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Lawrence University

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Faculty Teaching Excellence, Scholarship, Creativity Saluted at Commencement

Posted on: June 10th, 2012 by Rick Peterson

Lawrence University recognized five faculty members Sunday, June 10 for teaching excellence, scholarship and creative activity at the college's 163rd commencement.



Thomas Ryckman

Thomas Ryckman, professor of philosophy, received Lawrence's Award for Excellence in Teaching, which recognizes outstanding performance in the teaching process, including the quest to ensure students reach their full development as individuals, human beings and future leaders of society.

A member of the faculty since 1984, Ryckman previously was recognized with the college's Young Teacher Award (1986). He is only the 10th faculty member to receive both teaching honors in the history of the awards.

During his Lawrence career, he has taught everything from introductory philosophy to courses in epistemology, logic and the philosophy of art. He has served as director of the Freshman

Studies program (1989-91) as well as contributing to it as an instructor. He also was instrumental in launching Lawrence's *Senior Experience*, directing the program from 2008-10.

In presenting Ryckman his award, Lawrence President Jill Beck praised him for employing humor, direct but appropriate prodding and thoughtful personal attention to ensure "students not only learn the material you present to them, but also become skillful independent learners capable of mastering anything new."

"In all of your activities, you have remained dedicated to the ideal of liberal education. That dedication has benefitted our students for over 25 years," said Beck.

Ryckman earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in philosophy at the University of Michigan and his master's and doctorate degrees in philosophy at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.



Peter Peregrine

Peter Peregrine, professor of anthropology, received the Award for Excellence in Scholarship, which honors a faculty member who has demonstrated sustained scholarly excellence for a number of years and whose work exemplifies the ideals of the teacher-

scholar.

An archaeologist specializing in the evolution of complex societies, Peregrine joined the Lawrence faculty in 1995.

Last fall, he was elected a Fellow of the prestigious American Association for the Advancement of Science, which recognizes “meritorious efforts to advance science or its applications.” He is one of only two Lawrence anthropologists ever elected an AAAS Fellow. Earlier this month, Peregrine was named a member of the External Faculty of the Santa Fe Institute, joining an accomplished group of scholars that includes a Nobel Laureate, numerous National Academy members and two Pulitzer Prize winning authors.

In addition to an extensive list of book chapters and journal articles, Peregrine is the author of the book “Archaeology of the Mississippian Culture: A Research Guide.”

“The range of interests represented by your work is remarkable. You have published on physical anthropology and archeology, and also on cultural anthropology,” Beck said. “These areas are so diverse that you are virtually a one-person interdisciplinary program. But it is not primarily the quantity or your achievements that is so impressive. It is their excellence.”

Peregrine, who taught for five years in the anthropology department of Juniata College prior to Lawrence, earned his bachelor’s, master’s and doctorate degrees from Purdue University.



John Shimon and Julie Lindemann

Associate Professors of Art Julie Lindemann and John Shimon received the Award for Excellence in Creative Activity. Established in 2006, the award recognizes outstanding creative work for advancing Lawrence's mission.

Collaborating photographers since the mid-1980s, Lindemann and Shimon have focused their cameras on the remote corners of the Midwest, particularly Wisconsin's Manitowoc County. Among their photographic projects are "Animal Husbandry," "Midwestern Rebellion," "Real Photo Postcard Survey," "Go-Go Girls" and "Pictures of Non-Famous People." Their 2004 boutique art book, "Season's Gleanings: The Art of the Aluminum Christmas Tree," a tribute to the 1960s shimmering holiday decoration, received national media attention, including a segment on "CBS Sunday Morning."

Provost and Dean of the Faculty David Burrows cited Lindemann and Shimon's work for creating photographs "that help us appreciate the complexities of human nature."

"In addition to your brilliant use of photographic technology and

your ability to relate to your subjects, one of the remarkable aspects of your work is its highly collaborative nature,” said Burrows. “You have worked together for many years, and clearly gain strength from each other. To experience your visual representations is to be inspired and intrigued. Your art transforms our understanding of human existence, and for that we are all grateful.”

Lindemann and Shimon joined the faculty in 2000 as part-time instructors before receiving a joint assistant professor appointment in 2005. They both earned bachelor’s degrees at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and master’s degrees from Illinois State University.

Violinist Samantha George, associate professor of music, received the Young Teacher Award in recognition of demonstrated excellence in the classroom and the promise of continued growth.

George was the associate concertmaster of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra for nine years before joining the Lawrence conservatory of music faculty in 2008. Other previous appointments include assistant concertmaster of the Colorado Symphony, core concertmaster of the Hartford Symphony, and guest concertmaster posts with the Charleston Symphony and the Oregon Symphony.



Samantha George

Her solo career includes concert performances with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Chamber Orchestra, Raleigh Symphony, Idaho State Civic Symphony, Hartford Symphony and the United States Coast Guard Band.

In presenting her award, Burrows praised George as “an inspiring, brilliant and thoughtful teacher.”

“A key part of your success is your ability to create a unique learning experience for each student,” said Burrows. “You are able to understand how each individual thinks and feels and you work to develop just the right lesson to bring out the best in that individual. Your experience as a soloist and associate concertmaster of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra allows you to give excellent advice on solo repertoire and orchestral music. Simply put, your teaching is outstanding.”

George earned bachelor and master’s degrees as well as a Performer’s Certificate degree from the Eastman School of Music. She also earned a doctorate in violin performance and music theory from the University of Connecticut.