Awards Recognize Faculty and Staff Achievement

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Eleven faculty and staff members were recognized for their exceptional contributions during Wednesday’s 2013-14 Faculty/Staff Kickoff.

Awards were presented for innovative teaching, exceptional work by adjunct faculty, and outstanding staff.

Following are descriptions of the award winners.

Jim Fuller, chair of the Faculty Senate; Leslie Johnson, winner of the Gordon Clark Ramsey Award for Creative Excellence; Provost Sharon L. Vasquez; and President Walter Harrison.

Presenters and winners of the Awards for Innovations in Teaching and Learning (l-r); award winners Claudia Oakes, Sarah Senk, and Susan Grantham; T. Stores, the Harry Jack Gray Distinguished Teaching Humanist for 2012-2014; award winner Katherine Black; Provost Sharon L. Vasquez; award winner Michael Horwitz; and President Walter Harrison.
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Awards for Innovations in Teaching and Learning

Katherine Black, professor of psychology and associate dean, College of Arts and Sciences
In her undergraduate course, “Infant and Child Development,” Black enables students to put theory into practice. Students in the class tutor local school children through the University’s Educational Main Street program. To connect the tutoring experience to class material, Black assigns four papers that require students to use the theories and research discussed in class to devise ways to facilitate children’s learning and to understand and improve their behavior.

Susan Grantham, associate professor of public relations and director of the graduate program in the School of Communication, A&S
Students in Grantham’s “Public Relations Campaigns” class develop campaigns for real clients, gaining invaluable real-world experience. This past year, the clients were Sikorsky Aircraft and Hartford Young Professionals and Entrepreneurs. After being divided into teams, the students researched the clients’ communication needs, industries, competitors, and audiences, and they developed comprehensive communication plans. At the end of the process the clients selected a winning team, offering students an opportunity for valuable external critiques.

Michael Horwitz, assistant professor of academic strategies, Hillyer College
In his honors course on creativity, Horwitz encouraged students to find and develop the creativity within themselves, using such methods as role-playing, improvisation, field trips, group discussion, and guest lectures. For their final project, Horwitz asked each student to identify an original idea and bring it to fruition. The projects were displayed in a “Creativity
Expo” last spring. In addition to helping students develop their creativity, Horwitz also worked with them on presentation skills.

**Claudia Oakes, assistant professor and director of health sciences, College of Education, Nursing and Health Professions**

In her “Introduction to Gerontology” course, Oakes creates experiences for students that are designed to dispel stereotypes about older adults, while at the same time making students aware of the challenges associated with aging. For example, Oakes’s students conduct in-depth interviews with older adults at a senior center and assisted living facility. In addition, Oakes developed a “Walkability Assessment,” in which students walk in defined areas of West Hartford and assess how easy or difficult those areas are for older adults to navigate.

**Sarah Senk, assistant professor of English, College of Arts and Sciences**

Senk has developed an innovative project for her literature courses that she calls the “Critical Mosaic Assignment.” For this assignment, Senk made use of “Google Drive,” a platform in which students can work on a document simultaneously and in real time. Each week, students produced a collaborative class document of notes, ideas, and textual commentary before class, which they then revised in the classroom. This in turn freed up class time to allow students to engage much more deeply with both the texts they were reading and the comments other members of the class made.

**Gordon Clark Ramsey Award for Creative Excellence**

This award recognizes outstanding work by adjunct and part-time faculty.

**Leslie Johnson, adjunct faculty in English, Hillyer College**

Since joining Hillyer in 2005, Johnson has taught courses in freshman composition, introduction to literature, creative writing, and advanced composition. At the same time, she has continued to work on her own writing and has achieved an impressive record of publication in literary magazines and academic journals. Students in Johnson’s classes relate to and learn from her experiences as a working writer. Johnson also founded Hillyer’s highly successful Writing Lab, where she works with students one-on-one with essays they are writing for courses across disciplines.

**Outstanding Staff Member Awards**

**Felecia Bumpus, director of student activities and Greek life, Department of Student Affairs**

Bumpus successfully juggles a wide range of duties as director of student activities and Greek life. The many activities in which she is involved include Leadership Quest; Student Leadership Awards; World AIDS Day; and the detailed planning of Spring Fling. Bumpus also devotes many additional hours as a volunteer, often working late at night to assist students with social and philanthropic projects. She has served on many University committees, including the Special Events Committee, Invisible Support Network, and the World AIDS Day Planning Committee.
Katie Cox, evaluator, College of Arts and Sciences
Cox is known for her can-do attitude, technological efficiency, and quick problem-solving skills. She works hard to ensure that A&S faculty and staff have the resources they need to be successful. Cox has been a driving force in bringing technology up to speed, and she cheerfully coaches faculty who need help with technology, including writing her own user manuals for the most frequently used processes. She works well with large crowds at summer registration sessions, deftly orchestrating the process and fielding questions.

Laurie Fasciano, evaluator, Hillyer College
Fasciano has a reputation for infectious energy and enthusiasm and amazing organizational skills. She always goes out of her way to be helpful, and her warm personality makes her a magnet for students. Fasciano also is an invaluable resource for Hillyer faculty – she is known for sending out reminders about deadlines and procedural changes, and keeping herself well-informed about degree requirements and other important information for faculty advisors. Fasciano received her bachelor’s degree *summa cum laude* this year, making her an excellent role model for students.

Susan Gottlieb, administrative assistant, Maurice Greenberg Center for Judaic Studies, A&S
For more than 15 years, Gottlieb has dedicated herself to providing the best possible customer service to students, faculty, staff, and donors. In addition to her regular job duties, Gottlieb is administrator of the Museum of Jewish Civilization, coordinator of the Greenberg Center Board of Visitors, administrator of Judaic Study Abroad programs, and administrator for the Greenberg Center’s 25th anniversary campaign. She also is known as “a caring grandmother to every student who crosses her path,” and devotes a great deal of time to the University beyond her regular work hours.

Scot MacCluggage, printmaking technician, Hartford Art School
MacCluggage, a 1992 graduate of the Hartford Art School, is the technician for the Printmaking Department and also has taught as an adjunct faculty member. He is responsible for ensuring that the print shop is functioning properly and is safe and accessible to students and faculty -- but he goes far beyond those duties. With his tremendous technical expertise and strong work ethic, MacCluggage continually works to improve the print shop and make it a welcoming, supportive and valuable resource. He also plays an important leadership role within the art school’s technical staff.