



August 31, 2017

Annual convocation honors faculty and staff

PLATTEVILLE, Wis. – On Aug. 31, the University of Wisconsin-Platteville held its annual all-campus convocation in Ullsvik Hall. The 2017 faculty and staff award recipients were recognized. This year’s recipients included Alison Parkins, Sue Vavricka, Michelle Zasada, Dr. Shan Sappleton, Dr. Evan Larson, Dr. Holly Attenborough, Dr. Amanda Tucker, Dr. Susan Hansen, Deb Schulman, Dr. Jennifer Collins, Angela Miller and Dr. Lynnette Dornak.

University Staff Award of Excellence – Alison Parkins and Sue Vavricka Parkins is the associate director of public relations and manages UW-Platteville website content, writes and edits content for press releases and university publications, and serves as an associate public information officer.

In addition to keeping up with her daily tasks, Parkins also helped prepare the university’s 100-plus page assurance report for the 2016 Higher Learning Commission reaccreditation visit and also helped lead communications and planning for the April 2017 UW System Board of Regents visit. She is entering her fifth year with the university.

After 43 years of continuous service as an academic department associate, Vavricka retired from UW-Platteville this spring.

As an academic department associate, Vavricka has served as the support staff for the psychology department as well as the foreign language program. She worked closely with the department chair, faculty and students since 1974. In addition, Vavricka provided assistance to the foreign language program’s faculty since 1980.

Academic Staff Award of Excellence – Michelle Zasada

Zasada has served as student services manager of the UW-Platteville Distance Learning Center for seven years. She is responsible for the oversight of the Student Services team and managing many of the daily operations of the area.

Prior to this role, Zasada served as housing assistant office coordinator from 1997-99 and compliance and internal operations coordinator from 1999-07.

Excellence in Advising International Students Award – Dr. Susan Hansen

Hansen is the director of the UW-Platteville School of Business, and has been with the university for 25 years.

She served several years on the University International Education Committee and as a faculty liaison and advisor to international students in the College of Business, Industry, Life Science and Agriculture. She currently advises UW-Platteville students studying abroad and international students coming to UW-Platteville.

Outstanding Woman of Color Award – Dr. Shan Sappleton

Born on the Caribbean island of Jamaica, Sappleton has taught courses in comparative politics, international relations and African politics at UW-Platteville since fall 2013. As an assistant professor of political science at UW-Platteville, she has been instrumental in creating undergraduate research opportunities for students.

Sappleton is currently working on a forum series, “The Politics of Discontent,” which will explore various socio-economic issues that drive political choice and coding behavior within the United States.

Wisconsin Teaching Fellow – Dr. Holly Attenborough

Attenborough is an assistant professor of mathematics at UW-Platteville.

Originally from Middletown, Ohio, Attenborough received her bachelor’s and

master's degrees from Miami University (Ohio). She then went on to receive her Ph.D. in mathematics from Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana.

Inspired by her participation in the Mathematical Association of America's Wisconsin Section of Section NExT, New Experiences in Teaching, Attenborough applied as a fellow in 2016.

Wisconsin Teaching Scholar – Dr. Amanda Tucker

Tucker is entering her 10th year as associate professor of English at UW-Platteville. She also serves as the English department's assessment coordinator.

Originally from Irving, Texas, Tucker received her Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts from the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas. She received her Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida before joining UW-Platteville in the fall of 2008.

Alliant Energy Underkofler Excellence in Teaching Award – Dr. Evan Larson

Larson, associate professor of geography at UW-Platteville, was named one of three recipients across the UW System of the 2017 Alliant Energy Underkofler Excellence in Teaching Award.

Larson began teaching at UW-Platteville in fall 2009. He teaches a large general education load with the natural science course Planet Earth, introductory and advanced geography courses, and mentors numerous student researchers as part of their geography majors.

Woman of the Year – Deb Schulman

Besides coaching the women's volleyball team for nearly three decades, Schulman also served as an assistant athletic director and the senior women's administrator.

Throughout her time as head coach, Schulman earned the American Volleyball

Coaches Association Midwest Region Coach of the Year and was inducted into both the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Hall of Fame as a four-sport athlete and UW-Platteville's Hall of Fame for coaching.

Nimocks Family Faculty Appreciation Award – Dr. Jennifer Collins
Collins, assistant professor of education who teaches Introduction to Education and Teaching Social Studies Methods, was awarded the inaugural Nimocks Family Faculty Appreciation Award.

In her time at UW-Platteville, Collins has run a number of programs engaging students outside of the classroom on topics and ideas that they have learned in class. This include trips to Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Aldine, Texas; and Grantham, England. She also is a student teaching advisor.

UW System Board of Regents' Diversity Award – Angela Miller
Miller, executive director of Diversity and Inclusion, was among the honorees as the UW System Board of Regents recognized the ninth annual winners of its Regents' Diversity Awards Feb. 3.

Miller also serves as director of the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs. Under her leadership over the past five years, OMSA has had a sustainable impact on underrepresented minorities on campus. Miller also implemented the Academic Enrichment Program, a comprehensive approach to supporting students who are first-generation, low income, underrepresented minorities and/or students with low academic profiles.

Innovations in Teaching with Technology Award – Dr. Lynnette Dornak
Dornak is an assistant professor of geography and has been a member of the UW-Platteville community since 2014. She recently worked on building an augmented reality sandbox for 3D conceptualization of geographic concepts to promote student learning. The components of the AR Sandbox were assembled and tested this summer and will be ready for class use in early fall.

Dornak specializes in Geographic Information Systems, biogeography, ecological niche modeling, spatial analysis and remote sensing.

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