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# Young Teacher Award Citation for Karen Nordell

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## **Young Teacher Award**

### **Karen Nordell, Assistant Professor of Chemistry**

"Karen Nordell, whether introducing your students to the wonders of the nanoworld, assisting the Rowing Club's orchid sale in the Science Hall atrium, or rowing with the crew on the Fox, you evidence an infectious enthusiasm for your field and a genuine interest in your students. They admire and appreciate the limitless energy and passion for teaching you bring to all you do, praise expressed not only by chemistry majors but by the scientifically challenged as well. For the former, you lead them to new levels of understanding and experimental sophistication; for the latter, you exhibit patience and persistence in assuring that students learn and master chemical concepts.

They cite you as 'an extraordinarily gifted communicator of complex scientific concepts,' with one hailing you as an 'emulsifier' who can bring together disparate groups to reach consensus, urging that whatever your knack, we should bottle it up and 'put it in the campus water supply.' Another claims that 'students of the life sciences are anxious to enroll in inorganic chemistry--an almost unheard of phenomenon--because' you teach it.

A product of an Appleton upbringing, you have reached out from your Lawrence post to serve--perhaps give back to--the community. Through your work with Partners Reaching Youth in Science and Math, known to us as PRYSM, and Girls Exploring Math and Science, referred to as GEMS, you, your students, and your colleague Eugenie Hunsicker have provided important role models for young girls in their early encounters with these disciplines. And you have been imaginative and quick-witted in other forms of teaching and learning in your field, from incorporating in your classes the examination of new materials worn by competitors in the last Winter Olympics to organizing lunchtime discussions about chemistry for faculty and students, who gather at what has come to be called the 'periodic table.'

Karen, for these and other attributes and accomplishments, I am pleased to recognize you today as an outstanding young teacher on the Lawrence faculty."

*Citation read by President Richard Warch at Commencement, 2004*