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## Press Release

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Jones and Weisgerber receive Kaplan Award honors

(Janesville, Wis.) University of Wisconsin-Rock County recently named Professor of Business-Economics Dr. George Jones and Biological Sciences Lecturer Kristina “Krissy” Weisgerber their 2016/17 Kaplan Fellows. Jones and Weisgerber were nominated for this award by their peers and selected by the campus Steering Committee. The Kaplan Award recognizes the outstanding contributions to students made by UW Colleges’ faculty and instructional or non-instructional academic staff.

Jones, a native of Ghana, joined UW Colleges in 1991, fresh out of graduate school at UW-Stevens Point. He arrived on the UW-Rock County campus in 1992. Jones, also an artist (batiks) and accomplished in the kitchen, is the first UW-Rock County faculty member to receive the coveted campus Teacher of the Year award twice. He shares a life lesson by stating, “Always think ahead – if you cannot be great in the U.S. – where else can you achieve greatness? We all have that potential.”

Jones’ colleagues state, “Your unique teaching techniques and your passion for your students to succeed, you have made a momentous impact on your students. Students refer to you as “a wonderful man, teacher, and, most importantly, friend.” One of Jones’ students shared, “I am not the same person I was when I walked through his doors one year ago, and for that, I am forever grateful.”

His unique teaching techniques force students to think more broadly about the concepts of economics – to see the interrelationships and avoid simple memorization. This year, Jones introduced his VEGETABLE approach worksheet, a graphical perspective, which, as one student notes, “pushes her to look beyond the simple words and equations the students have learned, and find instead connections among all of these topics, which in turn puts far more meaning into the subject than if students simply read over class notes.”

Jones responds by saying, “Courses are very sequential in economics, so every semester I mix it up – to make it exciting – to get my blood boiling. It’s fun. We are all different kinds of learners. I cannot wait for the students to see what I have in store for them!”

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Weisgerber, a staunch supporter of community and the environment, joined UW-Rock County in 2003 and actively mentors student groups such as Green Scene and coordinates community events around Earth Day/Week. Her philosophy, both in and outside of the classroom, is, “Actions speak volumes about a person. I encourage my students to be active in the community: flexibility, purpose, belonging, interpersonal communication skills. I show that by my actions as well.”

Colleagues and students who nominated Weisgerber for the Kaplan Award state, “You have invigorated hundreds of students to grasp life’s positive opportunities through your extraordinary capabilities in biology and beyond. Your connections with charitable organizations provide students with tremendously positive experiences. For example, you developed a new 300-level Animal Behavior course and in one lab, students bring their own dogs and evaluate how their dog might fit into PetPals, the pet therapy program at American Family Children’s hospital.”

One of Weisgerber’s strengths as an instructor is being compassionate in the classroom – encouraging open dialogue and discussion. She comments, “I feel students are very focused – life is so busy – let’s make this efficient. My students have expectations of relevance and efficiency...tell me what I need to know in bullet points.” There is one example that Weisgerber repeats during her courses, “The environment is not the enemy of the economy. Without the environment, there is no economy. Let’s harmonize the economy and the environment. I think we need to bring reliable, responsible information to that conversation.”

In addition, each semester, Weisgerber strongly encourages her students to volunteer in the community for extra credit, offering information about a number of opportunities that she herself takes advantage of on a weekly basis. To quote one of her colleagues on the subject, “Through abundant tireless efforts, you continue to gift your students with the exhilarating goal of leading fulfilling lives of life-long learning.”

The Kaplan Award, established in 1993, honors Arthur M. Kaplan, a former provost of the UW Colleges. Each UW Colleges campus awards between one and four Kaplan Awards annually depending upon the size of the institution. The UW-Rock County award winners are named Kaplan Fellows for the academic year. To learn more about the UW-Rock County campus visit [rock.uwc.edu](http://rock.uwc.edu).

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*Photos: George Jones; Kristina “Krissey” Weisgerber*