

University Communications • 120 North Hall • 410 S. 3rd St., River Falls, WI 54022 • 715-425-3771

UWRF's Howry honored with AAEA Teaching Award

August 22, 2018 -- Sierra Howry, associate professor of agricultural economics at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls received the 2018 Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA) Distinguished Teaching: Less than Ten Years' Experience Award at AAEA's annual meeting in Washington, D.C. earlier this month.

Howry, of River Falls, is the first recipient of this award, in its 22-year history, to come from a small, regional, undergraduate teaching university.

In their letter of nomination, her department colleagues Brenda Boetel and David Trechter noted how Howry consistently ranks at or near the top on her student evaluations but went on to say that her teaching is not confined to the classroom.

"If Dr. Howry is in her office, the door is invariably open and there is a steady stream of students stopping by to talk with her. Many are there, not because they are in one of her classes, but to seek her advice about job or internship offers, get her opinion on how to handle some situation in a student club, or just to chat. Students respect her opinion and enjoy her company," they wrote.

Bailey Fernau, a 2015 graduate, spoke of Howry's rapport with students in her letter of support.

"Sierra's loyal enthusiasm is apparent in her warm welcomes and instantly assures students that they are capable of achieving all of their goals that they set out to accomplish," Fernau wrote. "That feeling is sometimes hard to come by at a university, yet Sierra is capable of encouraging it in every student she meets."

Howry would have attended the AAEA meeting even if she had not been an award recipient as she is the adviser to the UWRF agricultural economics student quiz bowl team. Soon after she arrived at UW-River Falls in 2013 Howry took the initiative to form a team which now travels to two different intercollegiate competitive events each year. Howry also serves as the faculty adviser for the College Farm Bureau chapter on campus and for Sigma Alpha, a professional agricultural sorority.

Last December Howry accepted another role on campus as the part-time director of the McNair Scholars Program. The program honors Ronald McNair, one of the astronauts killed in the Challenger explosion. It encourages first generation, low income and under-represented students to continue their education and earn a doctoral degree. The role is especially appropriate for Howry as she is a success story for the McNair Program as an undergraduate at East Central University in Ada, Okla.

For more information, email laura.walsh@uwrfl.edu or call 715-425-4714.

###

Photo: Sierra Howry, associate professor of agricultural economics at UWRFL, accepts the 2018 Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA) Distinguished Teaching: Less than Ten Years' Experience Award from Rodolfo Nayga, 2018 AAEA Awards Committee chair, University of Arkansas.