

Marshall University recently announced that Liberal Arts faculty have won four of the five top honors awarded to faculty in 2009:

Reynolds Award

The Reynolds award includes a \$3,000 stipend, and all full-time faculty members who have completed six or more years of service at Marshall are eligible.



Dr. Kateryna Schray has been at Marshall since 1996 when she was hired as an assistant professor. She previously received the Pickens-Queen Teaching Award and the College of Liberal Arts Teaching Award, both in 2001, and the Outstanding Graduate Advisor Award in 2006.

Dr. Donna Spindel, interim chair in the Department of English, nominated Schray for the Reynolds Award.

“I do not know another faculty member who loves teaching more than she does and who shows it,” Spindel said. “I have had the opportunity to work closely with her on course development and am truly astonished by the level of care and ‘perfection’ that she applies to course creation.”

Schray said one of four concepts woven into the fabric of every teaching moment is that “learning is a joy.”

“We share a natural desire to learn,” Schray said. “Learning is both an act of receiving and giving, searching and finding, growing and melting, climbing and falling. It is a communal act, which elevates and humbles us at the same time, whether we are toddlers examining a remote control or astronauts exploring space. In its purest form, learning is at the heart of what we do, and it is an act of joy.”

Pickens-Queen Award

Each of these three award winners receives a \$1,000 stipend. The award honors outstanding junior faculty. All faculty members teaching on a full-time, tenured or tenure track appointment who are at the instructor or assistant professor rank and who have completed one to five years of service at Marshall are eligible.



Dr. Natsuki Anderson has been at Marshall University since August 2006. Dr. Christopher L. Dolmetsch, interim chair of Modern Languages at MU, said that since her arrival Anderson has developed an entire academic degree program in Japanese mirroring those already existing for German, French and Spanish.

“Along with full elementary through intermediate level classes, this program already has attracted approximately 57 majors, which is extraordinary for such a new program,” Dolmetsch said.

Dolmetsch said Anderson also has promoted the teaching of Japanese successfully throughout the Tri-State region. She said she believes that “teaching is learning.”

“As a language learner, I always like the excitement of learning a different language and culture, and I am happy to be able to share the joy of learning with my students,” Anderson said. “At the same time, I am aware of the positive and negative impact that teachers have on students. Therefore, I strive to create an engaging classroom with a sense of community.”

She said she hopes more students consider studying Japanese throughout their lives rather than just as a foreign language requirement for a college degree.



Dr. George Davis has been a member of Marshall's Political Science Department for five years. Dr. Marybeth Beller, associate dean and associate professor in the department, nominated Davis for the Pickens-Queen Award.

"This award is for teaching, and George's performance in the classroom underscores his commitment to our students," Beller said. "When George Davis walks into the classroom, he rolls up his sleeves. The symbolism is bold: he is getting to work, and so do the students. George's lectures are riveting: they are fast-paced, well organized, full of information, and better still, full of humor."

Davis said one of his main goals is to invoke student interest in politics, not only as an academic discipline, but as an important component of concerned citizenship. With that in mind, he usually begins his course materials as an attorney would an oral argument.

He said he has learned in his short time teaching that "the clearer we, as faculty, articulate our expectations, the more likely students are to live up to what we expect."

Political Science graduate student Nora Ankrom said Davis is interested in his students' success beyond their academic years at Marshall.

"He is genuinely invested in his students and I believe he views his students' success as his success," Ankrom said.



Dr. Wendy Williams has been at Marshall since fall 2005. She said she uses a variety of techniques to facilitate student learning, including: 1, presenting material in interactive formats; 2, encouraging and expecting group discussion; 3, engaging students in critical thinking and writing.

“Through those techniques, I provide students with a learning experience that is both personal and challenging,” she said.

Dr. Christopher LeGrow, an associate professor in psychology, said Williams’ teaching efforts have been well received by both students and peers.

“She has developed new courses, incorporated service-learning into her courses, and provided excellent advising to her students,” LeGrow said. “Dr. Williams has also served as the undergraduate program coordinator and worked hard to remodel our department advising materials and process.”

Psychology Professor Steven P. Mewaldt said Williams is highly committed to excellence in teaching.

“She quickly gained a reputation for being popular and rigorous, but fair,” Mewaldt said. He described her as “the most organized teacher I have ever met.”