

Cudd named distinguished teacher at UW-River Falls

September 17, 2021 - Distinguished Music Lecturer Patti Cudd has been named the Distinguished Teacher of the Year at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. The award was established more than 50 years ago and is the highest honor a faculty member can receive on campus. Each year nominations are sought from current seniors and recent graduates.

“Patti Cudd is my applied percussion teacher, mentor, and friend,” one nominator wrote. “I have learned so much about what it means to be a female percussionist and how to be confident in doing so. Patti challenges me in my lessons and in her ensembles while also having grace for the days that I am not at my best. She treats all of her students with great respect and understanding, and that is why she leaves such a lasting impression on her students.”

Cudd is active as a percussion soloist, chamber musician and educator. She teaches percussion and new music studies at UW-River Falls and at the College of St. Benedict/ St. John’s University.

The Distinguished Teacher Award recognizes excellence in both mentoring as well as teaching, something formers students spoke to in letters of nomination.

“Her relationships with her students are phenomenal, and I hope to reflect her compassion in my future career,” a student wrote. “My life will forever be changed by Patti because I can honestly say that I have never had someone believe in me the way that she does.”

“She has persevered through a global pandemic and has managed to still provide students with excellent ensemble experiences. She is a phenomenal Music 100 teacher and an extraordinary music educator as a whole,” another student wrote.

Yet another student wrote “With fierce determination Dr. Cudd cares about her craft and the students she diligently passes it along to. She is a master at evoking a sense of purpose as well as an everlasting curiosity in every class she teaches. Beyond an educational front, Dr. Cudd is always pleasant to talk to and work with. With a quick wit and an unreasonable amount of patience she provides her students a comfortable person to reach out to.”

Cudd, a Hudson native who lives in Woodbury, Minn., has been teaching at UWRF since 1998. As an alum, receiving the university's Distinguished Teacher award was particularly impactful.

"As an educator, I hold this award to be one of the greatest honors," said Cudd. "It is especially meaningful knowing this award comes from the students. I am truly humbled by this recognition!"

Cudd holds a Doctor of Musical Arts Degree specializing in contemporary musical studies from the University of California, San Diego; Master of Music Degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo; undergraduate studies at UW-River Falls; and, studied in the soloist class with a Fulbright Scholarship at the Royal Danish Conservatory of Music in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Cudd will be honored September 21 during a reception on campus. A plaque of her likeness will be added to the wall of Distinguished Teachers in the Wyman Education Building. As the recipient of the Distinguished Teacher Award, she will deliver an address at fall commencement in December.

For more information, email dina.fassino@uwrf.edu or call 715-425-4306.

###