In recognition of the outstanding achievement of two faculty members recently named as 2008 Professors of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education. Through excellent teaching and service to students, their work demonstrably furthers each of the Board’s strategic goals.

Scheduled Presenter(s):
Linda L. Baer, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs
Edna Mora Szymanski, Minnesota State University Moorhead
Ann Wynia, North Hennepin Community College

Outline of Key Points/Policy Issues:
In November, 2008 Eugenia Paulus, chemistry instructor at North Hennepin Community College, was selected as the United States Community Colleges Professors of the Year. Since the inception of the prestigious U.S. Professor of the Year award in 1981, she was the first professor from Minnesota to receive the award at the national level. In April 2008, Dr. Paulus also received the Board of Trustees Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Martin Grindeland, professor of mass communications at Minnesota State University Moorhead, was selected by Carnegie/CASE as the 2008 Minnesota Professor of the Year. He was the eighth MSU Moorhead faculty member to receive the award in the past 21 years.

Background Information:
The U.S. Professors of the Year program salutes the most outstanding undergraduate instructors in the country. It is recognized as one of the most prestigious awards honoring undergraduate teaching, and the only broad, multi-disciplinary award at the national level.
BACKGROUND

Two faculty members were selected in November 2008 as Professors of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education. Through excellent teaching and service to students, their work demonstrably furthers each of the Board’s strategic goals.

Eugenia Paulus, chemistry instructor at North Hennepin Community College, was selected as the United States Community Colleges Professors of the Year. Since the inception of the prestigious U.S. Professor of the Year award in 1981, she was the first professor from any college or university in Minnesota to receive the award at the national level. In April 2008, Dr. Paulus also received the Board of Trustees Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Martin Grindeland, professor of mass communications at Minnesota State University Moorhead, was selected by Carnegie/CASE as the 2008 Minnesota Professor of the Year. He was the eighth MSU Moorhead faculty member to receive the award in the past 21 years.

Both were honored at a luncheon awards ceremony and reception in Washington, DC in November, and Dr. Paulus was introduced by Eric Jolly, President of the Science Museum of Minnesota, at a recognition event in December 2008.

The U.S. Professors of the Year program salutes the most outstanding undergraduate instructors in the country—those who excel as teachers and influence the lives and careers of their students. It is recognized as one of the most prestigious awards honoring undergraduate teaching, and the only broad, multi-disciplinary award at the national level.

Criteria for selection include extraordinary dedication to undergraduate teaching as demonstrated by excellence in impact on and involvement with undergraduate students; scholarly approach to teaching and learning; contribution to undergraduate education in the institution, community, and profession; and support from colleagues and current and former undergraduate students.

More information on the program, including video and photos of the 2008 awards luncheon, as well as transcripts of students’ introductions and awardee’s remarks, is available at http://www.usprofessorsoftheyear.org/
2008 U.S. Professors of the Year National Winners


Jerusha B. Detweiler-Bedell
Outstanding Baccalaureate Colleges Professor
Associate Professor of Psychology
Lewis & Clark College
Portland, Ore.
Passion for Teaching Statement
Student Introduction
Acceptance Speech
Video of Acceptance Speech

Eugenia Paulus
Outstanding Community Colleges Professor
Professor of Chemistry
North Hennepin Community College
Brooklyn Park, Minn.
Passion for Teaching Statement
Student Introduction
Acceptance Speech
Video of Acceptance Speech

Michael Wesch
Outstanding Doctoral and Research Universities Professor
Assistant Professor of Cultural Anthropology
Kansas State University
Manhattan, Kan.
Passion for Teaching Statement
Student Introduction
Acceptance Speech
Video of Acceptance Speech
Wei R. Chen
Outstanding Master's Universities and Colleges Professor
Professor of Biomedical Engineering
University of Central Oklahoma
Edmond, Okla.

Passion for Teaching Statement
Student Introduction
Acceptance Speech
Video of Acceptance Speech
Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. I would first like to applaud the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and TIAA-CREF for hosting this wonderful event. I would also like to thank all four recipients of the U.S. Professors of the Year Award because, like the individual I am about to introduce, you are the reason so many students achieve their dreams and live up to their full potential.

For seven years before returning to school, I had a wonderful career as an ice hockey player. When I decided to change career paths, I chose North Hennepin Community College in Minnesota to transition back into academia. And there, I met Dr. Eugenia Paulus, my chemistry professor.

Like many students taking chemistry, I wanted to be a doctor, but at times, I would struggle with core chemistry concepts and I wavered on whether I possessed the ability to fulfill my dream. During those times, Dr. Paulus provided the perfect mixture of constructive criticism and compassion and helped me realign my focus. Few professors in my academic career have given up precious personal time to assist me. When difficult concepts arose in the curriculum, she would stay late and provide extra teaching to any student who required assistance.

But her positive qualities extend beyond her altruism. You see, depending upon the path one chooses to pursue, much of the subject matter we learn from our professors in the sciences is never applied. What these professors teach students is a framework for understanding; it is a framework upon which a lifetime of inquiry can be constructed. Much of the chemistry I learned from Dr. Paulus has never been built upon. But she had a unique ability to show me her passion for chemistry, and her passion and positive attitude is now woven into my character.

The struggles she helped me overcome while learning organic chemistry have been applicable to overcoming struggles that I have faced during medical training. In five months, I will graduate from the University of Michigan Medical School in Ann Arbor, and shortly thereafter begin training for a career as an emergency physician. Today, I stand shoulder to shoulder with some of the most highly educated and well-trained students in the country.

During my time in her classroom, Dr. Paulus provided me with not only the mindset, but also the skills and confidence one needs to survive in a stressful medical environment. She was the first professor who instilled in me the confidence I needed to thrive in academics, and for that, I will always be thankful. Ladies and gentlemen, would you all please join me in welcoming Dr. Eugenia Paulus.