Celebrating Excellence

MINNESOTA STATE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

APRIL 17, 2024
11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Alex Cirillo
Micah Coatie
Jay Cowles
Dawn Erlandson
Jim Grabowska
Tim Huebsch
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MinnState.edu/BOTawards
Celebrating Excellence

MINNESOTA STATE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

April 17, 2024 | 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

EMCEE
Cathy Wurzer

MUSIC
Cyril Dela Cruz - Piano
Musical Overture

Andrew Green - Vocals
Cyril Dela Cruz - Piano
"Let it Sing" by Jeanine Tesori

WELCOME
Scott Olson, Chancellor
Roger Moe, Board of Trustees Chair

~ LUNCH ~

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS
Cheryl Tefer, Board of Trustees Academic and Student Affairs Chair

RECOGNITION OF AWARDS
Outstanding Service Faculty
Service Faculty of the Year
Educators of the Year
Outstanding Educators

CLOSING
Satasha Green-Stephen, Senior Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs

OFFICIAL PHOTOS
See page 22
PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE AWARD

The award is an honor bestowed upon university service faculty to acknowledge and reward exceptional commitment to students and to encourage ongoing excellence in the key roles that service faculty fulfill at our system’s universities. They are responsible for advising and counseling students; for the recruitment, retention, and placement of students; for residential life programming; facilitation of student groups and student leadership; and other involvement in university and community activities.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The Professional Excellence in Service Award Review Committee evaluated each nominee in the following areas:

- Leadership and Innovation
- Knowledge and Expertise
- Advancement of Equity and Inclusion
- Professional Development and Growth
- Commitment to Student Success

Nominations were made by students, faculty peers, or staff, and evaluated by a campus review committee before Outstanding Service Faculty nomination packets were submitted to the Senior Vice Chancellor. At the system level, a committee employed a rubric of detailed criteria in reading and discussing Outstanding Service Faculty portfolios, and made final recommendation of one Service Faculty of the Year recipient to Senior Vice Chancellor Green-Stephen. That recommendation was reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees.
Awards for Excellence

William Baldus

Director of the Career Center
Metro State University

William Baldus joined Metro State University in 2006 as the sole career counselor serving 10,000 students. Since that time, he has built and leads an innovative Career Center that offers student support to explore potential careers, to align their studies with their career goals, and to find jobs that match those goals.

With his highly collaborative approach, Baldus has expanded the Career Center’s reach, contributing to student success with each initiative. He has partnered with academic divisions, student services, and employers to build internship, apprenticeship, and employment opportunities for students.

Baldus brings a strong commitment to equity and inclusion to his work. He has developed programming to meet the needs of first-generation, low-income, and historically marginalized students, including a Diversity Job Fair on campus that continues to attract employers.

A leader among career center peers in the state, Baldus shares his knowledge, expertise, and enthusiasm with colleagues, faculty, and students in many ways, all of which multiplies the impact of his efforts.

SERVICE FACULTY OF THE YEAR COMMENTS
Thank you kindly President Arthur, Provost Gort, and Vice President Anderson for your support of my work and efforts in my nomination. I also want to thank my parents, sisters (MC is the best career coach ever), and wife who have always taken an interest in my work and serve as wise mentors.

Being selected as the 2024 Board of Trustees Service Faculty of the Year has been a high honor and means a great deal to me at this point in my career. When our work can take years to come to fruition, this award has energized me to press on toward our vision. It is highly exciting to see our big ideas take shape, knowing that they will change our students’ career trajectories in a dramatic way.
2024 Outstanding Service Faculty

**Brian Jones**  
**Director of Admissions**  
**Minnesota State University, Mankato**  
Dr. Jones has led the development of an innovative recruitment system, successfully worked to diversify the student body, and analyzed data to identify enrollment barriers, resulting in record enrollments for the university.

**Christine Lepkowski**  
**Executive Director of Undergraduate Programs**  
**St. Cloud State University**  
With students at the heart of all she does, Dr. Lepkowski directs the diverse activities of Herberger Business School’s undergraduate program and guides the complex process of accreditation for the university.

**Ron Strege**  
**Director, Warrior Success Center**  
**Winona State University**  
Strege demonstrates an unwavering commitment to students. He works to improve tutoring, advising, access, and career services, leading the development of student success metrics and spearheading retention efforts.

**Jon Wepking**  
**Associate Athletics Director for External Relations**  
**Minnesota State University Moorhead**  
As the founder of the award-winning GO TEAM, Wepking creates hands-on experiences for students as they tell the story of Dragon Athletics through a broadcast network and marketing and promotion opportunities.
RECENT SERVICE FACULTY OF THE YEAR

2023 - Randy Ludeman, Director of Housing and Residential Life, Bemidji State University
2022 - Erika Bailey-Johnson, Sustainability Director, Bemidji State University
2020 - Marcia Anderson, Director, Student-Directed Learning, Metro State University
2019 - Kari Peterson, Recreation & Wellness Director, Minnesota State University Moorhead
2018 - Jane Olsen, Director, Women’s Center, St. Cloud State University
2017 - Kierstin Hoven, Director, Campus Recreation, Bemidji State University

View additional previous award recipients at MinnState.edu/BOTawards.
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

The Board of Trustees Educator of the Year Award for Excellence in Teaching was established in 2007. Board of Trustees bestow the award upon faculty within Minnesota State to acknowledge and reward exceptional commitment to student learning and to encourage ongoing excellence in teaching. The award proclaims, on behalf of the entire system, the Board of Trustees’ pride in the dedication and accomplishment of its faculty who provide instruction that prepares Minnesota college and university students for their professional, scholarly and civic lives. This year, presidents designated 39 Outstanding Educators in nomination for the award.

SELECTION CRITERIA
The Board of Trustees Educator of the Year Award for Excellence in Teaching program evaluates each nominee in the following areas:

» Innovative Teaching Strategies and Materials
» Standards for Assessment of Student Learning and Performance
» Culturally Responsive Teaching and Pedagogy
» Service to Students, Profession, Institution, System to Advance Teaching Excellence
» Content Expertise and Professional Growth

Nominations were made by students, faculty peers, or staff, and evaluated by a campus review committee before Outstanding Educator nomination packets were submitted to the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs.

At the system level, two committees - one for college instructors and another for university instructors - employed a rubric of detailed criteria in reviewing and discussing Outstanding Educator portfolios, and made final recommendations of three Educators of the Year recipients to Senior Vice Chancellor Green-Stephen. Those recommendations were reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees.
With most students working in the field, Hope Doerner aligns her curriculum to meet evolving state-set standards and industry certifications. She uses technology-based strategies to support more personalized learning. Her multi-modal approach increases access for students of diverse backgrounds and helps reduce one of the biggest barriers to student success – the inability to make it to class on a regular basis.

She brings the topic of culturally responsive teaching front and center. In her Guiding Children’s Behavior course, she leads students in discussing the cultural responsiveness of different approaches to discipline in early childhood settings. In addition, she spearheaded the state’s first Spanish-language early childhood education classes at the college.

Doerner’s impact extends beyond the college: She has built strong industry relationships, resulting in partnerships with organizations that offer financial support for staff to attend the Early Childhood Program and access to industry-sponsored scholarships and apprenticeships for students.

**EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR COMMENTS**

I would like to thank Dr. Sharon Pierce, the President of Minneapolis College, for the opportunity to represent our campus. I would also like to thank my husband, Brian, and my two children, Emily & Eliot, for all the support they give me daily which allows me to devote so much time and energy to my students.

The honor of this award is not only the culmination of years of work as a faculty, but also a call for me to continue to advocate for equitable curriculum, policies, and practices that benefit all students in my department, at our college and within the system. This award is shared with all my past and current students. Their dedication to the field of early childhood and their own personal growth inspires me to do more. I look forward to continuing to be challenged and grow with all my future students. Thank you.
Dr. Mónica García-Pérez actively promotes community building and group belonging in all her courses and helps students appreciate the relevance of economic theory in their lives. She organizes her teaching around five core learning strategies: access, exposure, training and theory, discussion, and practice.

Dr. García-Pérez ensures access by redesigning several courses to incorporate zero-cost course materials. Students learn about real-world examples, such as the impact of discrimination and police brutality, children’s health outcomes, and the role of education on future income. For example, students simulate the immigration and visa application process and then discuss the impact. Through discussions, students connect current issues to specific theories.

Contributing to research in labor economics, health economics, immigration, and public finance, Dr. García-Pérez enriches her teaching with these insights, ensuring her courses remain informed by the latest developments in the field, promoting an engaging and relevant learning experience for students.

**EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR COMMENTS**

I am deeply honored, profoundly moved, and sincerely grateful to have been chosen by the Board of Trustees as a recipient of the Educator of the Year award. I extend my heartfelt appreciation to my esteemed colleagues in the Department of Economics at St. Cloud State University, whose dedication and professional evolution continually inspire and challenge me to excel in my teaching endeavors.

A special tribute is owed to my former Dean, Dean Banaian, and my colleagues Lynn MacDonald and Mana Komai, whose belief in my innovative teaching methodologies and unwavering support led to this nomination.

Last but certainly not least, I wish to express my profound gratitude to my students. They are not only my motivation but also the wellspring of my learning and the vessel of my pedagogical experiments.
Fostering a growth mindset in her students, Kendra-Ann Seenandan-Sookdeo refers to students as “change agents” and helps facilitate a community of shared learning, including peer-to-peer learning.

She structures her courses to engage students from start to end, whether through small and large group conversations on case studies, nursing care plans, or role playing, among other activities. She encourages students to bring their lived experiences to class. After her theory class, she offers small group “Let’s Chat” sessions, where students deepen their understanding of the day’s content.

Understanding the challenges that nurses face, Seenandan-Sookdeo also developed a unique assignment that applies learning with self-care. She wrote a Nursing Process Self-Care Plan that applies key takeaways about health and wellness from textbooks to student self-care. Students then use a journal template to design and track their own self-care plans.

From offering students an option to base progress on the students’ mastery of content instead of traditional grading to creating a fun learning environment, Seenandan-Sookdeo looks for ways to both build lasting relationships and personalize learning for greater impact.

EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR COMMENTS

I am honored to be a recipient of the 2024 Board of Trustees Educator of the Year Award. Thank you, Dr. Sharon Pierce and members of the selection committee for recognizing my efforts as a nurse educator. As a research enthusiast and a lifelong learner, I enjoy fine tuning my classroom facilitation skills based on professional development courses offered by Minnesota State and the Minneapolis College Center for Teaching and Learning. My community classroom ways continue to be inspired by learners (students) who I affectionately refer to as change agents. On behalf of change agents, I humbly accept the honor bestowed upon me.
2024 Outstanding Educators

Allen Bellas
Economics and Finance
Metro State University

Dr. Bellas’ contributions number many, from developing engaging activities, from a fishing simulation game that helps students understand markets to developing new opportunities, including a dedicated MBA for a financial services organization.

Sharon Bergen
Early Childhood and Youth Development
Dakota County Technical College

Students in Dr. Bergen’s classes benefit from her extensive experience in childhood education, her guidance as faculty advisor, her commitment to students, and her many contributions to the field, including updating curriculum.

Dale Buske
Mathematics and Statistics
St. Cloud State University

Dr. Buske makes math fun and accessible for students, whether as the math tutor coordinator, through interactive activities, or by his commitment to reducing or eliminating textbook costs through open educational resources.

Garrett Byrne
CNC Toolmaking
Saint Paul College

As a teacher, Byrne combines lectures and labs, helping students maximize their learning with machines, and as department chair, he leads changes to improve the program and stay current with industry trends.
Kristie Campana  
**Psychology**  
**Minnesota State University, Mankato**  
In her classes, Dr. Campana focuses on team-based learning, incorporates current events, and asks students to prepare in advance and come ready to participate – tools that help guide students to successful outcomes.

Matthew Craig  
**Physics and Astronomy**  
**Minnesota State University Moorhead**  
By unifying research – including a NASA project to search for planets outside of our solar system – teaching, community service, and professional contributions, Dr. Craig helps his students reach for the stars.

Cathy Crea  
**Reading, Student Success, and English**  
**Century College**  
In one class, a student may focus on learning outcome assignments while another writes a cover letter, demonstrating how Crea uses innovative teaching and ungrading strategies to fit diverse student needs.

Don Drummond  
**Mathematics**  
**Minnesota State Community and Technical College**  
Passionate about teaching, Drummond creates a safe, inclusive, and collaborative environment for students in his classes, works to make math engaging and fun, and goes the extra mile to help students learn.
2024 Outstanding Educators

Anna Francisco
Education
Minnesota North College
As the Class Act/Pre-Education program leader, Francisco reinforces the importance of educating the whole child and emphasizes active learning, building service learning and field experiences into nearly every one of her classes.

Amy Gonyea
Biology
Saint Paul College
In her classes, Gonyea fosters a sense of belonging for her students through innovative teaching assignments and assessment strategies and through an investment in open educational resources that reduce costs for students.

Jane Greathouse
Psychology
South Central College
Greathouse works to meet students where they are and to help them succeed through innovative teaching, multiple delivery methods, and real-world components, and helps the college advance by contributing to numerous committees.

Luke Green
Communication Studies
St. Cloud Technical and Community College
Dr. Green’s students develop learning portfolios that involve them in learning outcomes and assessments, and they also benefit from his work to reduce high textbook costs which resulted in an award-winning electronic textbook.
Marcia Hagen
Management
Metro State University
Hagen brings her experience as a well-published scholar to the classroom, asking students in all her classes to research and write at least one major paper and coaching them to higher performance levels.

Nicholas Heisserer
Business Management
Central Lakes College
Whether through small groups that tackle projects, practical learning experiences such as a Shark Tank activity, or open educational resources that reduce costs for students, Dr. Heisserer inspires and supports his students.

Jody Hibma
Biology
Minnesota State Community and Technical College
A strong student advocate, Hibma strives to make course content relevant to students and includes group and project-based learning to foster teamwork and inclusivity, helping students succeed inside and outside the classroom.

Theresa Hill
Chemistry
Rochester Community and Technical College
For students, Dr. Hill creates interactive tutorials of chemistry problems that they often struggle to solve, as well as provides materials in multiple formats and offers Diversity in Chemistry conversations.
2024 Outstanding Educators

Paul Howlett
Graphic Design
Hennepin Technical College

An experienced graphic designer, Howlett integrates emerging design technologies in his classes with practical application through client-based design projects and manages a student club that offers commercial experience.

Beth Husman
Veterinary Technology
Ridgewater College

Husman supports vet students’ entry into the college and advises them while at the college, works to enhance the curriculum, and coordinates student-community events, such as the ‘Chip ‘n’ Dip’ dog-washing fundraiser.

Neil Johnston
Art
Century College

A champion of the arts, Johnston believes in connecting with students and brings his experience as an artist and coordinator of many college and community exhibits to enhance his students’ learning journey.

Susan Kasahara
Physics
Normandale Community College

Predicting how far a projectile will travel and then seeing what happens is one example of Dr. Kasahara’s many demonstrations and activities that show students how physics connects to real-world applications.
2024 Outstanding Educators

Vicki Kintop
Radiography
Riverland Community College
An accomplished radiography technologist, Kintop designs game-like activities that involve students in their own learning and discovery, continuously works to strengthen the curriculum, and has secured funds for equipment for student use.

Ralf Mehnert-Meland
Business
Minnesota State University Moorhead
Continuously innovating, Mehnert-Meland demonstrates the theoretical through practical assignments where students may visit a courtroom to witness legal proceedings, operate a four-week pop-up business on campus, or write a short agreement.

Elizabeth Micheel
Biology
Minnesota State College Southeast
Micheel fosters a welcoming environment, encourages conversations and student interactions, and secured a grant for the innovative development of 48 lab kit rentals, as well as founding and advising the Equestrian Club.

Ryan Miller
Natural Resources
Minnesota North College
Leveraging his experiences with the USDA Forest Service and the Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Natural Resources, Miller prepares students for employment through relevant field activities and partnerships with local organizations.
2024 Outstanding Educators

**John Mirth**  
Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering  
St. Cloud State University

By applying the principles of lean manufacturing, high-impact practices that offer maximum value to students with minimum waste, Dr. Mirth improves learning outcomes for students, as well as helping expand learning opportunities.

**Siau Yean Montgomery**  
Dental Assisting  
Northwest Technical College

A highly qualified dental professional with years of industry experience, Montgomery strives to make learning engaging and personalized to student needs by exploring different teaching methods and fostering an inclusive environment.

**Carrie Naughton**  
Mathematics  
Inver Hills Community College

An online trailblazer, Dr. Naughton was the college’s first math instructor to offer online pathways from Introductory Algebra through College Algebra II and is instrumental in developing corequisites to prepare students for college courses.

**Paige Riehl**  
English  
Anoka-Ramsey Community College

A widely published poet and author, Riehl helps ensure students learn skills for navigating college successfully, inspiring discussion and critical thinking through many activities, including peer critiques, field trips, and guest speakers.
**Ailesha Ringer**  
**Professional Communication**  
**Metro State University**

Continually adapting teaching to support transformative education, Dr. Ringer co-creates learning with students to interrupt dominant narratives and maximize intercultural communication skill development.

**Carol Roth**  
**Nursing and Healthcare Leadership**  
**Minnesota State University Moorhead**

An experienced nurse educator and registered nurse, Dr. Roth helps prepare the next generation of nurses and expand nursing education offerings, including helping establish the university’s Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

**Jacqueline Semaan**  
**Nursing**  
**Lake Superior College**

Semaan’s many contributions include her creative classroom practices, such as an activity where students analyze medical information to present a client case, and her work to incorporate simulation in all nursing programs.

**Molly Skjei**  
**Art**  
**Normandale Community College**

Described as a great storyteller, Skjei turns her lectures into dynamic, relatable presentations, develops reflective assignments, involves students in course policy decisions, and assigns online materials that reduce the cost for students.
2024 Outstanding Educators

Heidi Tarus
Biology
Minnesota West Community and Technical College

During the international science competition, Plant the Moon Challenge, Tarus’ on-campus biology students experimented to find the best way to grow nutrient rich plants in lunar soil, highlighting her creative teaching practices.

Mike Tieleman
Mathematics
Anoka Technical College

Recognized for his work in curriculum development and course redesign and as a champion of diverse teaching methods, Tieleman takes a personalized approach to teaching, supporting the learning journey of each student.

Margaret Vaughan
Ethnic, Gender, Historical, and Philosophical Studies
Metro State University

A culturally responsive teacher, Dr. Vaughan uses innovative technology and creative learning strategies – including an assignment where students plan an Indigenous film festival – to deepen her students’ understanding and critical thinking skills.

Ruth Wollersheim
Humanities, Gender Studies, English, and Film Studies
Century College

One of the first faculty members to pilot multi-modal courses at the college, Wollersheim believes in exploring technologies and taking her teaching to the next level by energizing and involving students.
# RECENT EDUCATORS OF THE YEAR

## 2023

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<tr>
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View additional previous award recipients at MinnState.edu/BOTawards.
Official Photos

After the event, we ask 2024 award recipients, presidents, and Trustees to join us near the stage for official photographs. Photographs will be taken in the following order, additional guidance will appear on the slideshow.

Wearing your medallion is encouraged.

1. Service Faculty of the Year
2. Service Faculty of the Year, President, Trustees, and Chancellor
3. Outstanding Service Faculty, Trustees, Chancellor
4. Outstanding Service Faculty, Presidents
5. Outstanding Service Faculty
6. Educators of the Year
7. Educators of the Year, Presidents, Trustees, and Chancellor
8. Outstanding Educators, Trustees, and Chancellor
9. Outstanding Educators, Presidents
10. Outstanding Educators
11. All Award Recipients: Outstanding Educators, Outstanding Service Faculty, Service Faculty of the Year, and Educators of the Year

You are encouraged to take advantage of the personal photo station available near registration for personal photos, candid or formal.

Additional group photos can be taken on stage as time permits.
Celebrating the History

Since 2007, the Minnesota State Board of Trustees Awards for Excellence have recognized and awarded 511 Outstanding Educators and 75 Educators of the Year. Since incorporating the professional excellence in service award in 2016, 51 have been recognized as Outstanding Service Faculty, and 9 have been awarded as Service Faculty of the Year. Help celebrate and honor their professional achievements and encourage the ongoing pursuit of excellence.

Videos

Videos shown during this event and those from previous years will be available for future viewing in the Minnesota State Board of Trustees Awards YouTube playlist. Find this and programs from previous years at MinnState.edu/BOTawards.

Award Plaques

As of 2021, Minnesota State Board of Trustees Award plaques are on display at each campus to recognize and honor all current and past outstanding teaching and service faculty at each school.
Minnesota State is filled with incredible faculty who are doing amazing work focused on their teaching craft.

The purpose of the Network for Educational Development Excellence in Teaching Series is to continue honoring and showcasing the experience and expertise of the Board of Trustees Awards for Excellence Educators of the Year through the opportunity to present, share, or teach about teaching and learning topics that have contributed to their recognition as excellent educators.

**RECENT INSTALLMENT IN THE SERIES:**

**Deep Work in a Burnout Society:**
Manifesting Contemplative Focus

**Ruthanne Soohee Kim**
2020 Educator of the Year
St. Cloud State University
Facilitated in February 2024

Look for future installments on the NED Events Calendar.
asanewsletter.org/events
2025 Nomination Guidelines

The nomination guidelines for the 2024-2025 Minnesota State Board of Trustees Awards for Excellence are available now.

2024 Board of Trustees Award nominations are due November 1, 2024.

Learn more at MinnState.edu/BOTawards.

Your participation requested

During the event, we invite you to share a photo of yourself and your experiences on social media with your medal, family, friends, and colleagues using #MinnStateBOTawards and tagging @MinnStateEdu and your campus.

Alternatively, you may email your photos to BOTawards@MinnState.edu.

Wear your Medallion

Recipients are encouraged to wear their Board of Trustees Award for Excellence medallion at campus commencement ceremonies.

MinnState.edu/BOTawards
Thank You

To celebrate these honorees requires the hard work of many.

Thank you to:

» All of the students, faculty, and administrators who nominated candidates, and who served on the campus selection committees

» Members of the systemwide review committees

» Cathy Wurzer, our graceful and talented emcee

» Anoka-Ramsey Community College students for their musical performances, and to Melissa Bergstrom for supporting great music and bringing these talented students to us.

» Gary Hatteberg, videographer

» Todd Hawkinson, creator of the medallions

» Aaron Lavinsky, photographer

» Sheila Lukonen and all of the staff at DoubleTree by Hilton

» AVEX Audio Visual

» Cedar Printing

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