2014 Distinguished Professors of the Year

The Distinguished Professor of the Year award, now in its eighth year, is just one way the Academic Affairs Officers (AAO) honor faculty members who provide undergraduate education of the highest quality on our 15 university campuses. This year's AAO selection committee consisted of Fritz Erickson, Ferris State University; Maurice Walworth, Lake Superior State University; Paul Lang, Northern Michigan University; and James Lentini, Oakland University.

The recipients are:

Lake Superior State University
Dr. Ashley Moerke is a professor of Biology and Co-Director of the Aquatic Research Laboratory at Lake Superior State University. Dr. Moerke has been an enthusiastic and dynamic faculty member of the School of Biological Sciences since 2004. She has authored or co-authored approximately $2,000,000 in grants and contracts and is currently working with several other institutions/agencies on a significant Great Lakes Restoration Initiatives project. She goes out of her way to ensure students are directly involved in these activities. Dr. Moerke was the recipient of LSSU’s 2011 Excellence in Academic Advising Award, as well as LSSU’s 2012 Distinguished Teaching Award. Provost Walworth noted, "From recruitment to retention to post-graduation, Dr. Moerke is dedicated to helping her students achieve their academic and career goals. Her work ethic, enthusiasm, and passion for teaching and learning help inspire students. Her high expectations and established rules of professional conduct challenge the students and prepare them to become productive members of the professional scientific community.”

Northern Michigan University
Dr. Alec Lindsay is in his 12th year of teaching, research, and service at Northern Michigan University in Biology. Highly regarded by his peers and students alike, Dr. Lindsay’s contributions to NMU both within and outside the classroom are numerous. He seeks to provide his students with experiential learning opportunities, as evidenced by the “Field Studies in Zambia” course he designed, organized, and led. In just over ten years, he provided research opportunities to dozens of undergraduates, and due to the experience they obtained performing genetic research in his lab, many of
Dr. Lindsay's undergraduate students have gone on to have successful careers as researchers, scientists, and physicians. Dr. Lindsay was awarded the 2013 NMU Distinguished Faculty Award, which is the highest recognition given by the NMU Board of Trustees. NMU’s Provost Paul Lang said, “Dr. Lindsay is truly extraordinary in his dedication to undergraduate and graduate students and their learning. He is first and foremost an exemplary teacher who engages his students deeply and actively.”

Oakland University
Dr. Mark Simon is a professor of Management and Marketing in the School of Business Administration at Oakland University. He is noted for his ability to fuse scholarship and teaching into uncommon and effective methods of engaging students to learn. His ability to foster experiential learning is demonstrated through a course he designed in which OU students collaborated with students in India to develop an import/export plan. This project was awarded a $30,000 education innovation grant from the State of Michigan. Professor Simon was awarded the OU Faculty Advisor of the Year Award in 2005 and OU School of Business Administration Distinguished Service Award in 2008. OU’s Provost James Lentini stated, “As evidenced by the success of his teaching that is infused with research-based knowledge, Mark Simon has distinguished himself as an outstanding professor who has fostered demonstrable student success and has gained the respect of his peers for his creative and effective teaching methods and for his original research.”

The other nominees were Carl Lee, CMU; Doris Fields, EMU; Robert Friar, FSU; Scott Berlin, GVSU; Adrienne Minerick, MTU; Julie Foss, SVSU; Brian Coppola, UM-AA; Carolyn Kraus, UM-Dearborn; Joseph Sucic, UM-Flint; Elena Past, WSU; and Timothy Palmer, WMU. The recipients and nominees will be honored at a luncheon with their Academic Affairs Officers on April 11, 2014, in Lansing.

Consortium of Michigan Veteran Educators
April 4 Conference

The Consortium of Michigan Veteran Educators will be holding its annual conference, April 4, at Lansing Community College-West. The conference will feature a talk by American Council on Education (ACE) on the Veteran Toolkit and ACE’s work with transcripts; Jeff Barnes, Director of the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency (MVAA); and retired Major General Michael Lehnert. The breakout sessions will focus on 8 Keys to Student Veteran Success including recruiting, benefits, regional collaborations, student engagement, and employment and transitions. Click here to register.

The CMVE highly recommends that each institution has a link to the Joint Services Transcript (JST) web page on its Veterans admissions web pages. Every Veteran who applies to your institution needs to request their military transcript, and the JST covers all branches except Air Force. The Coast Guard is in the process of moving to the JST. To learn more about JST, visit the ACE website. To link to the JST, click here.

Michigan Transfer Agreement

All fifteen public universities have signed onto the Michigan Transfer Agreement (MTA). The Michigan Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers (MACRAO), working with the Presidents Council and Michigan Community College Association, have been working on implementing the MTA, including guides for counselors and students, and checklists for 2- and 4-year institutions. MACRAO held a one-day conference at Macomb Community College to help institutions implement the MTA. Over 200 public, private, 2- and 4-year representatives attended the workshop.
On March 19, Nicole Rovig (University Registrar, MSU), Steve Shablin (Registrar, OU) and Carrie Jeffers (Registrar, Macomb CC and MACRAO president) testified to the House Higher Education Subcommittee on the MTA. To learn more about the MTA, including trainings, go to the MACRAO website.

Other PCSUM Happenings

Michael Boulus testified to the Senate Higher Education Subcommittee on February 20, and the House Higher Education Subcommittee on March 5, supporting Governor Snyder’s budget recommendation for higher education. To obtain the presentation, click here.

In early March, Patty Farrell-Cole attended the AASCU/CCSSO/SHEEO College and Career Readiness (CCR) Partnership meeting in Baltimore, MD, with Michigan Department of Education and Michigan Community College Association colleagues. The focus of the 12 state meeting was to share and learn what other states are doing, and work on state CCR communication plans.

March 25-26, Larry Isaak (President) and Pam Schutt (Director of State Relations) from the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC) hosted an annual MHEC Michigan dinner. Guests included PCSUM Executive Director Michael Boulus and Director of University Relations Patty Farrell-Cole and Representative Al Pscholka, Chair of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Higher Education. Larry presented the attendees with the Michigan 2012-13 Report that highlights cost savings and cost containment through MHEC for Michigan, data on student access and success, and state performance indicators. To learn more about MHEC, click here.

On March 26-27, Patty Farrell-Cole attended the Lumina/Gates Foundation funded Credit When Its Due meeting in Atlanta to learn from and share with the other 12 state recipients of the grant. Her colleague, Chris Baldwin from the Michigan Student Success Center, also attended the meeting.

Student Association of Michigan Update

The Student Association of Michigan (SAM) executive board’s term is rapidly coming to a close, but SAM has not stopped advocating for students. SAM represented student opinion and testified before the House Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee in support of the Governor’s 6.1% proposed restoration to funding for Michigan’s public universities. SAM also plans on testifying similarly before the Senate Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee. SAM also continues to support innovative legislation that makes higher education more accessible and affordable for Michigan students.

Several SAM members attended the United States Student Association’s Grassroots Legislative Conference in Washington D.C. Members had the opportunity to strengthen the organizing skills of their membership and advocate for Federal issues including increased funding for Pell Grants, Trio Programs, Work Study, among many other issues. SAM also held their monthly conference at the University of Michigan - Ann Arbor where SAM elected its Elections Committee Members. They were honored to have some amazing guest speakers including Congressman John Dingell; House Democratic Leader Tim Greimel; President of the Michigan State Board of Education, John Austin; and State Representative David Knezek. They offered advice and knowledge of their experiences in public service, and they provided insight on the state of higher education in Michigan and across the US. To obtain more information about SAM, go to http://mistudents.org/
PCSUM Committee Meeting Reviews

State Relations Officers
The State Relations Officers met in Lansing on March 5 and March 19. Discussion included the Governor’s 2015 budget recommendations, a social media campaign to support higher education in Michigan, open meetings for governing boards, and draft fire safety legislation. They were also provided an M-SARA update.

Business Affairs Officers
The Business Affairs Officers met for their annual meeting on February 21 to hear updates from M.U.S.I.C. and MUCH; a budget update from Michael Boulos and James Spaniolo from the Governor’s Office; and a presentation on global disaster preparation and crisis management.

Chief Student Affairs Officers
The Chief Student Affairs Officers met on February 26 at the PCSUM offices to obtain a legislative update, and discuss several agenda items including women’s centers, diversity and transfer initiatives, Federal requirement data handling, and student conduct records.

Board of Directors
The Board of Directors met on February 26 at the Dykema Offices in Lansing. Their agenda consisted of a talk with Governor Snyder and Business Leaders for Michigan President Doug Rothwell, discussion of the EPIC-MRA poll findings, and the FY15 budget.

News Articles on PCSUM Web Site
Remember to visit the Presidents Council web site to obtain the latest articles and press releases. On the home page, we have just added a link to Higher Ed 101: A snapshot of Higher Education in Michigan

- Thank West Michigan colleges for Rosy Outlook on Youth Employment by President Thomas Haas, March 25, MLive
- Pay for Roads and College Now or Pay Later, by Phil Powers, March 25, Bridge Magazine
- U-M Chief: Alumni Should Lobby for Snyder’s Proposed Funding Hike, March 14, Detroit News.
- Thank West Michigan colleges for rosy outlook on youth employment by President Haas, March 25, MLive
- Tim Daman: Now is the Time to Invest in Higher Education, March 15, Lansing State Journal
- Michigan business group says state gains from higher ed reinvestment March 11, WKAR

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