2017 UNIVERSITY ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

A CELEBRATION OF INSTRUCTION, RESEARCH, CREATIVE ACTIVITY AND SERVICE

ABOUT THE AWARDS

OUTSTANDING STUDENT RESEARCH AWARDS, created in 2008, recognize excellent student research.

EARLY ACADEMIC CAREER EXCELLENCE AWARD, established in 2008, recognizes the outstanding and extraordinary academic and professional achievements of faculty members, at the early career stage, who have made major contributions to their profession and the university.

DISTINGUISHED FACULTY TEACHING AWARD rewards sustained excellence in teaching by members of the university's faculty, including tenured and probationary faculty, lecturers and librarians.

DISTINGUISHED FACULTY ADVISING AWARD, established in 2008, rewards sustained excellence in advising by members of the university's faculty.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING FACULTY MENTOR FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN RESEARCH, SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY, created in 2008, honors student mentoring within the previous 18 months.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AWARD FOR IMPACT ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE YEAR IN RESEARCH, SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY, created in 2008, honors research, scholarly or creative work conducted over the previous 18 months.

DISTINGUISHED FACULTY SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD rewards sustained excellence in scholarly and creative achievement.

OUTSTANDING STAFF AWARD recognizes a staff member who has made significant contributions to the campus community.

OUTSTANDING PROFESSOR AWARD encourages, rewards and publicly acknowledges outstanding professorial performance.

OUTSTANDING UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENT AWARD

LAUREN DUNNE
PSYCHOLOGY

When Lauren Dunne was first introduced to research, she didn't see it as a very power

OUTSTANDING UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENT AWARD

JAMIE GLEASON
CHEMISTRY & BIOCHEMISTRY

Since 2014, Jamie Gleason has worked as an undergraduate research student for Chemistry & Biochemistry Professor Stephen Mezyk,

OUTSTANDING GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENT AWARD

SHEENA CRUZ
PUBLIC HEALTH

In her short time as a graduate student, Sheena Cruz has managed to serve in a multitude of research-related roles, all of which has led to numerous presentations, two publications and another submission for publishing. That's in addition to her attending school full time, interning and working.

According to her mentor, Niloofar Bavarian, assistant professor of health sciences, all this activity is a testament to her "great work ethic." It is that work ethic, and its results, that have earned Cruz this year's Outstanding Graduate Research Student Award.

Currently an intern with the Center for Health Equity and Research working with the Building Healthy Communities project, Cruz is also a "graduate technician" on an O□ce of Research and Sponsored Programs-funded project that combines public health and information systems. She also is a graduate assistant for the Building Infrastructure Leading to Diversity (BUILD) Initiative and is responsible for assisting with mentoring students. Cruz also has volunteered time to participate as a member of the BUILD research team, which Bavarian leads.

DISTINGUISHED FACULTY SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

PRASHANTH JAIKUMAR
PHYSICS & ASTRONOMY

With 15 years of post-Ph.D. experience in theoretical astrophysics, Dr. Prashanth Jaikumar has produced central and highly-cited research results that have given new insights into the properties of neutron stars. His most recent efforts in this area have earned him the Distinguished Faculty Scholarly and Creative Achievement Award for 2017.

Since his appointment as an assistant professor at CSULB in 2009, Jaikumar has published 18 papers and conference proceedings in leading peer-reviewed journals in physics and astronomy and has garnered more than 500 citations for these publications.

His most significant research contributions have been made in the areas of the "Nature of Matter at Extreme Densities," "Gravitational Waves," and the "Nucleosynthesis of Heavy Elements," the latter topic of which he has made his most influential achievements. There, he helped develop a computer simulation to model the creation of heavy elements from light ones, addressing a central problem termed "nucleosynthesis" in physics. Along with his collaborators, Jaikumar leveraged large-scale computing resources and graphical user-interfaces to design a software module called "r-Java," which has been picked up by research groups from around the world in a common e□ort to solve the challenges of nucleosynthesis.

His impressive efforts within the field have earned him a handful of grants. He recently obtained a very competitive National Science Foundation-Research at an Undergraduate Institution grant that supports fundamental research at the highest levels and provides support for undergraduate and graduate students to be trained in astrophysics. This comes on the heels of previous grants from the Research Corporation for Science Advancement, NASA and the U.S. Army High-Performance Computing and Research Center, making up a continuous stream of federal and private funding in excess of $550,000 since 2010.

Additionally, Jaikumar has an impressive number of CSULB students who have finished their master's degrees with a research thesis under his guidance. Out of nine students, five are now in Ph.D. programs in the United States and Japan.

DISTINGUISHED FACULTY SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

THOMAS ALEX WASHINGTON
SOCIAL WORK

The HIV/AIDS research and public health communities have made major strides in reducing the wide-spread impact of HIV/AIDS in the United States. Still, there continues to be a ways to go to eradicate the virus and its accompanying disease.

Contributing to this e□ort, Dr. Thomas Alex Washington has been engaged in HIV prevention and intervention research for more than 18 years, and his work during that time has earned him a number of accolades, including CSULB's 2017 Distinguished

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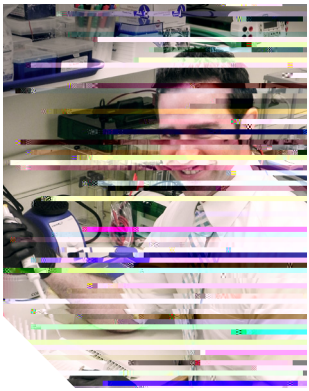

DR. JOSHUA A. COTTER
KINESIOLOGY

Completing just his third academic year, Dr. Joshua Cotter hasn't been at CSULB very long, but that hasn't kept him from making his mark at the university. In fact, his early e□orts and success at the campus have earned him this year's Early Academic Career Excellence Award.

Perhaps the accomplishment Cotter is most proud of is the building of a new high-tech lab called the Physiology of EXercise and Sports Lab—or PEXS Lab for short.

The lab was created with a transitional research mindset where he visualized a lab space that would allow for the study of not only the positive e□ects of exercise on health and sport performance but for exploring the underlying cellular and molecular mechanisms that determine those changes. Since he started the effort, Cotter has earned nearly $500,000 in grants and awards, funding the purchase of more than 200 individual equipment items and bringing cutting-edge technology that will significantly impact both student and faculty experiences.

Additionally, Cotter has sought out ways for creating unique educational and hands-on opportunities for students. Last summer, he took a trip to the Karolinska Medical Institute in Sweden to aid in the development of research collaborations and study abroad opportunities as part of the Professors Around the World Program. He also developed a relationship with the Los Angeles Kings of the National Hockey League that led to the coordination and training of more than 30 students each year for the team's annual physiological testing event.

To date, Cotter has been a member of eight master's theses, five projects, and 31 comprehensive exam committees. He serves as the graduate coordinator for exercise science, is a member of the College Research Committee, was a leader for the Building Infrastructure Leading to Diversity (BUILD) Mentoring community, and has served on two search committees, one of which he chaired.

DISTINGUISHED FACULTY ADVISING AWARD

OUTSTANDING STAFF AWARD

WENDY LOPEZ
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

When asked for feedback on the Department of Human Development (HDEV), students said the number one asset in the department is Administrative Support Coordinator Wendy Lopez. That's just one reason why she is this year's recipient of the Outstanding Sta Award.

An alumna of CSULB, Lopez has worked in the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) since 1999 in numerous positions and for HDEV since 2007. Her combination of congeniality and e ciency, collaboration and cooperation, make her a strong asset for the department and the university.

HDEV has experienced tremendous growth in recent years, with the number of full-time faculty more than doubling and the number of declared majors increasing from 200 to more than 800. Despite the numbers, however, "There isn't a student in the department that Wendy has not met with, advised, and/or counseled at some point during his or her time at CSULB," according to HDEV Assistant Professor Emily Schryer.

Through it all, Lopez has remained her kind, e cient, gracious, upbeat self. In addition to assisting students and performing her regular duties, which include scheduling, budgeting, hiring, and event planning, Lopez has also served as a mentor to new CLA sta members.

"Beyond her work ethic and productivity, Wendy's upbeat attitude is a principle force in maintaining a positive atmosphere in the department. Faculty members unilaterally appreciate her o ce management and ongoing support. For students she is often the public face of the department," Department Chair Carl Fisher summed up. "Wendy's enthusiasm for her job, and for doing it well, is unparalleled in my experience. I have never known a sta member so deeply woven into the fabric of an academic department."

In addition to her dedication to work at CSULB, Lopez also finds time to volunteer in her community. Most notable is her work with the YMCA of Greater Long Beach, for which she has volunteered for many years with a focus on fundraising for an after-school program.

DR. BILL PEDERSEN
PSYCHOLOGY

According to his students, what sets Dr. Bill Pedersen apart from other professors is his passion for teaching—both inside and outside the classroom—and that helped earn him this year's Outstanding Professor Award.

Pedersen admits that he is most passionate about working with students outside the classroom. He also believes it is the one area in which he has had the most positive impact on his students. Since joining the university in 1999, he has mentored more than 160 graduate and undergraduate students in his research lab, 21 of whom have subsequently been admitted to doctoral programs. He also has served on 86 thesis committees, of which he has chaired 21.

His work with students has also been a part of his scholarly and creative activities. With a focus on factors that impact aggressive behavior and violence, Pedersen's research e□orts have yielded 36 peer-reviewed articles in top journals plus two book chapters. He also has three manuscripts under review or in a revise-and-resubmit status and four papers in progress. Additionally, he has made more than 70 presentations at regional, national or international conferences, and nearly all of the presentations had multiple student co-authors.

Despite all of his teaching and scholarship work, participating in service activities is extremely important to him, both as a person and as an academic, and he has sought out opportunities to serve his department, the College of Liberal Arts, the university and the CSU system.

This includes serving as the Assistant Chair of the Psychology Department and an Advisory Committee member; includes assignments on hiring committees, with the Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion process, the CSULB Academic Senate and reviewing for 17 academic journals; anis dlF26.5 (n)-8.3k5 (s a p)-12.Flty aoaleg aor 1

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