Goergen awards recognize outstanding faculty, staff

Todd Krauss, associate professor of chemistry and optics

"I often remind the students that although we are always serious about learning chemistry, it does not mean that we always have to be deadly serious in presenting it," wrote Todd Krauss in his statement of teaching philosophy. In 2003, when Krauss began teaching freshman general chemistry, making the course fun, or as fun as possible, was an important goal. In an effort to increase enthusiasm for a course known for being difficult, he created innovations, including "Fun Fridays," which start classes with a chemistry-themed joke and song. Krauss also introduced peer-led team learning workshops to the general chemistry course, and his "real life" demonstrations take chemistry concepts and relate them to current events. For one former student, missing one of Krauss’s lectures meant "losing out on a chance to learn the material in a unique and enjoyable manner."

G. Bingham Powell Jr., the Marie Curran Wilson and Joseph Chamberlain Wilson Professor of Political Science

G. Bingham Powell Jr. teaches courses in comparative polities, democratic political processes, conflict, democracy, and western politics, among others. Powell notes that the primary principle that guides his teaching is to teach what he finds interesting. His enthusiasm will naturally shape the class and will generally catch students up on the material, he believes. His students agree. They say he is "passionate about what he teaches" and a professor who "focuses on real learning and long-term understanding." In recognition of his work with graduate students, Powell was awarded Rochester’s William H. Riker University Award for Graduate Teaching in 1999. Powell’s enthusiasm for political science reaches far beyond the perimeters of the River Campus. His textbook, Comparative Politics Today, is assigned to college students throughout the country.

Harry Reis, professor of psychology

After more than three decades as a faculty member at Rochester, Harry Reis has seen numerous changes take place in the classroom. From chalkboards to PowerPoint presentations, from mimeograph machines to Web sites, the tools for teaching may be different, but his goal “to foster engagement in the learning process” is still the same. For students, this translates into a passionate professor who “comes up with really clever and interesting ways to teach the material” and “engages the class’ with ideas that are ‘very relevant to our lives.’” A testament to his ability to reach students, his Relationship Processes and Emotion course, which he designed in 2001, now attracts enrollment numbers upward of 150 students. Courses modeled after this one have been created at several universities around the world. He has mentored 14 honor’s theses in the past six years alone and maintains an active research laboratory with many undergraduate assistants.

Center for Study Abroad and Interdepartmental Programs/Director Jacqueline Levine

“Jackie and her staff’s enthusiasm and confidence in what study abroad can do for students encouraged me to go places that few students go and to take advantage of unique Rochester programs,” writes a former student. In several nomination letters, Rochester alumni share similar sentiments about a staff that fostered their curiosity about the world around them. Under the guidance of director Jacqueline Levine, the Center for Study Abroad and Interdepartmental Programs provides opportunities for students to internationalize their education through a summer, a semester, or a year abroad and to create their own majors, minors, and clusters. The center has continued to expand its offerings and services. Since it was established in 1991, more than 4,000 students have studied in 63 countries including Ghana, India, Chile, Poland, Sweden, and China. For many, it was a catalyst that sparked lifelong passions. One alumna describes Levine as “personally and professionally dedicated to the concept of Meliora,’ always looking for new and innovative ways to encourage students to make the most of their time at Rochester.”

Anne-Marie Algier, associate dean of students and director of Wilson Commons Student Activities

Anne-Marie Algier has supported students at the University for 18 years—advising, counseling, and mentoring them in their curricular pursuits. Her nomination letters offer examples of how she has served as one of the students’ greatest advocates, listening to concerns and offering solutions. She currently oversees the Wilson Commons Student Activities office, advising student organizations and planning events, and has worked to establish the concept of College Community Weekends, which enhanced the programming of Yellowjacket and Winterfest Weekends. In this capacity, former and current students say she enhances the college experience of every student who steps inside Wilson Commons.”