have been enabled by Dr. Lunt's creative merging of principles in chemistry, materials science, physics and chemical engineering.

Dr. Lunt stands out as an exceptional faculty member in terms of high-impact publishing, patenting, funding, teaching, entrepreneurship, mentorship and national awards, including being named a Top-Innovator Under 35 by the MIT Technology Review. Dr. Lunt has authored more than 95 journal articles and more than 35 patents, the majority of which have been licensed. Furthermore, he serves as associate editor for "Science Advances," the open-access version of "Science."

Dr. Lunt's demonstrated passion for teaching is reflected through highly effective and engaging teaching methods in the classroom, community-based educational workshops for greater awareness of energy solutions, and participation in programs aiming for increased energy efficiency and conservation on campus. One of his former students notes: "Michigan State engineering students are extremely lucky to have him as a mentor."

At the university, Dr. Lunt has leveraged his experiences and transformed them into new curricula to increase engagement among engineering students. He has helped develop two minors in the college to support the emphasis on technology development and entrepreneurship.

Throughout his career, Dr. Lunt has established himself as a preeminent researcher, inventor, and entrepreneur, and an exceptional teacher who paves the way for innovative technologies for a sustainable future while inspiring students to become part of the solution.

For his imaginative approach to energy application and his motivational teaching methods, Dr. Lunt is highly deserving of the Michigan State University William J. Beal Outstanding Faculty Award.



**Radiology and Physiology
College of Human Medicine**

ANNA MOORE

Dr. Anna Moore is a nationally and internationally recognized biomedical research scientist with expertise in imaging and image-guided cancer therapies. Her groundbreaking work on developing RNA therapeutics for metastatic cancer has received recognition from her academic colleagues and industry partners.

Throughout her career, Dr. Moore has published work in the most prestigious journals, including “Nature,” “Nature Medicine,” “Science” and “Nature Biotechnology.” Her remarkable accomplishments include securing 45 grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and other funding agencies, totaling more than \$40 million. This distinguishes her as a leading figure among investigators at MSU, joining a select group who have attained similar funding levels.

Dr. Moore led the effort to secure a \$6.7 million NIH grant to build a new facility at Michigan State for imaging and image-guided therapies, including cancer, that afflict humans and large animals. As a project leader, she has exhibited tremendous organizational skills, creating an expansive vision for developing imaging at the university.

This visionary approach to science has inspired many faculty members and trainees. Dr. Moore deeply cares about creating a diverse, welcoming and nurturing community

for her students, fellow faculty and program members. She has also trained visiting clinical and basic science faculty from various institutions in the U.S. and abroad.

Dr. Moore’s work has earned her national and international awards, including a Distinguished Investigator Award from the Academy of Radiology Research and an Outstanding Teacher Award from the International Society for Magnetic Resonance in Medicine. She served as a member of the Board of Trustees of the World Molecular Imaging Society. For her service to the Society, Dr. Moore was elected as a WMIS Fellow.

Her unwavering commitment to community service is woven throughout Dr. Moore’s career, from advocating for increasing funding for imaging at Congressional Briefings on Capitol Hill to serving the Russian and Ukrainian-speaking community of Michigan by giving educational lectures on COVID-19 vaccinations and donating interpreter services to recent Ukrainian refugees.

For her role in inspiring the next generation of biomedical scientists and her compassion for those she serves, Dr. Moore is highly deserving of the Michigan State University William J. Beal Outstanding Faculty Award.



Kinesiology
College of Education

KARIN ALLOR PFEIFFER

Dr. Karin Pfeiffer is internationally recognized as a dynamic force in the field of kinesiology, particularly for her pioneering work in the measurement and promotion of physical activity among youth. Her career has been marked by innovative research that has shaped how we assess and improve physical activity levels in children and adolescents.

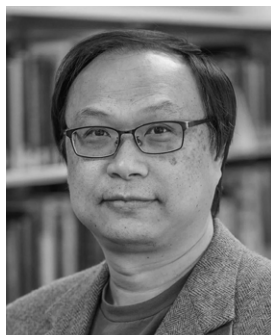
Dr. Pfeiffer's work has informed significant national health policies, including contributions to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Physical Activity Guidelines and the President's Council on Sports, Fitness, and Nutrition. These efforts underscore her national and international impact on public health initiatives related to physical activity.

Her research has earned widespread recognition, with Dr. Pfeiffer's publications being highly cited by scholars and practitioners worldwide. Her work has contributed to advancing public health through various funded research projects, translating scientific discoveries into practical interventions that benefit communities. Her ability to bridge academic research with real-world impact is a testament to her commitment to advancing MSU's research excellence and societal benefit.

As an educator, Dr. Pfeiffer has demonstrated excellence across all levels of teaching and mentoring. She has guided many graduate students who have gone on to successful careers and received numerous accolades for their contributions to the field. Her commitment to student success is evidenced by the high regard in which she is held as an instructor, consistently receiving outstanding evaluations. Dr. Pfeiffer is also deeply committed to fostering inclusive excellence, taking active roles in mentorship programs and leadership initiatives that focus on supporting underrepresented groups in academia.

In addition to her research and teaching, Dr. Pfeiffer has taken on significant leadership roles. She is the Director of the Institute for the Study of Youth Sports and holds leadership positions in national and international organizations. Her community engagement further highlights her passion for promoting physical activity, exemplified through her involvement in initiatives like Girls on the Run.

For her remarkable contributions as an exercise physiologist and her devotion to supporting students, Dr. Pfeiffer is highly deserving of the Michigan State University William J. Beal Outstanding Faculty Award.



**Plant Biology & Computational Mathematics, Science and Engineering
College of Natural Science & College of Engineering**

SHIN-HAN SHIU

Dr. Shin-Han Shiu is a world-renowned computational and experimental biologist whose research focuses on the evolutionary processes that shape plant genomes and plant adaptations.

He uses cutting-edge computational approaches to address two fundamental, unanswered questions in biology: how evolution impacts the content of a species' genome and how genome content is translated into the phenotype of an organism. Dr. Shiu approaches these problems using a combination of state-of-the-art genomic, bioinformatic and computational methods, and his expertise in these areas has had a major impact promoting quantitative and computational plant biology on our campus and worldwide.

Since arriving at Michigan State in 2006, Dr. Shiu has been continuously well-funded, securing \$10 million for his laboratory's research. He has published more than 110 peer-reviewed manuscripts in premiere journals like "Science," "Proceedings of the National Academy of Science," "PLoS Genetics," "Current Biology," and "Plant Cell." His expertise is further acknowledged through roles as an editor of international journals, requests to serve as a reviewer on federal grant panels and lectureships at external workshops.

Dr. Shiu was named a Science Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of

Science in 2023 and a Red Cedar Distinguished Professor in 2024. He has exhibited a strong commitment to mentoring colleagues at all career stages, including 17 predoctoral students, 38 undergraduate researchers, eight postdoctoral scholars and 10 faculty colleagues.

His unwavering dedication to increasing diversity in science is exemplified by his success in maintaining an international and distinct group of researchers by training 28 females and five underrepresented minority undergraduate and graduate students. Additionally, Dr. Shiu has engaged in outreach activities to improve female representation in STEM.

His distinguished and sustained service to science training at MSU includes as Principal Investigator and Director of the multidisciplinary National Science Foundation Research Graduate Training Program NRT-IMPACTS. Dr. Shiu also served as a member of the American Society of Plant Biologists Program Committee for five years and on multiple journal editorial boards, most recently for "Science Advances."

For his global leadership in predictive evolutionary computation biology and his emphasis on diversifying the field, Dr. Shiu is highly deserving of the Michigan State University William J. Beal Outstanding Faculty Award.

TEACHER–SCHOLAR AWARDS



These awards are presented to faculty who have earned the respect of students and colleagues early in their careers for their devotion to and skill in teaching and whose instruction is linked to and informed by their research and creative activities.

Shireen Al-Adeimi

Kristen Cetin

Amanda Flaim

Jacquelyn Jacobs

Elizabeth Perry

Ryan Shaw

The Teacher–Scholar Awards are supported by the Office of University Advancement at Michigan State University.



Teacher Education
College of Education

SHIREEN AL-ADEIMI

Dr. Shireen Al-Adeimi focuses on enhancing students' literacy outcomes through classroom discussion. Her research examines how discourse can transform educational spaces for student learning and social justice. Additionally, Dr. Al-Adeimi strives to advance dialogic practices that improve elementary school students' critical thinking and reasoning skills, reading comprehension, academic language and persuasive writing.

Funded by two large grants from the Spencer Foundation and the Institute of Educational Sciences, Dr. Al-Adeimi's recent efforts investigate how to create validated and reliable tools to measure and operationalize classroom discourse and examine the relationship between student and teacher discussion and literacy outcomes. Additionally, she emphasizes how students and teachers navigate discourse topics about social justice and how artificial intelligence is used to facilitate large-scale coding of text and classroom discourse data.

In addition to teaching language and literacy in the College of Education, Dr. Al-Adeimi is a core faculty member in the Muslim Studies Program, serves as the director of the Global Educators Cohort Program, and is a non-resident fellow at the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft. In her teaching, she fosters deep engagement and guides pre-service and graduate students to think

critically about the role of literacy in shaping learning and social justice.

Extending her prominent public scholarship and anti-war advocacy into practice, Dr. Al-Adeimi examines the evasiveness of imperialist frameworks in public and educational discourses and develops curricular and pedagogical approaches to challenging imperial evasions and fostering justice-oriented dialogic training. Through her teaching, she equips future educators and researchers with the critical tools and stances they need to recognize and challenge pervasive, oppressive ideologies in their teaching and research.

Both as a teacher and scholar, Dr. Al-Adeimi's contributions reflect her transnational identity and demonstrate her commitment to advancing literacy education, critical pedagogy, and social justice. Her work, which bridges multiple fields and methodologies, weaves together rigorous research and justice-oriented perspectives to create a holistic approach that deepens understanding of education's transformative potential.

For her role in providing well-rounded and empowering learning experiences and her dedication to advancing justice-oriented and dialogic discourse in education, Dr. Al-Adeimi is wholly deserving of the Michigan State University Teacher-Scholar Award.



**Civil and Environmental Engineering
College of Engineering**

KRISTEN CETIN

Dr. Kristen Cetin is a widely known expert in building performance, energy efficiency, and building data analytics and modeling. She leads a diverse research group dedicated to assessing the performance of buildings and other infrastructure and the development of solutions to improve energy performance, efficiency and energy demand contributions.

Among others, Dr. Cetin's research has been funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Department of Energy, and Advanced Research Projects Agency – Energy. Some of her most recent work includes addressing energy burden challenges in rural Alaska and understanding how the ongoing changes in work-from-home patterns are impacting home performance.

Dr. Cetin received the prestigious NSF CAREER Award in 2022. She also conducts research in engineering education, in improving an understanding of solving ill-structured complex engineering problems, and how to better teach students to solve such problems. Her research publication in this area was selected for the American Society for Engineering Education Stephen J. Ressler Best Paper Award. Dr. Cetin's engineering education work also includes a focus on the use of virtual reality to improve energy audit training.

The teaching portfolio of Dr. Cetin includes courses in building energy performance,

sustainability, building envelope systems, smart buildings and energy assessments. For six years, she has also participated in the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) ExCEED Teaching Workshop, where she has been an assistant mentor and mentor, collaboratively leading the engineering faculty in learning about effective teaching styles, classroom assessment techniques and other best practices to improve teaching abilities. She also received the ASCE ExCEED New Faculty Excellence in Teaching Award in 2021.

Dr. Cetin is the director of MSU's Industrial Assessment Center (IAC), where faculty, staff and student-led teams are working with companies to improve energy efficiency. These efforts have led to \$6 million in grant funding to expand the program and include training of high school and community college students. The center was also selected to be the lead Field Manager for the Expansion IAC program, which helps to train students across the country to work in the manufacturing and energy industries.

For her substantial contributions to the civil engineering and engineering education fields and her role in sharing expertise with students and fellow scholars, Dr. Cetin is highly deserving of the Michigan State University Teacher-Scholar Award.



Comparative Cultures and Politics
James Madison College

AMANDA FLAIM

Dr. Amanda Flaim is an internationally recognized scholar on the political ecology of development, statelessness and displacement in Southeast Asia. Her expertise in these topics has made her a sought-after consultant for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Educational and Cultural Organization.

One example focuses on statelessness in Thailand, revealing the legal and bureaucratic mechanisms through which political exclusion is produced and perpetuated. Combining ethnographic engagement and the development of the UNESCO Highland Peoples Survey, she contributed to theoretical understandings of how political boundary-enforcement and state conservation initiatives intersect to displace Indigenous, agrarian and historically marginalized communities.

Currently, Dr. Flaim serves as the principal investigator of the Mekong Culture WELL project, funded by a \$1 million grant from the Luce Foundation. For this project, she has assembled a multidisciplinary team of scholars from six MSU colleges while also collaborating with students and prioritizing the goals and knowledge of her Indigenous, ethnic minority and agrarian community partners across the Lower Mekong River Basin. Dr. Flaim's team employs diverse methodologies such as documentary film, survey research, collaborative community art and remote sensing to examine

the impacts of dam development on the lives, livelihoods and futures of Indigenous and riparian communities in this watershed.

Closer to home, Dr. Flaim's inclusive and innovative approach to research is evidenced by her collaboration with two MSU graduate students to curate an exhibit at the Broad Art Museum that will showcase the weavings and stories of Southeast Asian artists, Indigenous activists and filmmakers. Dr. Flaim's teaching reflects the innovative and inclusive nature of her scholarship. In her undergraduate qualitative methods courses, she teaches her students how to connect theory with practice while modeling the importance of active listening, personal reflection, dialogue and collaboration.

Her students describe her courses as enlightening, challenging and deeply engaging. An undergraduate mentee of Dr. Flaim, now beginning a Ph.D. program in Cultural Anthropology, captures the qualities that makes Dr. Flaim an exceptional teacher, one who "fosters a genuine sense of trust and community in her classroom, wherein students are encouraged to show up for themselves, their peers and their learning."

For her passionate approach to teaching, research, service and public outreach, and her dedication to active research and creative pedagogies, Dr. Flaim is deeply deserving of the Michigan State University Teacher-Scholar Award.



Animal Science
College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

JACQUELYN JACOBS

Dr. Jacquelyn Jacobs leads the first companion animal program in MSU's Department of Animal Science. Since joining the university in 2018, she has made substantial contributions to the animal science curriculum, developing and teaching courses ranging from introductory animal management and welfare science to graduate student science education preparedness.

Dr. Jacobs' research program includes both disciplinary research in companion animal behavior and welfare and research in the scholarship of teaching and learning. She has conducted studies on the behavior of dogs in shelters, the impact of lighting on cats in shelters and the welfare of free-living 'community' cats. In addition, Dr. Jacobs has conducted collaborative work on canine-assisted therapy for trauma survivors.

Beyond using her research results to inform lesson content, she involves many undergraduate students in her studies and is committed to blending scholarly work with her teaching. Utilizing her classroom as a laboratory, Dr. Jacobs studies the impact of her creative strategies on student learning. Most recently, she evaluated the use of virtual field trips for her high-enrollment course for students who would not have the ability to visit small pet facilities in person. Additionally, Dr. Jacobs developed a class project in which

students designed an animal area for a Petco store. The project was impactful because she established a collaborative connection with Petco, and students shared their ideas with company executives.

"Our semester-long project involved redesigning a Petco to better the companion animals' welfare," one student shared. "This project opened my eyes to how animal welfare and profit don't always align, but small adjustments can have huge impacts on the animals in a store's care." Students were thrilled by this engaging assignment and the energy it brought to their learning experience.

Dr. Jacobs has a passion for teaching and believes that by infusing excitement into the classroom, students more readily connect with the material, and the instructor can have a lasting impact on their love of learning. She is a recipient of the MSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources Excellence in Teaching – New Teacher Award and the North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture Educator Award. Furthermore, Dr. Jacobs was an MSU Lilly Fellow in the 2023-24 academic year.

For her inclusive and supportive approach to teaching and learning and her scholarly advancements in animal science, Dr. Jacobs is most deserving of the Michigan State University Teacher-Scholar Award.



Community Sustainability
College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

ELIZABETH PERRY

Dr. Elizabeth Perry is often compared to Leslie Knope, the enthusiastic and empathetic parks professional on the comedy television show “Parks and Recreation.” Indeed, she is dedicated to improving park management, especially how parks can sustain meaningful connections with multiple audiences.

As an assistant professor of Protected Areas and Natural Resources Recreation Management and the director of the Park Connections Lab, Dr. Perry researches and teaches about parks, outdoor recreation, nature-based tourism and related societal values. These efforts build on a previous career working in national and state parks. She is nationally known for her applied social science research program that considers parks an important component of community composition and regional character.

Working with affiliates of the Park Connections Lab, Dr. Perry links in-park issues and data with greater geographies and transcending themes. To date, she has mentored more than 60 student scholars. Her research program was recognized with the 2023 College of Agriculture and Natural Resources’ Early Career Researcher Award.

Dr. Perry’s focus on relevance, sustainability, collaboration, inclusion and climate change addresses critical areas for managers,

visitors and communities. These essential themes are woven into her teaching as well. Through an acute awareness of students as individuals, she brings these contexts and approaches into the classroom, nurturing students’ curiosity, community-building and professional success.

One student shared that through Dr. Perry’s “proactive effort to make others feel accepted and comfortable, she gets the best from her students, pushing them toward genuine growth,” while another shared, she’s “incredibly supportive” and “fosters individual growth and curiosity, even in studies that may differ from her own.” Another echoed this inclusion, stating, “I have yet to have a professor integrate such a wide variety of materials into the classroom as Dr. Perry. Whether it was spoken-word poetry pieces from Indigenous environmental advocates or environmental literature authored by people with varying backgrounds, Dr. Perry cohesively brought these materials together to effectively inform her students.”

For her commitment to teaching and research that meets the needs and centers the aspirations of students and community partners, Dr. Perry is highly deserving of the Michigan State University Teacher-Scholar Award.



Music Education
College of Music

RYAN SHAW

Dr. Ryan Shaw is a national leader in music education policy research who fosters impressive levels of both musicianship and pedagogy in future music educators. Excelling in scholarship and teaching, his research explores the intersections of education policy, music education and music teacher education.

Dr. Shaw's work has introduced policy frameworks to music education, challenged music educators and music teacher educators to utilize policy for analysis and sensemaking, and illustrated the roles that education policy and micropolitics play in the lives of music teachers and music education as a field. Recently, Dr. Shaw has published several articles on how arts education partnerships support creative solutions for improving school climate and student performance.

Many of his written works appear in journals considered preeminent in the field of music education, including the "Journal of Research in Music Education," "Arts Education Policy Review" and the "Music Educators Journal." In addition, several pieces were co-authored by graduate students, pointing to Dr. Shaw's commitment to mentoring.

Whether his instruction is for undergraduate or graduate students, he continually exhibits high intelligence, curiosity and creativity. Through careful pedagogical choices, Dr.

Shaw ensures that his students develop similar qualities. Students are often prepared to replicate the instrumental music programs they graduated from without considering the pros and cons of such programs or the possibility of other options. Dr. Shaw encourages students to think past what is familiar and instead consider what might best serve their school's community and foster growth in each student. Music educators across Michigan and the U.S. have learned from Dr. Shaw, and his impact is evident in their classrooms.

Dr. Shaw serves on the editorial boards of the "Journal for Research in Music Education," the "Journal of Music Teacher Education" and "Arts Education Policy Review." He is currently the chair of the American Educational Research Association's Music Education Special Interest Group and regularly advocates for the music education profession with state legislators and school board members as government relations coordinator for the Michigan Music Education Association.

For his role as an innovative educator, supportive mentor, exceptional researcher in music education policy and leader in the music education field, Dr. Shaw is wholly deserving of the Michigan State University Teacher-Scholar Award.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

This award is given in recognition of mutually beneficial and sustained campus-community research partnerships.

Irene Xagorarakis

College of Engineering

Community Partners in Detroit Tri-County

**Community Partners in Detroit Tri-County
and College of Engineering**
IRENE XAGORARAKI



Dr. Irene Xagorarakis has led an innovative academia-industry-government collaboration that monitored and predicted communicable disease outbreaks in the Detroit tri-county area since 2017. This wastewater surveillance collaboration between the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA), CDM Smith, several local health departments, and the Michigan State University College of Engineering, led to significant advances in early disease detection, helping local health departments respond rapidly to public health threats.

The partnership is funded by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services; Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy; GLWA, and other agencies. The partnership has collected and analyzed wastewater samples from the Detroit tri-county area, home to more than three million people. It has resulted in the collection of data that has been critical in providing early warnings for disease outbreaks, such as COVID-19, hepatitis A and sexually transmitted infections. This work has enabled targeted clinical testing, vaccination campaigns and public health messaging.

Key to the success of this effort has been the frequent communication and collaboration among academic, governmental and industry partners. Weekly meetings and continuous knowledge-sharing have ensured that the wastewater surveillance data is actionable, supporting real-world public health responses in the Detroit area. The methodologies developed through this partnership have also been published, shared with the public, and utilized by other communities nationwide, expanding the impact of the work beyond Michigan.

This wastewater surveillance project demonstrates the power of cross-sector partnerships to address public health challenges.

For her leadership in not only advancing the field of wastewater-based epidemiology but also providing valuable training for MSU students and postdoctoral researchers and preparing the next generation of public health experts, Dr. Xagorarakis is richly deserving of the Community Engagement Scholarship Award.

THE PRESIDENT'S DISTINGUISHED TEACHING AWARD



This award is given to faculty who have created innovative teaching environments that enable student learning within and across disciplinary, cultural, and ethnic boundaries.

Erica Wehrwein

The President's Distinguished Teaching Award is supported by an endowment from Carl and Margaret Leidholm.



Physiology
College of Natural Science

ERICA WEHRWEIN

Dr. Erica Wehrwein is a model educator whose dedicated efforts have positively influenced the lives of students and significantly impacted the national and international discussion of physiology education. After receiving her Ph.D. in Physiology at MSU in 2008, Dr. Wehrwein completed a three-year postdoctoral fellowship in human and integrative physiology in the Research Autonomic Division of the Mayo Clinic. She then returned to MSU to teach the senior capstone physiology laboratory.

Dr. Wehrwein often describes her position at MSU as her “dream job” as it perfectly matches her lifelong fascination with the workings of the human body. She extends that passion into her teaching and designed her undergraduate course to focus on active student participation by incorporating hands-on laboratory experiences in human physiology and active discussion of clinical data, embodying her vision of a highly integrative course that links physiological concepts with other basic science and clinical disciplines.

In addition to creating an inclusive and welcoming classroom environment, Dr. Wehrwein prepares her students for their futures. She incorporates professional and career development into her courses, helping seniors be intentional about their next steps while offering ongoing mentorship. Dr. Wehrwein also takes the time to learn more about her students, building community and

offering them opportunities to reflect on their professional growth and views of physiology throughout her courses.

Throughout the global physiology community, Dr. Wehrwein is leader. She was a cofounder and director of the national grass roots organization, Physiology Majors Interest Group, which now has over 300 members across the globe. She played a critical role in the development and launch of the Center for Physiology Education (CPE), a strategic effort of the American Physiological Society (APS), that provides resources (e.g., learning modules, comprehensive teaching guides, networking opportunities) to an international cadre of educators. In 2024, Dr. Wehrwein was elected as an APS Fellow, a title reserved to honor distinguished leaders, and this year, she will become chair of the CPE Advisory Board. Having published her work in peer-reviewed journals including “Advances in Physiology Education,” Dr. Wehrwein is frequently invited to talk about ways to improve physiology teaching and learning at venues across the U.S. and beyond.

For her work strengthening MSU’s educational mission, commitment to exemplary teaching at the undergraduate level, and her leadership in curricular reform, Dr. Wehrwein is most deserving of the President’s Distinguished Teaching Award.

SIMMONS CHIVUKULA AWARD FOR ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

The Simmons Chivukula Award is given for exemplary work in academic leadership at the rank of department chair, school director, assistant dean, or associate dean. An individual is selected based on consistent and demonstrated excellence in academic leadership, including the dimensions of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Dimitar Deliyski

The Simmons Chivukula Award is generously sponsored by a gift from Dr. Elizabeth H. Simmons (Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at UC San Diego, and former MSU Associate Provost for Faculty and Academic Staff Development and former Dean of Lyman Briggs College) and Dr. R. Sekhar Chivukula (Distinguished Professor of Physics at UC San Diego, and former MSU Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education and former Dean of Undergraduate Studies).



**Communicative Sciences and Disorders
College of Communication Arts and Sciences**

DIMITAR DELIYSKI

Dr. Dimitar Deliyski serves as a true pioneer in the study of voice science, shaping the field through his groundbreaking research, novel technological advances, and expert mentoring of students and colleagues alike. Hailed by his colleagues as one of the world's top experts in the study of voice production, Dr. Deliyski developed instrumentation and protocols for speech and voice analysis that are used around the world.

The author of more than 85 refereed papers and more than 125 conference presentations, Dr. Deliyski's research has been continuously funded for nearly 25 years, including support from the National Institutes of Health / National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders and the Department of Defense. Through this work, he developed technology that is fundamental to the study of voice production, including modern-day laryngeal stroboscopy and cutting-edge, high-speed videendoscopic analysis of vocal function. This work provides a critical foundation for clinical assessment and intervention to support those who experience vocal health difficulties.

In the College of Communication Arts and Sciences, Dr. Deliyski has leveraged his extensive experience in academia, medical settings and the private sector to support a culture of sustainable success. Thanks to his mentorship and leadership, the

Communicative Sciences and Disorders department has shown tremendous growth and strength across numerous metrics, reflecting outstanding teaching, research productivity and extramural funding, and professional service. This led to the department receiving the inaugural MSU Spirals of Excellence Award from the Office of the Provost in 2022.

Dr. Deliyski maintains excellence in research while emphasizing a department culture that values collegiality and community above all and accentuates the importance of considering various viewpoints. He is a tireless advocate for his colleagues, who consistently highlight his "warm nature," "wonderful personal characteristics" and "welcoming and encouraging" manner. It is this blend of academic excellence, field-changing impact, unequalled drive and determination, and constant support for colleagues that make Dr. Deliyski a treasure for the field of voice science, his colleagues and the university.

In recognition of his exceptional leadership, dedication, and profound impact on the College of Communication Arts and Sciences and beyond, Dr. Deliyski is unequivocally deserving of the Simmons Chivukula Award for Academic Leadership. His scholarship and productivity, strategic planning and humility are an inspiration to us all.

DISTINGUISHED ACADEMIC STAFF AWARDS

These awards are given to academic specialists and MSU Extension academic staff for extraordinary achievements, excellence, and exceptional contributions in advising, curriculum development, outreach, extension, research, and/or teaching.

Samantha Cass

Andrew Corner

Guillermo Delgado

Philip Kaatz

The Distinguished Academic Staff Awards are supported by the Office of University Advancement at Michigan State University.



Chemistry
Lyman Briggs College

SAMANTHA CASS

Dr. Samantha Cass maintains an energetic, active-learning, student-centered approach to instruction, highlighting the relevance of the material to everyday life and pressing worldwide science-related issues.

In addition to fostering a welcoming and inclusive learning environment, informal yet with maximum academic rigor, Dr. Cass employs a research-validated, flipped classroom approach in which students acquire an initial familiarity of the course concepts by watching her pre-recorded videos; they then answer pre-class quizzes to gauge their preliminary understanding. Dr. Cass tailors her classroom presentations based on student quiz responses, delivering a “mini-lecture” segment grounded on common student misconceptions. For the second half of each session, students collaborate on challenging “exam worthy” questions while Dr. Cass circulates the room asking leading questions and addressing stuck points.

In addition to engaging students in the learning process, Dr. Cass uses teaching to guide her research pursuits and informs her teaching through research focused on chemical education. She has a variety of submitted and published works in numerous publications, including a comparison of student understanding of reaction kinetics in lecture- and context-based courses published in the “Journal of STEM Education: Innovations and Research,” among others.

For more than a decade, Dr. Cass has taught the Instilling Quantitative and Integrative Reasoning (INQUIRE) course for Lyman Briggs, geared toward first-year students who are looking to gain experience with quantitative preparation. Her course materials focus on robust learning goals to develop self-efficacy among this cadre of students. Dr. Cass composed a lengthy supplemental workbook to assist students with developing their quantitative skills via directed practice. Additionally, she devised an “outside the classroom” seminar component for this class, with faculty and alumni guests presenting on mental health management, career options, study skills and learning approaches. Dr. Cass also gives personal time during the weekends to lead students from the INQUIRE course on enrichment trips to science museums and zoos.

Through her hard work and focused mentoring, Dr. Cass has provided a crucial formative experience for a cohort of Lyman Briggs’ students who attended under-resourced high schools across Michigan. She has fulfilled a crucial diversity, equity and inclusion mission of MSU by supporting and helping retain students from disadvantaged backgrounds and under-represented demographic groups.

For her consistent teaching excellence over 15 years, Dr. Cass is a richly deserving recipient of the Michigan State University Distinguished Academic Staff Award.



**Advertising and Public Relations
College of Communication Arts and Sciences**

ANDREW CORNER

Mr. Andrew Corner has demonstrated a comprehensive and sustained record of excellence in teaching, curriculum development, outreach, and leadership across various roles at the College of Communication Arts and Sciences and the broader university community. His vision-driven leadership has positioned him as a trusted member of the MSU community, who consistently steps up to lead with empathy.

One of his most notable contributions includes spearheading the initiative to launch a new public relations (PR) major catering to student and market demands. Mr. Corner continuously ensures student-centered teaching in the Department of Advertising and Public Relations by engaging students in developing their skills, understanding and integration of dynamic industry changes into teaching, and lifelong mentoring of current and former students.

Antonice Strickland, alumni and vice president of public relations and business development at 98Forward in Detroit is a prime example of Mr. Corner's impact on student careers at MSU and beyond. Antonice explains: "I was an unprepared student at MSU, unsure of my career path. After four changes to my major, I discovered the potential of PR as a career path. Before taking Andy's class, I had no idea PR could be a viable career option. His mentorship guided me from that pivotal

realization through my now nearly 13-year career in PR."

Mr. Corner's contributions also extend to leading the Department of Advertising and Public Relations at a time of transition. As interim chair, he ensures efficient day-to-day operations while facilitating several strategic initiatives. He led the University Committee on Undergraduate Education (UCUE) during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, where UCUE deliberated on eight major policy issues that helped ensure the university's effective response to health circumstances.

Among his many accolades, Mr. Corner has been selected as a Public Relations Society of America College Fellow – a top distinction in the PR field. In that capacity and through his rich professional networks, Mr. Corner leverages his strong industry connections, deep understanding of the field, and dedication to student achievement to create pathways for students and strengthen alumni connections.

His career at MSU and his service to the department, college, university, and the larger community demonstrate Mr. Corner's excellence, innovativeness, and creativity in curriculum development, teaching, advising/mentoring, and leadership. For this, he is most deserving of the Michigan State University Distinguished Academic Staff Award.



Residential College in the Arts & Humanities

GUILLERMO DELGADO

As an academic specialist, Mr. Guillermo Delgado has worked with creativity, compassion and energy to build a curriculum in which students and community members collaboratively use the arts to address pressing social issues and enhance individual and community well-being.

Mr. Delgado encourages students and community members to use art as contemplative practice, promoting self-awareness, individual and communal care and social action. He teaches courses like “The Art of Walking” and “Yoga and Art: Creative Possibilities through Contemplative Practices,” and developed and participated in extra-curricular events designed to build community and mutual support through creativity and art. This includes spearheading and hosting open “Mindful Mic Nights” that feature poetry and musical performances by students, faculty and staff and participating in a “House Band” for the Residential College in the Arts and Humanities (RCAH). Mr. Delgado’s work has been particularly important in the RCAH community in the wake of the pandemic and the trauma of Feb. 13, 2023.

Mr. Delgado’s leadership in curricular development, teaching, student engagement and outreach is epitomized in his “Prison Poetry ‘Zine Project,” nurtured and developed over 10 years. He created the project while working with formerly incarcerated individuals at Peckham, Inc. where he ran “Art@Work,” bringing RCAH students to conduct art classes and collaborations

with Peckham, Inc. employees. There he met a formerly incarcerated woman who taught herself to paint while in prison using Skittles as her pigment. Inspired, Delgado developed the idea for a prison arts program, focusing on poetry and ‘zines (hand-designed and -made short magazines) at the Ingham County Youth Center and later at the Richard A. Handlon Correctional Facility in Ionia.

Mr. Delgado has built a suite of curricular and co-curricular programs where RCAH students and incarcerated individuals at multiple institutional partners collaborate to read, discuss, write and perform poetry, culminating in a poetry slam.

The effects of Mr. Delgado’s programs are transformative. RCAH students testify to the power of their experiences and how this work has been critical in shaping their post-graduate careers. He has been invited to speak about poetry as contemplative practice in prisons to numerous audiences and collaborated with and contributed to several art institutions, including the exhibition “Free Your Mind: Art and Incarceration in Michigan” at the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit.

For his dedication, compassion and skill in constructing opportunities for RCAH students, faculty and community members to use the arts for mutual care and social action, Mr. Delgado heartily deserves the Michigan State University Distinguished Academic Staff Award.



**Institute of Agriculture and Agribusiness
MSU Extension and College of Agriculture & Natural Resources**

PHILIP KAATZ

Mr. Philip Kaatz is widely recognized locally, statewide, and internationally for his leadership, extensive knowledge, and dedication to using science and evidence-based information to improve the lives and businesses of others. He began with MSU Extension in 1999 and provides field crops expertise to seven counties and forage crop expertise statewide.

At the heart of his success is Mr. Kaatz's willingness and ability to lead. Throughout his career, he has served in an array of leadership roles, including county MSU Extension Director and president of the Michigan Association of Extension Agents. Furthermore, when MSU Extension needed an interim District 10 director, he stepped up to support work teams, obtain and maintain critical funding, and collaborate with staff to improve cohesion and morale.

Mr. Kaatz is an expert in forage crop production and management as evidenced by numerous invited presentations, authored articles and publications. He has given presentations to dairy producers and consultants in Ukraine and Israel and served as a U.S. Agency for International Development consultant in Belarus. He also shared his expertise and experience with representatives from eight countries at the International Conference on Agricultural Extension: Innovation to Impact in Hyderabad, India.

While Mr. Kaatz is an effective educator who enjoys sharing his expertise during farm visits,

he understands the need for and value of virtual learning. He led a collaborative Field Crops Team effort to develop and share in-season crop and pest management information with farmers and agribusinesses resulting in the creation of the Virtual Breakfast Series. This award-winning online program attracts a national and international audience to the weekly sessions.

Mr. Kaatz has received many awards for his work, including the highest honor that the National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA) confers: the Distinguished Service Award (2012). Other major awards include the 2023 NACAA Search for Excellence Award in crop production, the Lapeer County Farm Bureau Distinguished Service to Agriculture Award in 2016, and the MSU Extension Meritorious Service Award in 2023. Most recently, Mr. Kaatz was recognized for Outstanding Service to MSU Extension in 2024. He was promoted to senior extension educator in 2021.

According to Doohong Min, professor of Forage Systems at Kansas State University, Mr. Kaatz has been committed to MSU Extension throughout his career, making Michigan agriculture more sustainable and bettering the quality of life in our state's farming communities.

Mr. Kaatz is an exemplary educator, leader and colleague who is most deserving of the Michigan State University Distinguished Academic Staff Award.

EXCELLENCE-IN-TEACHING CITATIONS

These citations are awarded to graduate teaching assistants who have distinguished themselves by the care they have given and the skill they have shown in meeting their classroom responsibilities.

Vindula Alwis

Kasun Gajasinghe

Kathryn Genoa-Obradovich

Mary Ellen Rutemeyer

Danielle Seppala

Excellence-in-Teaching Citations are supported by the Office of University Advancement at Michigan State University.



Chemistry
College of Natural Science

VINDULA ALWIS

Mr. Vindula Alwis demonstrates expertise in organic chemistry, a strong dedication to teaching, and exemplary leadership in the instructional laboratory as a teaching assistant in the Department of Chemistry at Michigan State University.

His dedication to chemistry reaches beyond the classroom, as Mr. Alwis has conducted numerous research endeavors, including an ongoing project examining the synthesis of Capsular Polysaccharide Type 5 of *Staphylococcus aureus* for vaccine development. Additionally, Mr. Alwis has contributed to three peer-reviewed scientific publications and has shared his research during conference presentations, including the Midwest Carbohydrate and Glycobiology Symposium, and the International Conference on Frontiers in Chemical Technology.

The teaching philosophy of Mr. Alwis is rooted in creating an inclusive, engaging and community-centered learning environment. His ability to simplify complex concepts significantly enhances the learning experience for students, making challenging material more approachable, engaging and accessible. With a strong background in organic

chemistry, Mr. Alwis plays a key role in course development and contributed to the refinement of an award-winning lab project.

Moreover, Mr. Alwis exemplifies remarkable comradery and values diversity, equity and inclusion. His exceptional leadership in the laboratory ensures his students are actively involved and fully comprehend their experiments. His commitment to fostering a positive learning environment is evident in the support letters from students, who credit Mr. Alwis for his patience and eagerness to help students understand intricate subjects. These promising future scholars have clearly benefited from his guidance.

Mr. Alwis also displays his dedication to chemistry through leadership at MSU, serving as election commissioner for the Chemistry Graduate Student Organization. He has also served as the president and secretary of the MSU Sri Lankan Student Association.

For his expertise, leadership and team spirit, and the lasting impact he leaves on his students and the College of Natural Science, Mr. Alwis is highly deserving of the Michigan State University Excellence-in-Teaching Citation.



**Teacher Education
College of Education**

KASUN GAJASINGHE

Mr. Kasun Gajasinghe is a doctoral candidate and an outstanding teacher, scholar, and advocate for justice and equity in transnational contexts. His research centers on curriculum studies, global education, critical literacies and humanities, and he has shared his scholarly work through numerous journal articles, written book chapters and conference presentations.

One recent study focuses on the College of Education Global Educators Cohort Program (GECF), where Mr. Gajasinghe conducted interviews about the study away program. Additionally, a separate research experience generated data for a study on white Christian nationalism in a 2023 school board election campaign. In 2019, Mr. Gajasinghe also volunteered to teach and research for a digital storytelling project with immigrant youth co-created by the Residential College in the Arts and Humanities at MSU and the Refugee Development Center in Lansing.

Mr. Gajasinghe has distinguished himself as a strong, compassionate, student-centered and engaging instructor. He facilitates deep conversations around diverse ways that young teachers can participate in ending the everyday violence of patriarchy, white supremacy, ethnonationalism, colonialism, militarism and other ideologies that have material bearing on the possibility of multispecies survival. His passion for teaching and writing to change the world affected by a multilayered crisis is evident

in these engagements.

Mr. Gajasinghe is known as an exceptionally dedicated instructor who supports his students through difficult moments and personal challenges. A former student recalls that the caring, rigorous, contemplative, and engaging environment that Mr. Gajasinghe curates in his classes “greatly expanded my views on a variety of topics, constantly pushing my mind into a space of complexity and viewing the world in a way of interconnectedness and entangledness.”

During his doctoral program, Mr. Gajasinghe has taught seven different College of Education courses over five years. These courses range from second- and third-year undergraduate courses for the GECF and the Elementary Teacher Preparation Program, to senior year courses on world language teaching methods. Furthermore, he has supported student interns in their classroom practice.

Mr. Gajasinghe was an elected member of the Doctoral Education Committee for the Curriculum, Instruction and Teacher Education (CITE) doctoral program, and a member of the CITE Graduate Student Mentoring Committee in 2021-22, among other leadership and service appointments.

In recognition of his genuine care for students and his outstanding work as a scholar, teacher and advocate, Mr. Gajasinghe is richly deserving of the Michigan State University Excellence-in-Teaching Citation.



**Communicative Sciences and Disorders
College of Communication Arts and Sciences**

KATHRYN GENOA-OBRADOVICH

Ms. Kathryn Genoa-Obradovich exemplifies the ideal teacher-practitioner in the field of speech-language pathology. She artfully bridges theory and practice, sharing rich, real-world narratives of her own that illustrate the complexities of clinical decision-making. Her ability to convey these experiences with clarity and purpose enables students to translate classroom learning into practical skills, preparing them for the realities of clinical practice.

Ms. Genoa-Obradovich has special interest in dysphagia (swallowing disorders) in head and neck cancer. Her clinical involvement with this oncologic population has been impactful and has improved collaborative work between Michigan State University and state-wide health systems. She continues to strive for excellence in patient care and this motivation drives her research.

Ms. Genoa-Obradovich's research efforts have been noted and published in numerous publications and shared in more than a dozen presentations, including her contributions to a study published in 2024 in the "American Journal of Otolaryngology" on the perceptions and practices of people with a total laryngectomy during the COVID-19 pandemic.

With her engaging personality and remarkable interpersonal skills, Ms. Genoa-Obradovich has an innate ability to draw students

into the learning process. She promotes an environment that is both intellectually stimulating and emotionally supportive. Her classroom is a sanctuary for inquiry, where students feel empowered to ask challenging questions and explore complex concepts in risk-free scenarios.

One student elaborated that "her dedication to her students is unwavering. She created an inclusive and supportive classroom environment where all questions are encouraged, no matter the complexity. Her willingness to provide thorough explanations and ensure our understanding of difficult concepts demonstrated her commitment to our success. Ms. Genoa-Obradovich fostered an atmosphere where even the most reserved students felt comfortable participating." She has a genuine investment in her students' success both academically and personally.

Ms. Genoa-Obradovich's ability to make learning relevant and fun not only captivates her students but also enhances their critical thinking skills. Her dynamic and creative teaching methods, engaging and dependable interpersonal skills, and effective ability to translate clinical practice into the academic environment has had profound impact on her students' academic and clinical journeys and makes her incredibly deserving of the Michigan State University Excellence-in-Teaching Citation.



**Linguistics, Languages and Cultures
College of Arts & Letters**

MARY ELLEN RUTEMEYER

Ms. Mary Ellen Rutemeyer's dedication to teaching draws on her own passion for languages and the conviction that teaching and learning are social activities. Her pedagogy strives to create a classroom atmosphere conducive to open communication and collaborative learning.

To build the type of atmosphere that allows students to take risks and make mistakes, Ms. Rutemeyer takes time to get to know each of the students in her courses and dedicates every moment in class to reinforcing a collaborative learning environment. Her classes extend the social elements of language learning beyond the classroom space by bringing in diverse perspectives from German-speaking communities across the globe.

Currently a doctoral candidate, Ms. Rutemeyer's research interests lie at the intersection of German studies, second language studies, and language program administration. Her dissertation explores the written and lived policies in language programs, looking at practices related to the language used for in-class instruction. She has presented at the major national conferences in German studies, such as the German Studies Association (GSA) and American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACFTL). Her article, "Learner Agency and Investment in a Basic Language Program," is forthcoming

in *Second Language Research and Practice*, the premier venue for research on language program administration.

Ms. Rutemeyer's commitment to student success and willingness to go the extra mile has been evident to her students and frequently mentioned in course evaluations. For one student, her efforts were instrumental while they navigated a difficult transition to college; for another student, Ms. Rutemeyer's approach to teaching helped greatly when they were recovering from illness while abroad. As one student put it, Ms. Rutemeyer is "the most supportive instructor of any educational class I've attended at MSU."

In addition to serving as the graduate student representative in both her program and department, Ms. Rutemeyer was selected for the graduate research assistantship in the National Less Commonly Taught Languages Resource Center and is currently serving as the graduate advising assistant in the Department of Linguistics, Languages, and Cultures.

For her extraordinary teaching, commitment to ensuring student success, and her dedication to the field of language acquisition, as well as her approach to creating classroom atmospheres that are conducive to learning, Ms. Rutemeyer is highly deserving of the Michigan State University Excellence-in-Teaching Citation.



**Physics and Astronomy
College of Natural Science**

DANIELLE SEPPALA

Ms. Danielle Seppala is a doctoral student who shows dedication, skill and leadership in the classroom. Her passion and excitement for physics is contagious, resulting in great impact on her students.

Ms. Seppala's expertise in physics led to numerous contributions in six research projects. Her work includes serving as an experimental shift operator and nuclear interaction working group member for a neutron modeling collaboration at the High Energy Physics Lab at MSU. Additionally, she worked on a superconducting radio frequency cavity research endeavor at the university's Facility for Rare Isotope Beams.

Through a unique teaching approach, Ms. Seppala has enhanced the Projects and Practices in Physics (P-Cubed) course, and the Department of Physics and Astronomy has expanded the offering to more students. Operating as a flipped classroom format, P-Cubed requires instructors to devote the majority of their time to group problem solving. Students focus on complex physics projects and receive narrative feedback on their weekly work. Within a section of the course, small-group instructors include one faculty member, a graduate student and undergraduate learning assistants (ULAs). The department recently added 12 ULAs to support the P-Cubed expansion. Ms. Seppala was involved in all

facets of the course's success and excelled in this role.

A kind and thoughtful teacher, Ms. Seppala has been a natural leader within her instructional teams. She has a strong work ethic and is very generous with her time in support of students and colleagues. Her fellow instructors and others who have collaborated with Ms. Seppala describe her as an outstanding teacher and researcher who cares deeply about student success, who holds vast and practical experiences, and who can successfully relate physics to real-world topics.

In addition to ensuring students grasp a complex subject, she makes it a point to connect with them personally. Ms. Seppala asks how their day is going and shares lighthearted stories to begin each class, building a comfortable environment and helping them focus on tackling in-class work with a relaxed and open mindset.

A community college transfer turned high energy physics graduate student, Ms. Seppala is a mother to four children and a military veteran, serving eight years in the U.S. Navy before enrolling at MSU. For her excellence in teaching, research and service, and her kindhearted approach to interacting with members of the campus community, Ms. Seppala is wholly deserving of the Michigan State University Excellence-in-Teaching Citation.

ROBERT F. BANKS AWARD FOR INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP



This award is presented to a member of the faculty, academic staff, or support staff in recognition of extraordinary and sustained institutional leadership that advances MSU's commitment to connectivity, quality, and inclusion.

Sandi Smith

The Robert F. Banks Award for Institutional Leadership is supported by the Office of University Development at Michigan State University.



Communication
College of Communication Arts and Sciences

SANDI SMITH

Dr. Sandi Smith was the epitome of a “triple threat” faculty member with outstanding teaching, research and service contributions. Known for her strong pedagogical skills, student-centered approach, and high levels of engagement in and outside the classroom, she is a University Distinguished Professor Emerita and former director of the MSU Health and Risk Communication Center.

Over her 38-year career at MSU, Dr. Smith established herself as a distinguished scholar and dedicated leader within the academic community. She has conducted studies in social influence, health communication and interpersonal relationships, including pioneering work focused on interpersonal communication in the health context and the role of important “memorable messages,” and groundbreaking work on female parolees’ communication with probation officers. Furthermore, Dr. Smith’s research has been funded by numerous organizations such as the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation.

Her work has been published extensively in top-tier journals such as “Health Communication,” “Criminal Justice and Behavior,” and the “Journal of Pediatric Health Care,” with her research cited more than 7,000 times. Her latest book, “Reflections on Interpersonal Communication,” earned the prestigious Gerald

R. Miller Book Award, solidifying her position as a thought leader.

A renowned teacher and mentor, Dr. Smith was also a Lilly Fellow and received the Faculty Impact Award from the College of Communication Arts and Sciences in 2012 for her profound influence on thousands of MSU students. Her extensive service record includes countless contributions to the university, college and Department of Communication, reflecting her unwavering commitment to excellence, integrity and student success.

Throughout her career, Dr. Smith has earned numerous prestigious honors, including the MSU Distinguished Faculty Award (2007) and the B. Aubrey Fisher Mentorship Award (2008). She was named the International Communication Association (ICA)/National Communication Association (NCA) Outstanding Health Communication Scholar (2011), elected a Fellow of the ICA (2012), and awarded the ICA Outstanding Program of Applied Research (2013). In 2016, she was named a Distinguished Scholar by the NCA and was appointed a University Distinguished Professor in 2017.

Dr. Smith’s enduring impact at MSU is a testament to her visionary leadership, pioneering research, and unwavering dedication to fostering academic and personal growth, making her exceptionally deserving of the Robert F. Banks Award for Institutional Leadership.

DONALD F. KOCH AWARD FOR QUALITY IN UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING

In recognition of outstanding undergraduate teaching.

Raven L. Jones

The Donald F. Koch Award for Quality in Undergraduate Teaching is supported by the MSU Alumni Club of Mid-Michigan and by Donald F. Koch and Barbara J. Sawyer-Koch.



Teacher Education College of Education

RAVEN L. JONES

A Detroit native and resident, Dr. Raven L. Jones is a joy-chaser, committed to teaching and empowering children and youth to speak truth to power. An associate professor in the Department of Teacher Education at Michigan State University, her teaching and work examine culture, equity and the lived experiences of Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) in schools and communities.

Deeply inspired by the Civil Rights Movement, the Harlem Renaissance, generational storytelling practices and social justice activism, Dr. Jones designs antiracist course content for all levels of education, facilitates urban debate league workshops, and organizes national and international conference sessions that dismantle oppressive teaching practices in curricula and schooling. Before earning her doctorate, she served as a classroom teacher and as the Director of Debate for the Life Skills Center of Metropolitan Detroit. Across her teaching, research and service, Dr. Jones draws inspiration from her community of caretakers and mentors: Drs. Geneva Napoleon Smitherman, Pero G. Dagbovie, and Maisha T. Winn.

Her commitment to excellence in teaching also stems from continuous reflection on her instructional practices, grounded in careful consideration of student experiences. From analyzing student insights to better understand their views of course content to engaging in valuable conversations in and outside the

classroom with her learning community, Dr. Jones embodies what it means to teach for justice and joy.

Her publications and service are widely recognized by the American Educational Research Association, the Detroit Public Library, National Public Radio, the Michigan Council of Teachers of English, and key outlets like “The Journal of Higher Education.” Additionally, Dr. Jones has been the recipient of the Grace Lee Boggs Center to Nurture Community Leadership fellowship; the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation’s Democratizing Knowledge Institute fellowship; the Martha’s Vineyard Institute of Creative Writing fellowship; and the Early Career Educator of Color Leadership Award from the National Council of Teachers of English.

As a Fulbright-Hays Scholar, Dr. Jones examined students’ experiences and identities with language and literacy in urban and rural Tanzania. Alongside her daughter, Zuri Hudson, they co-founded The Zuri Reads Initiative. In partnership with the Michigan Council of Teachers of English, they co-facilitate The Joy in Me, monthly affinity space sessions for children and youth of color.

For her immeasurable commitment to collaborating with children and youth and her dedication to creating space for inclusive and crucial conversation, Dr. Jones is most deserving of the Donald F. Koch Award for Quality in Undergraduate Teaching.

FACULTY EMERITI ASSOCIATION AWARD

In recognition of Outstanding Contributions by an Individual or
Team of Faculty

Laurie Kaguni

John Wang

This award recognizes an individual MSU Faculty Emeritus or Emerita or a team of Emeriti faculty who following retirement have served the university community through contributions to a unit or program.



**Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
College of Natural Science**

LAURIE KAGUNI

Since her retirement, Dr. Laurie Kaguni has played an essential role in enhancing the programs and initiatives of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (BMB). She was instrumental in implementing the Clarence Suelter Postdoctoral Fellowship, which was introduced to the department in 2022. Her leadership and substantial personal contributions have helped establish the fellowship as a cornerstone for attracting and supporting exceptional postdoctoral researchers to MSU.

Additionally, Dr. Kaguni has continued to serve as director of the Biochemistry Research Trainee Program (B RTP), which provides paid, practical training in an academic environment for individuals exploring career opportunities after earning a bachelor's degree. The program has flourished under her guidance, providing meaningful research experiences to participants and bridging the gap between undergraduate education and future careers in graduate education, industry or public service. Dr. Kaguni's dedication to mentoring and program development has enriched the department and positively impacted the career trajectories of countless trainees.

Dr. Kaguni also recently served as a judge for the BMB TEAM-UP Postdoctoral Fellowship Award. The review process adhered to the National Institutes of Health format, requiring Dr. Kaguni to dedicate significant time and effort to evaluating and scoring proposals and

providing constructive feedback. Her expertise and thoughtful assessments were invaluable to ensuring a fair and rigorous selection process for this prestigious award.

Beyond her formal responsibilities, Dr. Kaguni's efforts to engage emeriti faculty have fostered a sense of community and encouraged continued contributions from retired faculty. Through her initiatives, she has created opportunities for emeriti to remain actively involved, further enriching the department with their experience and expertise.

Dr. Kaguni's efforts have significantly impacted the BMB department and the MSU community. The Clarence Suelter Postdoctoral Fellowship has become a vital resource for supporting postdoctoral researchers, strengthening the department's ability to attract and retain top talent. Her stewardship of the B RTP program has transformed it into a highly effective training ground for aspiring scientists, providing them with practical skills and experience critical for their development.

In honoring Dr. Kaguni with this award, the Faculty Emeriti Association acknowledges her mentorship, financial generosity and forward-thinking leadership that have left an indelible mark on the department. Her efforts to organize and engage emeriti faculty highlight her dedication to fostering a vibrant community and encouraging continued contributions from retired faculty.



**Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
College of Osteopathic Medicine**

JOHN WANG

Dr. John Wang has remained a deeply engaged and invaluable member of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (BMB) since his retirement. His commitment to mentoring teaching faculty, including Drs. Faner, Ritchie, Simmons and Wilkins, has provided these educators with steady guidance and professional support. Through his thoughtful mentorship, Dr. Wang has helped cultivate a collaborative and innovative environment that benefits both faculty and students alike.

Dr. Wang's contributions extend beyond mentorship. He played an important role in assembling the award nomination package for Dr. Martinez-Hackert, demonstrating his dedication to recognizing excellence within the department. This effort required careful coordination, keen attention to detail and a strong understanding of how to best highlight a nominee's achievements.

Moreover, Dr. Wang served as a judge for the newly launched BMB TEAM-UP Postdoctoral Fellowship Award. In this capacity, he carefully evaluated grant proposals submitted by faculty teams, modeling the review process after the National Institutes of Health. His commitment to thorough, fair evaluations and his ability to provide meaningful feedback have been instrumental in ensuring the success of this competitive fellowship program.

Dr. Wang has also been active in initiating collaborations between BMB and the College of

Osteopathic Medicine and the College of Human Medicine. His involvement in these activities has improved overall teaching strategies and curriculum development, which has built a stronger connection between Biochemistry and the faculty members physically located in the Grand Rapids or Detroit Campuses.

The influence of Dr. Wang's mentorship is evident in the success of BMB teaching faculty he supports. His guidance has empowered them to refine their teaching strategies, develop professionally and contribute meaningfully to the department's educational mission. By fostering a supportive atmosphere, Dr. Wang has had a direct and lasting effect on the quality of education within BMB.

Through his mentorship, leadership and unwavering dedication, Dr. Wang exemplifies the substantial contributions that emeriti faculty can continue to make to the university community. His efforts have left a longstanding mark on the department, enriching its programs and inspiring the faculty and students he continues to serve.

In honoring Dr. Wang with this award, the Faculty Emeriti Association acknowledges his mentorship, leadership and enduring dedication to the MSU community. His significance to the department, enrichment of programming and inspiration to the faculty and students exemplify the highest ideals of academic leadership and service.

ALL-UNIVERSITY AWARDS COMMITTEES

William J. Beal Outstanding Faculty Awards+◆

John Aerni-Flessner	Xuefei Huang
Tara Behrend	Richard Lenski
Patricia Edwards	Camelia Suleiman
Marcia Gordon	George Sundin
Ann-Lise Halvorsen	Corwin Smidt

Teacher-Scholar Awards+◆

Henry (Rique) Campa III	Scott D. Farver
Katie Clements	Carl (Alex) Matisse
Frank Duarte	Kennedy Poeszat
Omowumi (Funmbi) Elemo	

Community Engagement Scholarship Award★

Rhonda Conner-Warren	Jean Kerver
Asia Dowtin	Maria Lapinski
Peter Glendinning	Gail Richmond
Louise Jezierski	Aklilu Zeleke

Simmons Chivukula Award for Academic Leadership♥

Marilyn Amey	Victor DiRita
Glenn Chambers	Mary Finn
Kirk Dormer	

Distinguished Academic Staff Awards+◆

Bess German	Brandon Schroeder
Lauren McKenzie	Jodi Schulz
Stanley Moore	Cheryl Williams-Hecksell

Excellence-in-Teaching Citations+◆

Kevin Cabrera	Brian Pentland
Sharlyn Ferguson-Johnson	Amy Radford-Popp
Sachi Horibata	Brooke Van Loh

Robert F. Banks Award for Institutional Leadership+◆

Kendra Cheruvelil	Allyn Shaw
Lucinda Davenport	Judith Stoddart
Nara Parameswaran	

Donald F. Koch Award for Quality in Undergraduate Teaching+◆

Claire Lepkowski	Chinyere P. Tobias
Ryan McNeill	Mario Schabus
Kune Park	Shaoming Yang
Peter Thompson	

Faculty Emeriti Association Awards●

Fred Derksen	David Long
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★ Kwesi Brookins, Acting Ex-Officio Chairperson

+ Marilyn Amey, Ex-Officio Chairperson

♥ Cindi Leverich, Ex-Officio Chairperson

◆ Katie Rundblad, Faculty Honorifics
Coordinator

● John Baker, Chairperson

