Outstanding Faculty to Receive Awards at Commencement  
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Five faculty members will be honored for their exceptional achievements during the University's 2011 Commencement ceremony on **Sunday, May 15**.

Awards will be presented for outstanding accomplishments in the areas of teaching, scholarship, service, and contributions to the All-University Curriculum. In addition, the Belle K. Ribicoff Junior Faculty Prize, which was established in 2009, will be awarded.

**Jack L. Powell**, professor of psychology in the College of Arts and Sciences, is this year’s recipient of the **Roy E. Larsen Award for Excellence in Teaching**.

Powell excels at making difficult concepts accessible and showing students how the theories they learn in class have applications in their daily lives. He teaches a wide range of courses, from introductory psychology to doctoral social psychology, and the constant at all levels is that Powell’s students emerge from his classes with new ways of seeing the world.

“To observe Jack working with his class is to watch a person who captures his student’s attention, stimulates their discussion and brings out their optimal academic performance,” says one colleague. “There are many of Jack’s former students who attribute their accomplishments to Jack’s mentoring, motivation, and his modeling of the ideal professor both in and out of the classroom.” Since arriving at the University in 1988, Powell has served in numerous leadership roles, including as director of the undergraduate psychology program, director of the general experimental psychology master’s program, director of the master’s in organizational behavior program, and chair of the Psychology Department.

Jack Powell
This year’s **James E. and Frances W. Bent Award for Scholarly and/or Artistic Creativity** will go to **Timothy Black**, associate professor of sociology in the College of Arts and Sciences and director of the Center for Social Research.

A social researcher with nearly two decades of experience, Black has made a career out of work that makes a difference. Nothing illustrates this more than his highly acclaimed 2009 book, *When a Heart Turns Rock Solid: The Lives of Three Puerto Rican Brothers On and Off the Streets*. The book, which has won a number of prestigious honors and awards, is the culmination of an 18-year study of the lives of three brothers from a poor, gang-dominated neighborhood in Springfield, Mass. It provides a vivid portrait of how jobs, schools, the streets, and prisons shaped the lives and choices of the three brothers and their friends and family members.

“The greatest value of Tim’s work is its ability to put a human face on the problems of poverty, economic and social marginalization,” says one colleague. As director of the Department of Sociology’s Center for Social Research for the past 17 years, Black has researched social problems within Greater Hartford. At the center of that research has been work for the Children’s Trust Fund’s Nurturing Families Program, which is designed to prevent child abuse and neglect.

![Timothy Black](image)

**Jerry Katrichis**, associate professor of marketing in the Barney School of Business, will receive the **Oscar and Shoshana Trachtenberg Award for Sustained Service to the University**.

Katrichis’s contributions can be felt throughout the University of Hartford and the Barney School of Business. Since joining the Barney School in 1995, Katrichis has been involved in more than 50 service committees, often taking on leadership roles. He currently serves as chair of the Department of Management and Marketing at Barney,
where he has distinguished himself as a mentor to new faculty, counsel to students, and
advisor to the student chapter of the American Marketing Association.

University wide, Katrichis is credited with transforming the Faculty Senate. Among his
many achievements as chair of the Senate from 2005 to 2007 are the establishment of
annual goals, improvements in the process of reporting accomplishments, and the
redesign of the Senate’s website. Katrichis also has played an important role in the
advancement of technology at the University as a member of many strategic Barney
and University technology committees.

![Jerry Katrichis]

Joan O’Mara, associate professor of speech and drama in Hillyer College, is the
recipient of the **Donald W. Davis All-University Curriculum Award**. The All-University
Curriculum (AUC) is an innovative, cross-disciplinary program that allows students to
explore the depth and breadth of a liberal education, including heritage, culture, the arts,
social context, science, and technology.

O’Mara has been a prolific contributor to the AUC since 1995, when she co-created the
AUC course the Caribbean Mosaic. She continues to teach the course to this day, and
has consistently updated it with new material, innovative assignments, and dynamic
guest speakers, musicians, artists, and others who help students learn about the
diversity of Caribbean culture. In addition, O’Mara has mentored other faculty members
who teach the Caribbean Mosaic; served as the Hillyer College representative to the
AUC Committee; and designed a summer study program in Puerto Rico for the AUC. In
2005, she was co-organizer of an AUC all-University event titled “Haiti’s Continuing
Struggle for Freedom.”

O’Mara also has produced extensive scholarly work related to Caribbean studies,
interdisciplinary education, and her own experiences as an AUC faculty member. She
has written and presented countless papers, articles, and book chapters on those
subjects, and has encouraged colleagues to do the same. One colleague describes
O’Mara as an “ambassador” for interdisciplinary research and teaching.
The Belle K. Ribicoff Junior Faculty Prize, now in its third year, will be awarded to Bryan Sinche, assistant professor of English in the College of Arts and Sciences. The prize recognizes an outstanding junior faculty member in a tenure-track position who has not yet been tenured. The prize and an endowed chair for junior faculty were established through a generous gift from Belle K. Ribicoff, a longtime supporter and life regent of the University.

During his five years at the University of Hartford, Sinche has distinguished himself as an extraordinary teacher, scholar, and University citizen. As a teacher, Sinche is known for his high standards and personal engagement with students, who consistently give him excellent evaluations. Sinche has taught a number of new and special topics courses covering a wide range of literary themes and historical periods.

Like his teaching, Sinche’s research and publications showcase his range as a scholar of 19th-century American literature. He has authored articles on important African American texts such as The Bondwoman's Narrative and My Southern Home and on maritime writings by authors such as James Fenimore Cooper, Frederick Douglass, and Lydia H. Sigourney. Several of these publications make up the core of his book manuscript, a project tentatively titled Slave, Savage, and Citizen: Sailors in Nineteenth-Century American Literature. Sinche also has established a reputation as a hard-working University citizen who has served his department, his college, and the University in a tremendous number of roles.