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Michigan Distinguished Professors of the Year Announced

Lansing, MI – A professor of learning technologies with his award-winning video games and learning class, a professor of theater studies dedicated to bringing dramatic literatures to life and a professor of English who has doubled the size of the university’s honors program have been selected as Distinguished Professor of the Year Award recipients from Michigan’s 15 public universities.

The Michigan Distinguished Professor of the Year award recognizes the outstanding contributions and dedication exhibited by the faculty from Michigan’s 15 public universities to the education of undergraduate students. Each university was invited to nominate a faculty member who has had a significant impact on undergraduate student learning through various activities, particularly classroom instruction, applied research, experiential learning, innovation and mentoring. The 2017 recipients are Barry Fishman, University of Michigan; Ann Folino White, Michigan State University; and David Wood, Northern Michigan University.

“These professors represent the very best of teaching, innovation and dedication to student success at the state universities of Michigan,” said Dr. Daniel J. Hurley, CEO of the Michigan Association of State Universities. “They symbolize the distinction for excellence and innovation in higher education for which Michigan’s public universities are globally renowned.”

The 2017 recipients are introduced below:

Barry Fishman, Professor of Learning Technologies, University of Michigan

Dr. Barry Fishman is the *Arthur F. Thurnau* Professor of Learning Technologies with a dual appointment in both the School of Information and School of Education at the University of Michigan. He is also the Director of the Bachelor of Science in Information Program.

He has taught at the University of Michigan since 1997, and is the recipient of the 2010 Provost’s Teaching Innovation Prize for his work on designing his signature “Video Games and Learning” class. This highly popular class applies principles from games to critically reconsider the process of human learning and assessment systems. Work from this class grew into *GradeCraft*, a tool for tracking assignments, grades, team challenges and more.

CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY
GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
LAKE SUPERIOR STATE UNIVERSITY

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY
NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
OAKLAND UNIVERSITY
SAGINAW VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-DEARBORN
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-FLINT
WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

THE MICHIGAN FIFTEEN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

His dedication to education extends to a decade-long partnership with Detroit Public Schools, where he and colleagues collaborated with teachers to create a more successful science curriculum, as well as his work on the development of the Obama Administration's first National Educational Technology Plan. His team received an "Innovators Award" from *Campus Technology* in 2016 for their work on *GradeCraft*. He is a University Academic Innovation Fellow and is a Fellow of the International Society for Design and Development in Education.

He earned a B.A. in Honors English and American Literature at Brown University in 1989, an M.S. in Instructional Systems Technology from Indiana University in 1992, and a Ph.D. in Education & Social Policy – Learning Sciences from Northwestern University in 1996.

"Professor Fishman is a visionary instructor, whose passion for engaging, challenging and supportive undergraduate education has fueled an award-winning tenure as an educational technology scholar and administrator, both at UM and across the nation," said Paul N. Courant, University of Michigan Interim Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Ann Folino White, Associate Professor of Theatre Studies and Directing, Michigan State University
Dr. Ann Folino White is the Associate Professor of Theatre Studies and Directing, as well as Head of Theatre Studies, at Michigan State University.

She has taught at Michigan State University since 2008 after previously working with several Chicago theatre companies. In 2013, she renovated the Theatre Studies (History/Criticism/Literature) curriculum to focus on theatre in diverse social, cultural, and historical contexts and has developed new courses for undergraduates based on her three approaches to education: collaboration, humor, and interdisciplinarity.

Her general education Integrated Arts and Humanities course was a nominee for the MSU Fintz Teaching Award, and she was honored as the 2016 MSU Alumni Club of Mid-Michigan Quality in Undergraduate Teaching Award recipient, among other awards. Her book *Plowed Under: Food Policy Protests and Performance in New Deal America* was awarded the 2015 Working Class Studies Association CLR James Book Award.

Outside the classroom, she has directed numerous plays for MSU and Summer Circle Theatre, and has been the faculty mentor for student-directors of The Wharton Center for Performing Arts' Young Playwrights Festival. She involves community education in the plays she directs, particularly *Voices of Old Town: Variations on a History* and *The Grapes of Wrath in Words & Song*. She has also dedicated years of service on the President's Advisory Committee on Disabilities Issues, helping to make MSU's campus more accessible and inclusive.

She earned a B.A. in Theatre at Michigan State University in 1998 and then an M.A. in Theatre in 2001, a Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Theatre and Drama in 2007, and a Gender Studies Certificate in 2007 at Northwestern University.

"Since her arrival in August 2008, she has proven to be a master teacher, a superb director and an invigorating collaborator," said June Pierce Youatt, Michigan State University Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.

David Wood, Professor of English, Northern Michigan University

Dr. David Wood is a Professor of English and the Director of the Honors Program at Northern Michigan University, where he has taught since 2007.

One of his colleagues once commented that the level of student discussion in his classes was the finest she'd encountered at NMU – one of many reasons he was the recipient of the NMU 2015 Distinguished Faculty Award and 2011 Excellence in Teaching Award. He also was co-chair of the Liberal Studies Program Task Force in 2012, which restructured general education at the university.

As Director of the Honors Program, he has doubled the program's enrollment without diminishing standards, and has been instrumental in landing the largest gift in the university's history, which will go toward undergraduate Honors student learning. Thanks to this stewardship, he reinvigorated the Stratford Festival Endowment, which brings students to the renowned Shakespeare Festival in Stratford, Ontario.

As a Shakespeare scholar, he also infuses his academic work on disability into his literature classes, creating innovative courses that teach older primary course materials alongside culturally and politically current secondary materials. This work on disability studies extends to his service as Trustee of the Tyler Rigg Foundation, where he can steer funding to areas of health, disability, and alternative education.

He earned a B.A. from Skidmore College in 1993, an M.A. from the University of Alaska – Fairbanks in 2000, and a Ph.D. from Purdue University in 2004, all in English Literature.

“Dr. Wood is truly extraordinary in his dedication to our students and their learning,” said Kerri D. Schuiling, Northern Michigan University Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. “He is an exemplary teacher who engages students to think deeply and participate actively in their classrooms and communities.”

The other nominees for Michigan Distinguished Professor of the Year were: Maureen Eke of Central Michigan University; Jacqueline LaRose of Eastern Michigan University; Sharon Colley of Ferris State University; Robert Franciosi of Grand Valley State University; Scott Miers of Michigan Technological University; Laila Guessous of Oakland University; Erik Trump of Saginaw Valley State University; Barbara Klein of University of Michigan—Dearborn; S. Aslı Özgün-Koca of Wayne State University; and Jay Berkow of Western Michigan University.

The Academic Affairs Officers of the Michigan Association of State Universities will recognize the nominees and recipients on April 21, 2017 during a luncheon held at Troppo in Lansing. This is the 11th year of the awards program.

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The Michigan Association of State Universities serves as the coordinating board for Michigan's 15 public universities, providing advocacy and fostering policy to maximize the collective value these institutions provide in serving the public interest and the State of Michigan.