



Faculty Convocation 2008 Awardees

Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching:

- Alma Abdel-Moty (Department of Occupational Therapy)
- Faisal Kaleem (Department of Decision Sciences & Information Systems)
- Laird Kramer (Department of Physics)

Faculty Award for Excellence in Research:

- Arvind Agarwal (Department of Mechanical & Material Engineering)
- Kannan Raghunandan (Department of Accounting)
- Judith Stiehm (Department of Political Science)

Faculty Award for Excellence in Service:

- Leslie Frazier (Department of Psychology)
- Nestor Portocarrero (Department of Hospitality Management)

Faculty Award for Excellence in Graduate Mentorship:

- Maureen Donnelly (Department of Biological Sciences)
- Daniel Wakefield (Department of English)

Faculty Award for Excellence in Librarianship:

- Scott Kass (Library)

Faculty Award for Excellence in Advising:

- William Maguire (Department of Art & Art History)

Adjunct Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching:

- Gretchen Scharnagl (Department of Art and Art History)
- Jayne Klein (Department of Religious Studies)
- Anastasios Moysidis (Department of Finance)

President's Council Outstanding Faculty Award:

Finalist: Arvind Agarwal, Department of Mechanical and Materials Engineering

Finalist: Kinzy Jones, Department of Mechanical and Materials Engineering, Director AMERI

Winner: Darden Pyron, Department of History

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Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching

Alma Abdel-Moty, Department of Occupational Therapy

Professor Alma Abdel Moty is a gifted teacher who finds unique ways to help her students learn. She serves as Associate Clinical Professor and Department Chair in the Department of Occupational Therapy, and teaches undergraduate and graduate courses. Professor Moty is known for her lively, interactive teaching style. She often seeks advice from her students to improve her teaching and facilitate learning, asking: “What is the one thing you learned today? What was the muddiest point in today’s lecture? How was the pace?” This professor has a reputation for making her classes fun, using crossword puzzles and interactive games to help students integrate and master material in their own way. Professor Moty was listed in Who’s Who Among American Teachers for five years. She received the Excellence in Advising award in 2004 and the Teaching Incentive Program Award in 1999.

Faisal Kaleem, Department of Decision Sciences & Information Systems

Faisal Kaleem’s students have consistently given him the highest ratings for his teaching. He was voted “Best Professor” and his Information Security course “Best Course” by several of his classes in the Master’s of Science in Management Information Systems program. Professor Kaleem introduces students to the world of computers in a way that is both engaging and enlightening. He has developed a reputation for his innovative use of technological tools and methods to stimulate learning and challenge his classes. He encourages students to read articles and newflashes related to technology and that they share them by posting them in a discussion forum. He even prepares them for job interviews with prospective employers, reviewing common interview questions. This professor inspires a love of learning in his students, and consistently shows a willingness to go “above and beyond” to help them achieve success.

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Laird Kramer, Department of Physics

Laird Kramer, a distinguished physicist, is dedicated to bringing science alive for his students. His introductory physics class operates in a studio format where students have multiple opportunities for real-world learning. They observe phenomena, draw conclusions, share ideas, and construct models, building their physics knowledge as scientists do every day. Professor Kramer's innovative teaching techniques have significantly impacted his students' academic performance. Their average conceptual learning gains are more than double the average of students in lecture sections, and they are four times less likely to drop out or fail the course. Outside of the university, Professor Kramer is working to improve physics education in high schools. By inspiring and challenging his students, he is helping to build a research and learning community that redefines the model for science and science teacher education in South Florida.

Faculty Award for Excellence in Research – George Walker

Arvind Agarwal, Department of Mechanical & Material Engineering

Arvind Agarwal, an Associate Professor and Graduate Program Director in the Department of Mechanical and Materials Engineering, received the prestigious National Science Foundation Career Award in 2006. Dr. Agarwal's research interests include carbon nanotube reinforced nanocomposites and coatings, nanomechanics and nanotribology, processing of bulk nanostructured materials, near net shape processing, and rapid prototyping. Since joining FIU in 2002, he has published six journal articles a year in leading journals. He has also edited three books, two book chapters, 21 conference proceedings publications, and 15 book reviews. Dr. Agarwal has received more than \$1.5 million in external funding as the sole principal investigator. His research has been funded by leading organizations including the Office of Naval Research, the Defense University Research Instrumentation Program, NASA, the U.S. Air Force, the Army Research Office, and the FIU Foundation.

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Kannan Raghunandan, Department of Accounting

Kannan Raghunandan is a Professor in the School of Accounting and the Ryder Eminent Scholar Chair in Business Leadership at the College of Business Administration. He studies audit opinions, internal auditing, and corporate governance. Since his arrival at FIU in 2003, Professor Raghunandan has accounted for 15 percent of all premier journal publications by College of Business Administration faculty. His expert knowledge is frequently used by regulators, legislators, academics and practitioners. His recent research was cited in testimony before the U.S. Senate, and he has served as a Consultant to the U.S. General Accounting Office. When FIU School of Accounting re-started its Ph.D. program in 2004, Professor Raghunandan served as coordinator of the program. He also served as dissertation co-chair for the majority of doctoral accounting students. He is the author of three computer-assisted instructional software packages in the areas of financial and managerial accounting.

Judith Stiehm, Department of Political Science

Judith Hicks Stiehm is a Professor of Political Science, and formerly served as Provost and Academic Vice President for four years. She studies political theory, social change, the status of women, and civil-military relations. Professor Stiehm has received many prestigious awards including the Frank J. Goodnow Award from the American Political Science Association and the U.S. Army Distinguished Civilian Service Medal. She has published consistently since 1968, and appears in the most recent edition of Who's Who. She served as a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, and as a Consultant to the United Nations Commission for the Advancement of Women and to the Lessons Learned Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Professor Stiehm has held academic appointments at University of Wisconsin, University of California at Los Angeles, and the University of Southern California. She also served as a Visiting Professor at the U.S. Army Peacekeeping Institute and at the Strategic Studies Institute at Carlisle Barracks.

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Faculty Award for Excellence in Service

Leslie Frazier, Department of Psychology

Leslie Frazier is an accomplished scholar and researcher who has provided outstanding service to the university in a variety of roles. As Director of Undergraduate Studies for the Department of Psychology, she played a key role in improving the quality of undergraduate course offerings by implementing a hiring, training, and evaluation process for adjunct professors. As a Faculty Senator and member of the Faculty Senate Steering Committee, she worked with colleagues throughout the university to enhance FIU's educational mission and contribute to collegial governance. Professor Frazier is passionately committed to preserving all of the rights and privileges that college faculty enjoy, and demonstrates that commitment through her service as President of the FIU chapter of the United Faculty of Florida. She has served on the Executive Council as a Senator of the United Faculty of Florida for many years. Recently, she was nominated by the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs at the College of Medicine to serve on the interview panel for student applicants.

Nestor Portocarrero, Department of Hospitality Management

Nestor Portocarrero has rendered extraordinary service to FIU. He is a Professor of Accounting and Finance in the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, and has been a faculty member since 1981. Among his many accomplishments, he was instrumental in systematizing and improving the assessment of student learning outcomes at his school. He obtained the James Bruce Wallace/Ruby Tuesday Scholarship fund for the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, and raised substantial funds to finance *The FIU Hospitality Review*. Professor Portocarrero made significant contributions as a member of various Search and Screen Committees, the Faculty Senate, and the FIU Undergraduate Council. He is a past Chairman of the FIU Honorary Degrees and Awards Committee, and served as a member for several years. He was honored by alumni at his school as the professor who contributed the most to the

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academic growth of his students. He has also received two awards for excellence in teaching and two Teaching Incentive Program awards.

Faculty Award for Excellence in Graduate Mentorship

Maureen Donnelly, Department of Biological Sciences

Maureen Donnelly is a Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences, where she has served as Graduate Program Director for the past five years. Since joining FIU in 1994, she has mentored 12 master's students, and four Ph.D. students. A number of her master's degree students have gone on to pursue doctoral degrees at FIU and elsewhere. Professor Donnelly believes that innovative education is an essential part of mentoring. She developed specialized graduate workshops that provide students with hands-on training that allows them to take their classroom experience into the real world. She is a tireless advocate for her students and assists students with achieving their academic goals in a variety of ways, helping them to write grants, get published, obtain funding for dissertation research, and present research at scientific conferences. A great number of her current and former students endorsed her nomination for this award with great enthusiasm, admiration and gratitude and describe her mentorship with: "character, personality and charisma, and tough love".

Daniel Wakefield, Department of English

Daniel Wakefield, the Writer-in-Residence in the English department, is known for his unwavering dedication of time and energy to his students. Since joining the English Department in 1994, this distinguished journalist, screenwriter, and best-selling novelist has helped to further the careers of his students in a variety of ways. He assists them with getting published and connects them with literary agents and publishers. He introduces his Master of Fine Arts Students to visiting writers at informal gatherings, helping them to forge professional

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connections and learn how develop their own voices, materials, and styles. Professor Wakefield is always available to his students. His door is open to anyone who needs helps with publishing, rewriting, finding an agent, or facing rejection. He is a devoted and successful mentor of student writers through and beyond their time at FIU.

Faculty Award for Excellence in Librarianship

Scott Kass, University Libraries

For more than 30 years, Scott Kass has demonstrated daily his outstanding skills in librarianship, and his creativity and his innovation. He has served in a variety of roles including University Librarian, Head of Reader Services and former Interim Associate Director of Libraries. His many and varied responsibilities include administering library operations, formulating and implementing policies and procedures, overseeing collection development, and providing reference assistance. What he does, and how he does it, are vital to the library's mission. Mr. Kass has twice he has received the University's Excellence in Teaching Award for library instruction. He has been an Adjunct Instructor at the university for 22 years, and teaches advanced research and writing courses at the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management at the Biscayne Bay Campus. He has also instructed students in FIU's programs in Luzern, Switzerland, and Tianjin, China.

Faculty Award for Excellence in Advising

William Maguire, Department of Art & Art History

William Maguire nurtures students to success in their academic and professional careers with especially cogent personal and academic advising. He is a faculty member in the College of Architecture and the Arts, where he teaches courses in photography. Professor Maguire is the only academic advisor in the School of Art and Art History. He believes that his role is not just to tell students which courses to take, but to accompany each student on his and her own journey

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of self-discovery. He has advised 120 students in the school, and mentors more than 20 students every semester. He instituted an email list of all art and art history majors that allowed him to proactively communicate with students on advising matters. He also implemented a formal mentoring system for all art majors that facilitated better monitoring of progress toward declared majors. This professor has an uncanny ability to connect with his advisees on the personal level, making students feel that he genuinely wants to help.

Adjunct Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching

Gretchen Scharnagl, Department of Art and Art History

Gretchen Scharnagl is a practicing artist who convincingly brings to her classes in design, drawing, ceramics, and color theory the belief that what she teaches provides her students with a foundation basic to all disciplines. Her teaching philosophy, she writes, is premised on “the idea that no great person was called great because they could recite all the knowledge brought to us by others or could execute skills as well as someone who came before [them].” Rather, “greatness comes from those who create new knowledge or go beyond accepted skills or application.”

Jayne Klein, Department of Religious Studies

Jayne Klein is completing a doctorate in Higher Education Administration at FIU, where she did her masters in Religious Studies. She has taught as an adjunct instructor in Religious Studies and the Honors College and is an affiliate faculty member of the Latin American and Caribbean Center. Lesley Northup, Dean of the Honors College, writes in her nomination letter that “Jayne’s commitment to the study of Haiti and its religions is enhanced by her dedication to the related external programs and organizations that she has brought in the FIU orbit She has crafted partnership arrangements and college-prep programs . . . that indicate her commitment to extending her excellent pedagogy beyond the confines of FIU alone.”

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Anastasios Moysidis, Department of Finance

Anastasios “Tasos” Moysidis brings to our students his career experience in financial planning and treasury operations. He notes Greek writer Nikos Kazantzakis observes that “teachers are those who use themselves as bridges, over which they invite their students to cross; then having facilitated their crossing, joyfully collapse, encouraging them to create bridges of their own.” Having taught each year at FIU since 1992, Tasos has seen many crossings and encouraged the creation of many new bridges. Professor Moysidis uses case studies to build his students’ analytical and critical skills and provides the support to let his students work as a team, as they will in the workplace, and they appreciate the opportunity to become actively engaged in their education as they become financial professionals.

President's Council Outstanding Faculty Award

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Finalist I:

Arvind Agarwal, Department of Mechanical and Materials Engineering

A short while ago, you heard about Professor Agarwal's impressive research performance that promises to further promote the university's research agenda. His research complements a strong record in teaching. He has taught two undergraduate and four graduate courses and received excellent evaluations. In his laboratory, he supports 4 Ph.D. students, 2 M.S. students, 3 B.S. students and one postdoctoral fellow.

He took the lead in creating and advising the TMS professional society student chapter at FIU. This chapter rated best nationally in its first three years of existence. He also serves as the Graduate Program Direction in Mechanical and Materials Engineering. Dr. Agarwal has also received the FIU Faculty Advisor of the Year award.

The President's Council rightfully recognizes Dr. Agarwal as a well-rounded and outstanding scholar. Congratulations.

Finalist II:

Kinzy Jones, Department of Mechanical and Materials Engineering, Director AMERI

For our next finalist in this award category, we literally go across the hallway in the Department of Mechanical and Materials Engineering:

Dr. Kinzy Jones is a colleague of Dr. Agarwal in the Department of Mechanical and Materials Engineering with a joint appointment in Electrical Engineering. He earned his B.S. in Engineering Science and his M.S. in Metallurgy both from Florida State University and his Ph.D. in Materials Science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

His primary research interests include microelectronic packaging, electronic materials development and implantable device packaging. Dr. Jones obtained a complete MEMS facility donation from Motorola, with which he established the Motorola Nanofabrication lab, a 2000 square foot facility. He also founded, and currently serves as the Director of, the Advanced

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Materials Engineering Research Institute that supports the analytical instrumentation needs of all faculty and provides an open access equipment infrastructure to support materials research and engineering over a broad range of technology and capabilities. Dr. Jones has garnered a total of \$8.3 million in external research support as P.I. and \$1.2 million in the past academic year alone.

Dr. Jones established the Ph.D. and M.S. programs in Materials Science, from development of the proposal to approval by the BOG.

With great appreciation, the President's Council recognizes Dr. Kinzy Jones for 24 years of outstanding academic contributions to the College of Engineering.

President's Council Outstanding Faculty Award 2008 - Winner

Darden Pyron, Department of History

Darden Pyron is an exceptional teacher and distinguished scholar. As founding chair and senior faculty member in the Department of History and professor in the Honors College, Darden Pyron has made extraordinary contributions over the course of more than three decades to the field of North American history and to the life of our university.

Through his consummate scholarship, Professor Pyron has enhanced the reputation and furthered the mission of FIU. He has published numerous books on American cultural history and the American South including *Recasting: "Gone with the Wind" in American Culture*, and *Southern Daughter: The Life of Margaret Mitchell*. The former has been translated into Czech and German, and was also a Book of the Month Club selection. His critically acclaimed biography of the performer Liberace titled *Liberace: An American Boy* was published in 2000.

This professor has a passion and enthusiasm for teaching that is evident every time he enters a classroom. He teaches a broad array of courses on diverse topics – from intellectual history, to Greek History, to contemporary American history and culture. As part of the Honors College, he has created innovative courses such as "Humor and Laughter" and "Creativity and the Human

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Condition”. In recognition of his work as an educator, he has twice received the University Teaching Award and the Teaching Incentive Program Award.

Professor Pyron provided years of academic leadership in giving form to the Department of History at the university’s start. After completing several years as the department chair, he continued to contribute to the maturation and stature of FIU by his actions and his discourse. Congratulations Professor Pyron.

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