

5-2-2013

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Lawrence University

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Recommended Citation

Lawrence University, "Two State Educators Recognized by Lawrence University as “Outstanding Teachers”" (2013). *Press Releases*. Paper 69.

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Two State Educators Recognized by Lawrence University as “Outstanding Teachers”

Posted on: May 2nd, 2013 by Rick Peterson

Kelly O’Keefe-Boettcher and Kenny Bosch, teachers at Milwaukee’s Rufus King International School and Muskego High School, respectively, will be honored Sunday, May 5 with Lawrence University’s 2013 Outstanding Teaching in Wisconsin Award.

Both will receive a certificate, a citation and a monetary award from Lawrence President Jill Beck in ceremonies at the president’s house. In addition, their respective schools will receive \$250 for library acquisitions.



Kelly O’Keefe-Boettcher

Nominated by Lawrence seniors, recipients are selected on their abilities to communicate effectively, create a sense of excitement in the classroom, motivate their students to pursue academic excellence while showing a genuine concern for them in and outside the classroom. Since launching the award program in 1985, Lawrence has recognized 60 high school teachers.

O’Keefe-Boettcher has taught in the Milwaukee School District since 1999, including the past 10 years at Rufus King, where she teaches American literature as well as courses affiliated with the International Baccalaureate.

Active in the Milwaukee Interfaith Conference, O’Keefe-Boettcher has provided assistance and resources to help students form religiously-oriented groups to help foster interfaith understanding and collaboration in the school, which boasts a racially, religiously and economically diverse student body. She serves as an advisor to the student organizations Jew Crew and Friends of Islam.

“A Powerhouse Woman”

O’Keefe-Boettcher was the founder of Rufus King’s peer mediation program, which facilitates resolution of student conflicts and was instrumental in securing a \$35,000 federal CLEaR Justice Grant for Rufus King and developed an anti-bias program to promote social justice teaching around issues of class, language, ethnicity and race.

Calling her “a powerhouse woman,” senior Jared Marchant praised O’Keefe-Boettcher’s ability for “coaxing students away from their comfort zones and pushing their intellectual boundaries” in nominating her for the award.

“Kelly prepares her students not only to succeed in English classes, but to succeed as informed, self-motivated global learners,” wrote Marchant, a 2009 Rufus King graduate. “She teaches and exemplifies the values of the liberal arts, encouraging her students to expand their thinking to examine the big picture and to take action in their own learning. Her standards are high, but she never sets her students up to fail.”

O’Keefe-Boettcher was the recipient of the 2009 Metropolitan

Milwaukee Association of Black School Educators Teacher of the Year award and in June will be presented Northwestern University's 2013 Distinguished Secondary Education Teacher Award.

A Milwaukee native, she earned both a bachelor's degree in communications with an emphasis on small group counseling and a master's degree in educational policy from UW-Milwaukee.



Kenny Bosch

Bosch joined the Muskego High School faculty in 2002, where he teaches social studies classes, including sophomore U.S. history and AP U.S. history. He began his teaching career in 2000 at Turlock (Calif.) High School.

“Excellent Motivator”

He helped create Muskego's Freshmen Mentor Program, for which he was recognized with the 2005 “Good Idea Award” by Partners for Education, Inc. Bosch also creates instructional videos to help teachers use technology more effectively for a video newsletter and is writing a chapter for the forthcoming education book “Flipping 2.0.”

Active in coaching on various levels since 1999, he has served as head coach of the Baylane Middle School 8th-grade girls team the past 11 years.

Lawrence senior Kaye Herranen described Bosch as “an excellent motivator” and “endlessly patient” in nominating him for the award.

“While Mr. Bosch certainly drives his students to do their very best and expects great things of them, he never pushes them too far,” wrote Herranen, a 2009 Muskego High School graduate. “He’s a teacher that students can’t help but like, even as he challenges them academically. It’s no surprise that I’m a history major at Lawrence. Mr. Bosch gave me his passion for history.”

A native of Franksville, Bosch earned a bachelor’s degree in broadfield social studies with a history concentration from Lakeland College and a master’s degree in education from UW-La Crosse.