

2019

Excellent Teaching Award Citation for Erin Lesser

Lawrence University

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2019 UNIVERSITY AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

Erin Lesser

As a gifted instrumentalist and member of the acclaimed ensembles Wet Ink, DeCoda, and Alarm Will Sound, you have established a reputation as an artist of the highest caliber, appearing in venerable venues such as Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alice Tully Hall, and the Guggenheim Museum in performances that garner praise from *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Boston Globe*, and *The Wall Street Journal*. Your brilliance in the concert hall finds its bright reflection in the Lawrence Conservatory studio, where your grateful students grow as musicians and thinkers in their own right, thanks to your thoughtful, attentive efforts to meet them where they are and then give them the tools and support that helps them realize their artistic goals.

Since coming to Lawrence in 2011, you have gracefully balanced the life of a touring concert artist with the demands and obligations of a professor, mentoring young musicians with care and compassion. Your students praise your ability to balance patience with persistence, sympathy with rigor. They particularly appreciate your advice about how to organize

their time and set their focus in their daily practice: “I never leave a lesson wondering what I have to do during practice time,” commented one student. “Professor Lesser was always willing to talk about how I can best practice and achieve my goals,” said another. Students understand that your advice about practice time management is rooted in your own experience as a performing artist and are particularly grateful for your insight. “Erin knows a lot—and I mean a LOT—about playing the flute and being a professional musician,” observed a student. “Her expertise is invaluable.” Your practical advice is balanced by keen insights into the finer points of musical artistry, as a chamber music coach as well as an instrumental instructor. As one student put it, “I always felt I was becoming a better musician at every rehearsal.”

As a performing musician and a dedicated teacher, you provide a sterling model for our students of artistic accomplishment and generous mentorship. It is my distinct pleasure to recognize your achievements today with the 2019 Award for Excellence in Teaching.

June 2019