

Six UCSD Faculty Members and Three Graduate Students to be Honored June 1 for Teaching Excellence, Creativity

May 22, 2007

Six professors and three graduate students at the University of California, San Diego will be honored for excellence in teaching June 1 in the Cecil and Ida Green Faculty Club courtyard and dining room. A reception will be held at 3:30 p.m. and the program will begin at 4 p.m.

The Distinguished Teaching Awards are sponsored by the San Diego Division of the Academic Senate at UCSD.

Speakers who will address the importance of teaching excellence, innovation, creativity, and accessibility and communication with students include UCSD Chancellor Marye Anne Fox with welcoming remarks; Henry Powell, chair of the Academic Senate, and Sidney Zisook, chair of the Academic Senate's Committee on Distinguished Teaching.

The Distinguished Teaching Awards for faculty members of the Academic Senate include professors Victor Ferreira, psychology; Ursula Meyer, theatre and dance; Joel Robbins, anthropology; Andrew Scull, sociology, and Steven A. Wasserman, biology.

The Barbara J. and Paul D. Saltman Distinguished Teaching Award honoree is Stephen Potts, professor of literature.

The Barbara J. and Paul D. Saltman Excellent Teaching Award/Graduate Student honorees are Cynthia Kilpatrick, linguistics; Lisa Nunn, sociology, and Nicholas A. Spiliakos, electrical and computer engineering.

Each recipient brings an individual teaching style and passion for his/her subject as described by students and colleagues and quoted in their award certificates.

Victor Ferreira - Personable, approachable and friendly, every moment for him is an opportunity to each, to interact, to motivate, constantly teaching and learning. To him, "teaching is not so much something one does, as it is a way of life."

Ursula Meyer - Tireless in coaching both voice and acting and pouring countless hours in one-on-one work with her students, she skillfully manages to find "gold in the sound of each student." Says one student, "I would be lost without this teacher."

Joel Robbins - With ever-present and infectious energy and enthusiasm, and a gift of oration, he tackles cultural diversity from the personal and professional to the contemporary, praised by students for his "care for people learning."

Andrew Scull - A gifted lecturer who speaks with charm and eloquence, he takes what would otherwise be dry, historical facts and brings them to life with fascinating storytelling and humor, generating "a lust for learning" with ideas that "sparkle and enlighten."

Steven A. Wasserman - A superb teacher at every level, he ranks at the "top of the charts for the way he presents material and engages students," constructing new teaching strategies with "unparalleled dedication and ingenuity" and teaching students to think critically.

Stephen Potts - With ideas in abundance, a clear and direct scholarly way of presenting them, and a sense of humor, he holds his "students pretty much spell-bound." As one student says, "He knows his literature and what's best is that he makes us love it as much as he does."

Cynthia Kilpatrick - With a bright, cheerful, and humorous classroom manner, she is described by one professor as "a model of what we want in a teacher," going the extra mile - or two - to make sure that all of her students are learning and "excited to learn."

Lisa Nunn - Presenting material in a lucid, easy-to-follow manner, she connects with students both as individuals and as scholars and directs discussions so that "we want to share," says one student, and the discussions are "also applicable to daily life."

Nicholas A. Spiliakos - Described as a "born teacher," he demonstrates a natural talent for effective communication with students. His "investment of time and effort goes far beyond the call of duty" and his creative approach cheerfully invites students to "enjoy learning."

The Distinguished Teaching Awards were established in 1992 to recognize a select number of faculty Academic Senate members who have made extraordinary contributions to UCSD as teachers. The late Paul Saltman, professor of biology, was one of the first award recipients.

In 1999, the Barbara and Paul Saltman Endowment Fund was established to recognize non-Senate faculty members and graduate students for their teaching excellence.

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