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Excellence in Teaching Award Citation for Michael LaMarca

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University Award for Excellence in Teaching

Michael J. LaMarca, Professor of Biology

"Yourself a devoted scientist, you bring to the classroom a deeply held commitment to the
disciplined study of the world of living things. Through your own example, spiced by a vigor and
rigor that are legendary, you have led your students not only to an understanding of biology but
also to the recognition that good questions are as central to our pursuit of knowledge as are good
answers. If you have not yet made Rana pipiens and Xenopus laevis household words, you have
surely given those little amphibians notoriety among the many students who have worked with
great benefit alongside you in your laboratory. Moreover, you have succeeded in a quest that has
foiled others for centuries: for the General Zoology Laboratory Manual contains records of
heartbeats of unicorns allegedly captured by you in the wilds of Omro, Wisconsin.

Innovative in your approach to computer-assisted education, you have loosed upon the campus a
set of programs with such disarmingly direct titles such as ANIMAL, BONES, SKINS, MEATS,
and SMARTS, thus freeing you to concentrate in your classes on the leading theoretical and
experimental concerns of modern biology. You have also directed your students' attention to the
ethical and policy implications of contemporary scientific knowledge through the sensitive
handling of your course in human reproduction and through your concern for the roles of experts
and citizens alike in making critical decisions in an era of rapidly growing scientific
sophistication.

Michael LaMarca, in the best tradition of the teacher/scholar you render vividly for your students
the excitement, the challenge, and the responsibilities that attend our efforts to probe nature's
workings. Knowledgeable as your students may be about biology, however, they remember you
best for your skills in teaching others how to think."

*Citation read by President Richard Warch at Commencement, 1983*