

UCSD honors four as high school teachers of the year

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"He is the most inspirational teacher I have ever had." "She is phenomenal." "He gave me confidence in myself." "She is a great teacher." These words of praise by former students describe the four High School Teachers of the Year named by the University of California, San Diego.

Teachers cited in the 1997 program are Marilyn Baer of Mira Mesa High School, Brady Kelso of Scripps Ranch High School and Brett Weiss of University City High School, all in San Diego County, and Steve Murray of Cerritos High School in Orange County. What makes this program unique is that these teachers were selected by their former students, all of whom are now enrolled at UCSD.

UCSD Chancellor Robert C. Dynes, Vice Chancellor Joseph Watson, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Management/Registrar Richard Backer and Provost Patrick Ledden each hosted a ceremony recently to honor the four at their high schools.

Marilyn Baer, a teacher of Advanced Placement English and English Literature began her career in the San Diego Unified School District in 1967. Her reading background strengthens her ability to help students develop writing skills. She is a member of Mira Mesa High School's School-To-Work Committee. Quiet and unassuming, she devotes most of her time to her students, who say they value and respect her for the attention she gives them.

Brady Kelso's accolades also include the Teacher of the Year award from the San Diego Unified School District in 1996-97. He teaches English and World Literature at Scripps Ranch High School. Known for his challenging, motivational and humorous teaching methods, students and parents alike point to his excellence. Says one parent, "You hope once in a lifetime to have a teacher like Brady Kelso."

Brett Weiss teaches Advanced Placement English and coordinates the AVID program at University City High School. AVID gave her an outstanding teacher award last year. Weiss's 18 years of teaching have also included video production, English as a Second Language, and coaching cheerleading and drill teams. Her students say, "She taught me everything I know about writing" and colleagues say she is "incredibly respectful of staff and students."

Steve Murray has taught high school math for more than 20 years, including six at Cerritos High School, where he co-chairs the Mathematics Department. A versatile man, he also teaches a social studies class based on the Model United Nations program. Murray is known for the high test scores earned by his students. "He thinks outside the box," says his principal. "His students can crunch numbers. But they also get the big picture: the why, the how and the philosophy of mathematics. He is really remarkable."

UCSD's Outstanding Teacher Recognition Program was initiated in the spring of 1996 by the Office of Admissions and Outreach as a way of showing appreciation to the high school teachers who work hard to instill a

lifelong love of learning in their students. Each spring, students who accept UCSD's offer of admission are given the opportunity to nominate a teacher who had a strong, positive academic influence on their lives.

In 1997 the university received more than 2,700 nominations for 2,500 teachers from around the world. Each teacher was given a certificate of recognition and a letter from UCSD Chancellor Dynes. Those garnering the most nominations were named Teachers of the Year.

"We are very happy with how well this program has been received by teachers and school administrators," says Mae Brown, Director of UCSD's Office of Admissions and Outreach. "This is certainly a program that we will continue, because we feel it is extremely important to thank those teachers who are preparing our most valuable asset --- our youth."

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