



News Release

Missouri Western State College • 4525 Downs Drive • St. Joseph, MO 64507 • 816-271-5649

Contact: Kristy Hill

Phone: (816)-271-5649

Title: Public Relations/Marketing Director

Email: hillk@mwsc.edu

WESTERN FACULTY AND STAFF HONORED

St. Joseph, Mo. —May 12, 2005—Missouri Western State College recently held its 2005 awards program where faculty and staff were given awards for excellence in job performance and years of service.

Presidential citations for staff were given to Elaine Bryant, student services coordinator; Rodema Gnuschke, interlibrary loan supervisor; Patty Kuechler, administrative assistant for the Western Institute, and Tomie Walker, art director for campus printing services.

The Dr. James V. Mehl Outstanding Faculty Scholarship Award was granted to Dr. Michael Cadden, associate professor of English. Dr. Cadden had an extraordinary year of publishing his research, and is developing a national reputation as a scholar in the field of children's literature. In the past year, he published a book, essays in two professional journals and reference materials in two encyclopedias.

Those faculty honored with the Jesse Lee Myers Excellence in Teaching Awards were Dr. Jason Baker, assistant professor of biology; Dr. Kelly Henry, assistant professor of psychology; Dr. Ann Thorne, associate professor of journalism, and Bonnie Gregory, assistant professor of nursing.

The criteria for this award includes outstanding contributions in either scholarly and professional activities, or institutional and community service.

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Page 2 of 2 – Faculty and Staff Honored

Dr. Baker was honored for his noteworthy record of accomplishment as a teacher-scholar and as a faculty member. His student ratings are above average for his department, school, and the college. Nineteen students have made public presentations with Dr. Baker and he was instrumental in negotiating admission agreements with area medical schools. He has presented at three professional conferences, published four peer-reviewed articles and was co-author of a National Institute of Health grant for \$136,000.

Dr. Henry earned the award because she is an innovative and rigorous teacher with very positive student evaluations. She has published five peer-reviewed journal articles, two book chapters, seven separate instructor textbook resource guides/chapters/media, presented 17 papers at regional and national meetings, and sponsored 12 student presentations.

Dr. Thorne is described as an “empathetic, motivating, and inquiry-driven teacher leader.” Under her supervision, Western’s yearbook has consistently received All-American ratings in national competitions – including several Best of Show and first place awards against larger and more selective institutions. Dr. Thorne was awarded the Distinguished Advisor Award for yearbook advisors in 2003 by the College Media Advisors organization.

Gregory has been a member of the nursing faculty since 1988, serving as the instructor for many of the beginning level nursing courses. She also functions as a “teacher for teachers,” often helping first-year nursing faculty successfully begin their teaching careers. Gregory was elected president of the local chapter of the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing.

The “Western Service Award,” new this year, was given to Julia Schneider, library director, for her outstanding record of community service during the past year.

Additionally, 82 employees were recognized for their years of service.

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Missouri Western State College is a four-year public institution providing a blend of traditional liberal arts and professional degree programs. The college offers student-centered, high quality instruction that focuses on experience-based learning, community service, and state-of-the-art technology. Western is located in St. Joseph, Mo. and is committed to the educational, economic, cultural and social development of the region it serves.