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Faculty members Garavaso, Rudney receive prestigious recognition

Summary:

(April 19, 2004)-by Matt Gilmore '05, UMM News Service -- Two professors at the University of Minnesota, Morris have received prestigious recognition for their contributions to the University of Minnesota.

Pieranna Garavaso, professor of philosophy, is a recipient of the 2004 University wide Horace T. Morse University of Minnesota Alumni Association Award for Outstanding Contributions to Undergraduate Education.

The honor is awarded to exceptional candidates and reflects the University's emphasis on the importance of high quality undergraduate education. It also contributes to the improvement of undergraduate education at the University by publicizing the work of the award winners to serve as a resource for the whole faculty.

"It was wonderful to receive this award," said Garavaso. "There are many other teachers here that deserve recognition for their hard work."

Garavaso has been a member of the UMM philosophy discipline since 1985. Beyond her teaching duties she works as the coordinator for the women's studies major on campus. She earned bachelor's and master's degrees in philosophy, with honors, from the University of Padua in Italy. She received her doctoral degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Garavaso is the author of one book on the philosophy of mathematics and numerous articles published in Italian and English philosophical journals and anthologies. Most recently, her scholarly work has included projects in feminist epistemologies, in the teaching of philosophy with service learning, and in the editing of a book in the philosophy of mathematics, which have been conducted as faculty-student partnerships.

"She's the best teacher I've had here," said UMM junior Trevor Wagner. "She found a way to relate our learning to real life, something not easy to do with a subject like symbolic logic. She is patient and really supports a multicultural education."

"I work to get [the students'] minds involved," said Garavaso. "Logic and reasoning skills are used every day. I just help [the students] realize what they already know."

Gwen Rudney, associate professor of elementary education at UMM, is the 2004 recipient of the UMM Alumni Association Teaching Award. Thanks to the generosity of the UMM Alumni Association, the Morris campus recognizes its professors for their superior contributions to undergraduate education through this annual award, first given in 1997.

Perhaps even more than receiving the award, Rudney expressed satisfaction for "the letters that my colleagues and my students wrote for me. I feel appreciated and valued by the people I know best and value most.

"I know how hard they work and the standards they have. For them to do that for me is such an honor. Then, to have other people choose me, it's indescribable. It's exciting because teaching is so important to me. To be honored for it is amazing."

Rudney earned bachelor's and master's degrees, as well as her doctorate and all of her teaching certification at the University of California Riverside. She has been a part of the UMM faculty since she chose it in 1991.

"Morris was the only interview that I went on where students were clearly involved and active in the entire interview process," said Rudney. "That was very important to me."

In addition to teaching classes, Rudney also serves on a committee to coordinate the elementary education program at UMM. She spends time researching multicultural education, the mentoring of student teachers, and the parent teacher relationship. She has published one book, *Maximum Mentoring: An Action Guide for Teacher Trainers and Cooperating Teachers*, and is well on her way to publishing her second. She also serves her profession as chair of the selection panel for the Minnesota Teacher of the Year.

Rudney is proud to teach her students the skills they will use to teach their own students one day.

"All students deserve good teachers," she said.

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