

# *Celebrating Excellence*



**MINNESOTA STATE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE**

**APRIL 21, 2021  
12:00 P.M. - 1:00 P.M.**



**MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

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# Celebrating Excellence

MINNESOTA STATE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

April 21, 2021 | 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

## MUSIC

Sanil Lynch, guitar

"La Huida de los Amantes por el Valle de los Ecos"

(The Flight of the Lovers through the Valley of Echoes)

Composed by Leo Brouwer (b. 1939)

Combined choirs from Anoka-Ramsey Community College, Minneapolis College, Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Normandale Community College, North Hennepin Community College, and Riverland Community College.

"Love is Love Is Love"

Composed by Abbie Betinis

## EMCEE

Cathy Wurzer

## WELCOME

Devinder Malhotra, Chancellor

Jay Cowles, Board of Trustees Chair

## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Cheryl Tefer, Board of Trustees Academic and Student Affairs Chair

## RECOGNITION OF AWARDS

Outstanding Service Faculty

Service Faculty of the Year

Outstanding Educators

Educators of the Year

## CLOSING

Ron Anderson, Senior Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs

## PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE AWARD

The award is an honor bestowed upon university service faculty to acknowledge and reward exceptional individual professional accomplishment, and to encourage ongoing excellence in the key roles that service faculty fulfill at our system's universities. They are responsible for advising and counseling students; for the recruitment, retention, and placement of students; for residential life programming; facilitation of student groups and student leadership; and other involvement in university and community activities.

### SELECTION CRITERIA

The Professional Excellence in Service Award Review Committee evaluated each nominee in the following areas:

- » Exceptional Work Performance
- » Advancement of the University Mission
- » Expertise and Creative Achievement
- » Contribution to Student Growth and Development
- » Advancement of Equity and Inclusion

Nominations were made by students, faculty peers, or staff, and evaluated by a campus review committee before Outstanding Service Faculty nomination packets were submitted to the Senior Vice Chancellor. At the system level, a committee employed a rubric of detailed criteria in reading and discussing Outstanding Service Faculty portfolios, and made final recommendation of one Service Faculty of the Year recipient to Senior Vice Chancellor Anderson. That recommendation was reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees.



## Marcia Anderson

**Director, Student-Directed Learning  
Metropolitan State University**

Ms. Marcia Anderson is the Student-Directed Learning Director at Metropolitan State University. Her strong commitment to valuing students for who they are and what they bring to their institutions has been a catalyst for Credit for Prior Learning across Minnesota State. Her leadership has been innovative and vast at both the institutional and system levels impacting past, current, and future students.

Anderson is committed to advocacy for expanding equity and inclusion, consistently engages in personal and professional development, and shares this new learning with others.

Anderson holds a B.A. in Individualized Studies and an M.A. in Liberal and Integrative Studies from St. Mary's University.

### SERVICE FACULTY OF THE YEAR COMMENTS

It is a joy to have a job to help recognize learners for their learning. I help learners build from and get credit for their college-level learning from life-wide resources: study, mentoring, work- or community-based learning, and reflection from hands-on and transformational experiences.

I am privileged to hear students' stories and refer them to demonstrate their prior learning for faculty assessment, or to guide them to accomplish new student-directed learning. Besides boosting learners' confidence, I see such competence-based learning recognition that encourages lifelong learning and their continued empowerment beyond graduation.

Many thanks to my colleagues Stanley Hatcher, Advisor, and Dean Charles Tedder for nominating me. Deep gratitude also goes to President Ginny Arthur for supporting the Student-Directed Learning Office, and for recommending me to the Board of Trustees. Applause and admiration to all nominees, and to each distinguished awardee for your dedication to teach, guide, and launch our system's lifelong learners. I am honored.

## OUTSTANDING SERVICE FACULTY

These administrative service faculty are recognized for the extraordinary service they provide at their universities and to Minnesota State. Comments were provided by colleagues, presidents, and community supporters.



### CORITA BECKERMANN

**Director, Medical Clinic and Pharmacy  
St. Cloud State University**

This consummate professional is renowned for staunchly promoting effective health and wellness initiatives for St. Cloud State University's students, faculty, and staff.



### JODI EGELAND

**Medical Director, Student Health Services  
Minnesota State University, Mankato**

Egeland's diligent work to create new and innovative service delivery models for mental health care is recognized throughout her university and Minnesota State.



### JODI KNOTT

**Assistant Director, Financial Aid  
Bemidji State University**

Fully understanding the critical role financial aid plays in student success, Knott is a determined champion of finding ways to help students and increase financial literacy.



## TRACY RAHIM

**Associate Director, Student Activities and Leadership  
Winona State University**

Tireless, diligent and always cheerful, Rahim plays a pivotal role in the success of WSU student life events. Daily she works to advocate, educate and empower students.

## PREVIOUS BOARD OF TRUSTEES SERVICE FACULTY OF THE YEAR

2019

**Kari Peterson**

Recreation and Wellness Director  
Minnesota State University Moorhead

2018

**Jane Olsen**

Director, Women's Center  
St. Cloud State University

2017

**Kierstin E. Hoven**

Director of Campus Recreation  
Bemidji State University

2016

**Barbara Oertel**

Director of Warrior Success Center  
Winona State University

2015

**Shahzad Ahmad**

Director for Multicultural Student Services  
St. Cloud State University

# THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

The Board of Trustees Educator of the Year Award for Excellence in Teaching was established in 2007. Board of Trustees bestow the award upon faculty within Minnesota State to acknowledge and reward exceptional professional accomplishment, and to encourage ongoing excellence in teaching. The award proclaims, on behalf of the entire system, the Board of Trustees' pride in the dedication and accomplishment of its faculty who provide instruction that prepares Minnesota college and university students for their professional, scholarly and civic lives. This year, presidents designated 57 Outstanding Educators in nomination for the award.

## SELECTION CRITERIA

The Board of Trustees Educator of the Year Award for Excellence in Teaching program evaluates each nominee in the following areas:

- » Innovative Teaching Strategies and Materials
- » Assessment of Student Learning
- » Culturally Responsive Teaching and Pedagogy
- » Service to Students, Profession, Institution, and System
- » Content Expertise and Professional Growth

Nominations were made by students, faculty peers, or staff, and evaluated by a campus review committee before Outstanding Educator nomination packets were submitted to the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs.

At the system level, two committees - one for college instructors and another for university instructors - employed a rubric of detailed criteria in reading and discussing Outstanding Educator portfolios, and made final recommendations of seven Educators of the Year recipients to Senior Vice Chancellor Anderson. Those recommendations were reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees.





# Jessie Breyer-Peterson

Psychology  
Century College

Dr. Jessie Breyer-Peterson is a dedicated educator and passionate mental health advocate. In the classroom, Breyer-Peterson uses formative and summative assessment to inform teaching, which is both intentional and continuous, adjusting as needed in order to create more equitable outcomes for underserved students. She places emphasis on understanding the unique needs of students and how to serve them and help them succeed.

Breyer-Peterson has provided valued and unique service to her students, institution, and greater community in the creation and implementation of mental health first aid courses. Additionally, her grant writing for and managing of mental health first aid training was extended to four additional Minnesota State colleges for faculty, staff, and community members.

Breyer-Peterson holds a B.A. in Psychology and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from the University of St. Thomas.

## EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR COMMENTS

It is such an incredible honor to receive the Board of Trustees Educator of the Year award. Thank you to President Angelia Millender and the nomination committee for submitting my name for this distinguished award, and thank you to my amazing colleagues who inspire me each day! In addition, thank you to my parents and my husband for supporting me in my growth and development as a student, and later as an educator.

I began my academic journey as a community college student at North Hennepin Community College and eventually returned to Minnesota State as a Psychology faculty member at Century College. I will admit that on the drive home after my first day teaching, I cried because it felt like the perfect fit – I was home! I love the values and mission of the Minnesota State two-year colleges and feel so fortunate to get to contribute to that mission each day. It is an honor to get to know my students and help support them in their own academic journeys.



# Ruthanne Crapo Kim

Philosophy  
Minneapolis College

Dr. Ruthanne Crapo Kim has a deep understanding of culturally responsive and anti-racist pedagogies, which she implements very intentionally in her philosophy classroom at Minneapolis College. She actively seeks to diversify the philosophical cannon and deliberately uses global resources to capture diverse perspectives in community based and service learning.

Crapo Kim's research on orality as inclusive and reflective of indigenous groups is not just a research focus but is also lived out in her courses and in her classrooms. She fills these spaces with active learning activities such as case study, class analysis, fish bowl, and a recognition of the various ways that students can demonstrate mastery of course objectives.

Crapo Kim holds a B.A. in Communication Arts and Interdisciplinary Studies, a M.A. in Counseling and Theology, and a Ph.D. in Philosophy from Vrije Universiteit (Amsterdam, Netherlands).

## EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR COMMENTS

Thanks are owed to the outstanding students at Minneapolis College who let me learn with them. Special thanks to President Pierce for supporting my nomination and to the review committee whose hard-won experiences are generously shared. I extend this award to the exceptional department of Philosophy, a singular hub of pedagogical innovation, anti-racist commitment, decolonizing research, and irreverent laughter. With you, I've reimagined ways to center student exceptionalities, to invite students to be assessed in the languages in which they feel the most loved, and to challenge and extend philosophy from every region and culture. I thank my institutional and professional mentors and peers for criticizing my research, testing my fluency, pushing my endurance, and sparking new horizons of thought and praxis. I recognize the transformative legacies of those committed to anti-racism, equity, and inclusion in Minnesota State; you bear the exhaustion and rise daily. To my family, words aren't enough.



## Cindy Kaus

**Mathematics**  
**Metropolitan State University**

Dr. Cindy Kaus' focus on and connection between math and social justice utilizing a method of integrating civic engagement into STEM is a distinguishing feature of her teaching at Metropolitan State University. Her courses are often project-based and authentic in process, application, and content using topics that students find engaging. Additionally, she is a great campus partner through her work with other programs to meet the mathematics needs of their students.

Kaus integrates culturally relevant real world content to support student learning. She is helping students understand how the historical context of inequality connects to empathy and solving world problems.

Kaus holds a B.S. and M.A. in Electrical Engineering and a Ph.D. in Mathematics from the University of Arizona.

### EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR COMMENTS

I would like to thank President Arthur and Provost Gort of Metropolitan State University for their nomination for the Board of Trustees Educator of the Year. They have been very supportive of my work with students. In addition, I would like to thank my husband, Chris Kaus, for the thousands of hours sitting at the dinner table talking about teaching and learning, celebrating our students' successes, and empathizing with one another when things don't work out as planned. The opportunity to teach the students at Metropolitan State University has been the most professionally rewarding experience of my life. Continuously grappling with the most effective ways to engage my students and helping them to achieve their goals has led to a dream career. I am truly honored to receive this award and the recognition of being an excellent teacher. That is all I have ever wanted to be.



## Miriam Kero

Speech/Communications  
Hibbing Community College

Ms. Miriam Kero is passionate about service to students and supporting student success both in and out of the Hibbing Community College classroom. Outside the classroom, she leads HCC's Overtime Lab, an innovative program that includes study sessions and resources for student athletes, which has also motivated and engaged faculty and staff from across campus to be involved and contribute to student success.

Kero integrates current and student driven media into the classroom and is committed to empowering students. She recognizes the backgrounds, talents, and knowledge that they bring with them to class. Kero meets people where they are at and is skilled at creating spaces to have difficult conversations with other faculty and students about privilege and equity.

Kero holds a B.S. in English and an M.A. in Communicating Arts from the University of Wisconsin-Superior.

### EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR COMMENTS

As I look at my colleagues at Hibbing Community College and across Minnesota State, I am humbled to be recognized for this honor. So many co-faculty and staff work continually to educate and alleviate life challenges for our students. I am surrounded by incredible educators who continue to teach me through their words, actions, and heart.

A special thanks to my honest and hard-working students. Without their trust and willingness to build relationships, our classes would not contain the magic they hold. Thank you for sharing your experiences and perspectives. Your words challenge and inspire me.

Thank you to our Dean of Academics Jessalyn Sabin for writing a beautiful application, Provost Aaron Reini and President Mike Raich for their support, and the Board of Trustees for reading and reflecting upon all the worthy entries they received. It is truly a privilege to receive this award.



## Paul Neiman

**Philosophy**

**St. Cloud State University, 2007-2020**

**Weber State University, 2020-Present**

Dr. Paul Neiman created an inclusive and welcoming classroom for his philosophy students at St. Cloud State University. He is intentional to include diverse materials and voices of non-Western, non-male voices who traditionally have dominated in the field, and he seeks to have awareness of self and others with intent to affirm student identity and lived experiences.

Neiman makes the content real for students with application and reflection such as the Living Like assignment to understand and analyze ethical theories and learning games or simulations to support the understanding of key concepts. Additionally, his incorporation of RAW (Reading and Writing) assignments allows Neiman to assess student understanding of and engagement with the course material and provide timely and frequent feedback to students.

Neiman holds a B.A. in Philosophy and Political Science and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Philosophy from Marquette University

### EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR COMMENTS

I would like to thank the people who have contributed most to my development as a teacher: my mother, Dr. Linda V. Neiman, and my former colleague, Dr. Kevin Sharpe. From my first class as a graduate instructor at Marquette University to helping me design ways to create community in online classes I teach at Weber State University, my mother has always offered creative ideas, and teaching wisdom. Kevin and I have had numerous conversations about teaching and learning over the last decade at St. Cloud State University, and I am thankful to have had a great colleague dedicated to teaching. I am proud to be part a system that values teaching and learning through this award and would love to have been able to continue my career here. I was disappointed to be retrenched by St. Cloud State University in 2020.



## Janet Tilstra

Communication Science  
St. Cloud State University

Dr. Janet Tilstra is committed to creating a sense of belonging in her Communication Sciences and Disorders courses and to demystify college for her students at St. Cloud State University. Her belief in students is evident in her asset-based approach to teaching and her students. This sense of belonging and demystification is extended in her explicit belief that every person brings value and wisdom to the classroom and conversation.

Using the Backward by Design method, Tilstra has aligned content, assignments, and assessments to the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) at the course, program, and institution levels. She uses multiple sources of evidence and multiple levels of learning (based on Bloom's taxonomy) and is committed to assessment both of students and self.

Tilstra holds a B.A. in Speech and Hearing Science, an M.A. in Speech-Language Pathology, and a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from the University of Minnesota.

### EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR COMMENTS

I am honored and humbled to be awarded one of the Board of Trustees 2020 Educator of the Year Awards. In my own journey, many mentors have challenged and cheered for me; I am privileged to play that role for others. It was especially validating to be selected for this award based on characteristics I deeply value: creating a sense of belonging, recognizing the wisdom each person brings to the classroom, and incorporating ongoing assessment of student learning. A sincere thank you to my departmental colleagues for their support, especially Rebecca Crowell who encouraged me to complete the application when I was immersed in tenure portfolio preparation. Thank you to the St. Cloud State University faculty committee for their careful review of my application and to St. Cloud State University President Robbyn Wacker for nominating me for this award. I am grateful every day for my family, Dave, Hannah, and Lauren, who encourage, challenge, and sustain me.



# Stephanie Zarse

Dental Hygiene  
Normandale Community College

Ms. Stephanie Zarse purposefully thinks about how she creates and develops the environment and culture of her classroom in the Dental Hygiene program at Normandale Community College. In her courses, she asks students to identify structural racism in their field in order to disrupt it and focuses on providing equitable care. Additionally, Zarse provides students opportunities to work with underserved communities to incorporate elements of civic engagement.

Using a variety of classroom activities and assignments such as PeerYouTube teaching videos, concept mapping, flipped-hybrid classroom, and case-based scenarios, Zarse seeks to stimulate, engage, and increase collaboration among her students. She also uses various approaches to assess students allowing them to demonstrate competency in a variety of ways.

Zarse holds a B.S. in Biological Sciences and Dental Hygiene and an M.S. in Dental Hygiene Education from the University of Missouri.

## EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR COMMENTS

Thank you President Ester and Dean Brickle for helping me become the educator that I am today and for your part in my recognition as a Minnesota State Educator of the Year. Colleen Brickle, Dean of Health Sciences, welcomed me into the campus teaching community by believing in me. With her foresight, she continues to encourage me in directions that will inspire and challenge my professional growth. One opportunity in particular, guided me to be influential in the pursuit to integrate principles and practices of equity in academics and in healthcare. My involvement within Normandale Community College's teaching community has allowed me to engage with educators across disciplines to influence their perspectives on equitable practices. With Dr. Joyce Ester, Kristina Keller, Cary Komoto, Deb Sidd, my potential has been magnified, and I will be forever grateful to these exceptional Normandale Community College leaders who have been instrumental in my success as an educator.

## OUTSTANDING EDUCATORS

A sampling of comments from students, colleagues, deans, and presidents. They recognized these faculty as outstanding in every regard: as teachers, advisors, colleagues, scholars, and professionals.



### JAY ANDERSON

**Psychology**  
**Normandale Community College**

This consummate educator takes a multi-faceted approach to creating a classroom environment that embraces the development of student perspectives and understanding of others.



### JIM BIEDERMAN

**Psychology**  
**Anoka-Ramsey Community College**

This influential educator and mentor is known for his vibrant and visual storytelling. Students describe him as highly-organized and skilled at making difficult content understandable and enjoyable.



### GALE BIGBEE

**Graphic Communications**  
**South Central College**

This superb teacher is committed to ensuring students graduate armed with a comprehensive skill set and valuable real-world experiences provided by local industries.





**TRACY BOYLE**  
**Architectural Technology**  
**Minneapolis College**

This campus leader strives to serve students by helping expand credit-for-prior learning, developing assessments for test-outs and creating an architectural design camp for high schoolers.



**NATHAN BRUENDER**  
**Chemistry**  
**St. Cloud State University**

Bruender's students praise his focus on evidence-based teaching, willingness to try new approaches and acute ability to cultivate a sense of belonging in his classrooms.



**RAJEEV BUKRALIA**  
**Computer Information Science**  
**Minnesota State University, Mankato**

Bukralia has an impressive record for engaging students in research projects to enhance their learning, including mentoring students who have produced papers for national conferences.



**JILL CADWELL**  
**English**  
**Century College**

A respectful, compassionate approach to student lives and their many vulnerabilities has helped Cadwell to focus on reducing unnecessary barriers to student success.



## ANGELA COFFEE

**English**  
**Century College**

This kind, welcoming teacher encourages students to become engaged in the broader college community and integrates incredible trainings, events and campus speakers into her curriculum.



## KYENA CORNELIUS

**Special Education**  
**Minnesota State University, Mankato**

Cornelius successfully prepares her students for the field of special education by creating innovative assignments that allow them to bridge theoretical coursework to real-work application.



## JOANNA CREGAN

**Biology**  
**Saint Paul College**

More than just being a superb instructor, Cregan excels at engaging students outside of the classroom, sharing best practices with colleagues and helping her institution improve.



## JESSE DAHL

**Electrical Maintenance and Construction**  
**Hibbing Community College**

In addition to being a fabulous teacher, Dahl is a role model, demonstrating how to share one's time, talent, and expertise with the larger community.



## JESSICA DANIELS

**Biology**

**Minnesota State Community and Technical College**

This impressive teacher diligently works to provide a safe learning environment, innovative curriculum and accessible support to help her students successfully reach their academic goals.



## FERNANDE DENO

**Nursing**

**Anoka-Ramsey Community College**

Students in Deno's nursing classes learn to think critically and apply complex knowledge, while also developing skills such as collaboration, communication, self-reflection, and resiliency.



## REBECCA DRISCOLL

**Surgical Technology**

**Anoka Technical College**

This dedicated teacher's program standards match those found in the surgical technology industry, ensuring graduates know what will be expected of them in the workplace.



## ANGELA EFFERTZ

**Exercise Science**

**Normandale Community College**

This campus leader facilitates innovative, meaningful experiential learning opportunities for her students, including a wide variety of affordable field trips and community service projects.



## ROB GALLER

**History**

**St. Cloud State University**

This highly-regarded instructor believes in the power of learning and urges students to take risks and think outside their comfort zone to become vital, engaged citizens.



## NORA GIBBONS

**Psychology**

**Saint Paul College**

Committed to culturally-responsive teaching, this incredible teacher creates a classroom environment that supports the development of critical thinking skills from multiple viewpoints.



## K.C. HANSON

**English**

**Minnesota State Community and Technical College**

This special teacher works to create pathways within his discipline, scaffolding both content and courses to present students with clear, achievable routes to success.



## CATHERINE HASLAG

**Chemistry**

**Riverland Community College**

Haslag has honed nearly 20 years of teaching and learning experiences to present materials in creative ways that promote active participation, dynamic interactions and practical application.



## MATT HOEPNER

**Medium/Heavy Truck Technician**

**St. Cloud Technical and Community College**

Hoepner's passion for his career is evident by the health of his program, which has full enrollment, excellent student success rates and high job placement.



## MIKI HUNTINGTON

**Political Science**

**Minneapolis Community and Technical College**

Students in Huntington's classes are impressed by her thoughtful and engaging lesson plans, effective classroom management, strong communication skills, and warm, welcoming personality.



## KERRY JAEGER

**English**

**Northland Community and Technical College**

This beloved educator not only serves his students in an exemplary manner, but also is a role model, sharing his approach to student success with peers.



## JOEL JENSEN

**Philosophy**

**North Hennepin Community College**

With deep dedication to teaching and learning and student success, Jensen truly changes lives. Students can't help but find the excitement he exudes infectious.



## FAISAL KALEEM

**Computer Science**  
**Metropolitan State University**

This extraordinary educator demonstrates the value of involving students in the learning process, helping them develop the leadership, collaboration and presentation skills that contribute to career success.



## KERRY KLEYMAN

**Psychology**  
**Metropolitan State University**

Kleyman's remarkable ability to build a culture of engaged students in a high-impact practice of research and presentation skills cannot be underestimated.



## MELISSA KRULL

**Educational Leadership**  
**Minnesota State University, Mankato**

This thoughtful, compassionate educator is known for her high-quality instruction and her dedication to the achievement and well-being of every student.



## KATY LUNDELL-STUHR

**Massage Therapy**  
**Ridgewater College**

Lundell-Stuhr's determination, sense of commitment and persistence allow her to both challenge and support students to reach their full potential in their classes and life.



## MEGAN MAHOWALD

**Speech, Hearing & Rehabilitation Services  
Minnesota State University, Mankato**

Students agree that Mahowald is an inspiring, impactful teacher who genuinely cares about her students. She motivates everyone to follow their dreams and achieve.



## RITA MILLER

**Medical Laboratory Technician  
Minnesota West Community and Technical College**

Miller is a gifted teacher who understands the varying needs of her students. She strives to instill strong values including honesty, integrity, equality, fairness, and professionalism.



## CAROLYN NEUBAUER

**Nursing  
St. Cloud Technical and Community College**

Neubauer is admired for her deep concern for students and their success. Her focus on student engagement and instructor accessibility creates a positive culture of learning.



## COLLEEN NORGREN

**Administrative Support-Paralegal Studies  
Ridgewater College**

Students in Norgren's classes appreciate her clear and consistent expectations, accessible instructional methods and her diligent commitment to help them meet their educational goals.



**DAVID OTTO**  
**Welding and Fabrication**  
**Central Lakes College**

This visionary educator has transformed the college's welding program by redesigned the space and curriculum to work for diverse learners and expanding relationships with industry leaders.



**KATHLEEN PORTER**  
**English**  
**Central Lakes College**

Porter is known on campus for teaching with heart. She goes above and beyond to understand her diverse students, creating a truly inclusive learning environment.



**TINNA ROSS**  
**Biology**  
**North Hennepin Community College**

This highly-respected and valued teacher prides herself on not only teaching content, but also helping students understand what they're learning and applying it in their everyday lives.



**LEAH SCHNAITH**  
**Chemistry**  
**Minnesota State College Southeast**

Schnaith's commitment and passion for teaching and her college, coupled with her outstanding work ethic, has earned her the respect, admiration and genuine affection of her students.





**HIRAL SHAH**  
**Engineering Management**  
**St. Cloud State University**

Distinguished not only for her contributions to supporting inclusion and diversity, Shah also is known for her ability to create partnerships and opportunities with Minnesota businesses.



**NANCY SHIH-KNODEL**  
**English**  
**North Hennepin Community College**

This exemplary educator recognizes the importance of creating innovative materials, inventing new instructional strategies and developing fresh curricula to energize the mind of each student.



**SHERRY LEE SHORT**  
**Art**  
**Minnesota State University Moorhead**

This excellent teacher is motivated by her desire to provide curriculum that is relevant, transformative and responsive to the evolving needs of the students she serves.



**ROBERT SLEEZER**  
**Integrated Engineering**  
**Minnesota State University, Mankato**

This superior teacher is passionate for both engineering and education. He skillfully engages students in classes, making them part of the lesson rather than passive observers.



## BRAD THORPE

**Automation Robotics Engineering Technology**  
**Hennepin Technical College**

Talented, conscientious, enthusiastic and innovative are words colleagues use to describe Thorpe. A graduate job placement rate of 100 percent is proof of his program's success.



## ALLI VAINSHTEIN

**Business**  
**Saint Paul College**

Vainshtein is a strong advocate for students and quality teaching. She approaches her vocation with true conviction and works daily to find new ways to inspire her students.



## CHRISTOPHE VELTSOS

**Computer Information Science**  
**Minnesota State University, Mankato**

Veltsos is globally-recognized cybersecurity trailblazer and leader. Colleagues call him humble and responsive and tout his track record of making significant contributions to his discipline.



## KENT VOELKNER

**Chemistry**  
**Lake Superior College**

This remarkable chemistry teacher also is a wise advisor, guiding and supporting several generations of students to grow into the leaders that few knew they could become.



## MELANIE WAITE-ÄLTRINGER

**Biology**

**Anoka-Ramsey Community College**

Waite-Altringer is recognized as a passionate ambassador of scientific scholarship. This effective, admired teacher embraces opportunities to provide students with exciting research and presentation experiences.



## RICHARD WATKINS

**Criminal Justice**

**Riverland Community College**

Watkins successfully combines the wisdom and discipline he learned as a patrol officer with innovative teaching techniques to produce highly sought-after law enforcement program graduates.



## SUZANNE WHITE

**Communication**

**Normandale Community College**

This masterful teacher is a champion of culturally-responsible pedagogical methods. She challenges students to stretch beyond their comfort zone by engaging them with themes related to diversity.



## RHONDA WIGGINS

**Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning, Refrigeration**

**Hennepin Technical College**

The excellent teacher proves how a technical education can change people's lives. Wiggins inspires and mentors students, helping them succeed in the classroom and beyond.



## GAYLA WINSLOW

**Practical Nursing**

**Rochester Community and Technical College**

This seasoned veteran in practical nursing graciously shares her exceptional skills and wealth of knowledge with each and every student to enrich their academic journey.



## KARIN WRIGHT

**Communications**

**Rochester Community and Technical College**

Inspirational, exciting, insightful, encouraging and passionate are words colleagues and students freely use when describing Wright's teaching style and personal interactions.



## NIKOLAY ZHELEV

**Nursing**

**Lake Superior College**

Zhelev champions student success by mentoring his nursing students, as well as providing presentations during campus Student Success Days, on test-taking and study skills.

## RECENT BOARD OF TRUSTEES EDUCATORS OF THE YEAR

2019

### **Kevin Haglin**

Physics and Astronomy  
St. Cloud State University

### **Kimberly Hansen**

Accounting  
Riverland Community College

### **Tanya Hoting Mrazek**

American Sign Language  
Central Lakes College

### **Megan Jones**

Earth and Environmental Sciences  
North Hennepin Community College

### **Jacqueline Semaan**

Nursing  
Lake Superior College

### **John Sinko**

Physics and Astronomy  
St. Cloud State University

2018

### **Jeffrey Bell**

Biology  
Northland Community and Technical College

### **Rhonda Besel**

Cosmetology  
Riverland Community College

### **Kerry Norling**

Communications  
Hennepin Technical College

### **Tracy Ore**

Sociology  
St. Cloud State University

### **Matthew Palombo**

Philosophy  
Minneapolis College

### **Sarah Petitto**

Chemistry  
St. Cloud State University

2017

### **Joan Bernard**

Computer Careers/Information Systems  
Hennepin Technical College

### **Gill Creel**

English  
Minneapolis College

### **Carol (Kari) Frisch**

Communications  
Central Lakes College

### **Maran Wolston**

Philosophy  
Minneapolis College

2016

### **Justin Berry**

Physical Therapy Assistant  
Northland Community and Technical College

### **William Breen**

English  
Anoka-Ramsey Community College

### **Shannon Peak Fiene**

Mathematics  
Minnesota West Community and Technical College

### **Adam Marcotte**

English  
Central Lakes College

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# Your participation requested

On April 21st during the event, we invite you to share a photo of yourself or your experiences on social media with your event box, pin, medal, or certificate using the hashtag #MinnStateBOTAwards and tagging @MinnStateEdu.



Medals and pins received by outstanding educators and service faculty can be worn at commencement ceremonies.

# Thank You

To celebrate these honorees requires the hard work of many. Special thanks to:

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- » Members of the review committee:
  - » Joan Bernard • Hennepin Technical College
  - » Melissa Dingmann • Minnesota State University Moorhead
  - » Shannon Fiene • Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Minnesota West Community and Technical College
  - » Amy Gort • Metropolitan State University
  - » Linda Kingston • Winona State University
  - » Becky Krystyniak • Anoka-Ramsey Community College
  - » Josefina Landrieu • Metropolitan State University
  - » Melissa Lindsey • St. Cloud Technical and Community College
  - » Shawn Mueske • Ridgewater College
  - » Sarah Olcott • Winona State University
  - » Becky Omdahl • Metropolitan State University
  - » Tracy Ore • St. Cloud State University
  - » Shana Petermann • Minnesota State Community and Technical College
  - » Karen Qualey • Minnesota State University Moorhead
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