

Faculty earn grants for projects that enhance student learning

The Center for Academic Innovation recently named the recipients of the 2017-18 Dow Professor Award, which provides funding for projects through the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Academic Development fund.

"The purpose of the award is to support the work of individual faculty or teams of faculty for academic and pedagogical innovation projects that enhance student learning," said Robert Lane, professor of political science and faculty liaison to the Center for Academic Innovation.

The recipients are:

• **Sally Decker**, professor of nursing, for her project titled, "Use of Gaming: Friday Night in the ER Game as an Educational Learning Experience." The award will allow Decker to purchase an educational game that will provide an opportunity for experiential learning related to communication and critical thinking with nursing students and other professional groups.

• **Christopher Giroux**, assistant professor of English, and **Hideki Kihata**, professor of art, for a project titled, "The Still Life Project." The initiative will create collaborative service-learning opportunities for students — particularly art majors and Writing Center tutors — to gain practical experience with writing, editing and photography.

• **Gary Lange**, professor of biology, for a project titled, "Engaging Students in a Non-Majors Biology Classroom through Increased Active Learning." The funding will secure materials to enhance and expand the active learning modalities students are exposed to in the Human Biology course.

• **Art Martin**, associate professor of biology, for his project titled, "Development of Project-Based Biology Laboratories." Martin and members of the biology department plan to develop project-based laboratories in an effort to improve student retention, academic success, and suitability for employment after graduation.

• **Rhett Mohler**, assistant professor of biology, for his project titled "Acquisition of an Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) for Curricular and Co-Curricular Use." The goal of this project is to provide students an opportunity to gain hands-on experience with UAS technology by incorporating UAS flight programming, data collection, and data processing into the curriculum of the Advanced Remote Sensing course.

• **Bill Williamson**, professor of rhetoric & professional writing, and **Scott Kowalewski**, assistant professor of rhetoric & professional writing,

for their project titled "Preparing 21st-Century Communicators: Audio Production in Professional and Technical Writing."

The funds will purchase professional-level audio-recording equipment to support student projects and productions.

Join your faculty and staff colleagues at the 28th annual All-University Awards Banquet

Friday, April 21

Reception 5:30 p.m.

Dinner 6:30 p.m.

Awards Program 7:30 p.m.

FRANC A. LANDEE TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD
Rebecca Schlaf

EARL L. WARRICK AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH
Sara Beth Keough

HOUSE FAMILY AWARD FOR TEACHER IMPACT
Christopher Giroux

MARY H. ANDERSON ADJUNCT FACULTY AWARD
Sara Clark

EXCELLENCE IN ONLINE TEACHING AWARD
Sherrin Frances

BANK OF AMERICA – RUBEN DANIELS
COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD
Jo Brownlie

TERRY ISHIHARA AWARD
FOR OUTSTANDING CO-CURRICULAR INVOLVEMENT
LaCreta Rutledge Clark • Mike Major

CAMPUS FACILITIES EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR
Dale Gough

SECRETARY/CLERICAL EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR
Lori Williams

THOMSON AWARD FOR EMPOWERING LEARNING
IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Joseph Ofori-Dankwa

ROOSEVELT RUFFIN DIVERSITY AWARD
Theatre Department

OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE AWARD
Jill Allardyce • Jeremy Glaser

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDALLION
Terry Moore

John Baesler

Associate Professor of History

John Baesler was a boy in Bensheim, West Germany, in the 1980s when his family — watching a crime drama on TV one evening — heard a knock at the front door. On the other side were two members of his family he met for the first time that night: His father's niece and her daughter, who had arrived there after a daring escape from then-Communist-occupied East Germany.

"That was an amazing experience," said Baesler. "They had escaped through Hungary and showed up at our door."

Not long after that, the Berlin Wall came down in 1989 and the Cold War's grip slipped loose. The two German nations reconciled. Families reunited without fear. The anxiety of those divided days went the way of history.

It's that distancing history that Baesler chases today. With the help of his students, he is leading a research effort aimed at capturing the experience of living in West Germany during a Cold War that spanned four decades, including the 28-year existence of the Berlin Wall. For now, the project involves interviewing United States military veterans stationed near communities such as his hometown in Bensheim, just south of Frankfurt with a population of 40,000, although he may expand the work's scope depending on his findings.

"I want to answer the question, 'How did that everyday interaction with each other influence Germans and Americans, and how did that influence the Americans when they came back to America?'" he said. "There was an everyday diplomacy between German citizens and American soldiers. Especially in small German cities, that represented a major change in daily life."

Baesler remembers the weddings between American soldiers and German daughters. He listened to the U.S. Armed Forces' radio stations. He saw their military vehicles traveling the streets. He enjoyed their food. "Once a year, the Americans in our town had an open-door event," Baesler said. "They played really good music, and I remember eating marshmallows for the first time there. Germans didn't have marshmallows."

More than 20 million U.S. military veterans have served inside Germany's borders.

Already, Baesler and his students have heard stories from 14 veterans — recording their accounts on video, audio and paper — and he continues to search for more witnesses of that history.

"There are so many stories to tell, and I'm interested to hear them," he said. "This is a labor of love for me."



Sylvia Fromherz

Assistant Professor of Biology

For being too much of a distraction in seventh grade, Sylvia Fromherz was asked to spend the rest of class sitting outside in her Catholic school's atrium. It was a beautiful spring day in Oregon. The teacher's decision hardly felt like a punishment.

It wasn't the serenity of the setting that stands out about the experience to Fromherz now, years later. Instead, that day became a watershed moment in her life when Fromherz discovered the orb weaver spider sharing space with her in that atrium. "I watched it as it built such an intricate, geometrically-precise web," she recalled. "It was the most fascinating thing I had ever seen."

That moment of biological beauty launched Fromherz on an academic path that led to her position today at SVSU.

Fromherz grew up one of 11 children on a dairy farm straddling the Oregon coast. Aside from the Catholic community, there was little contact with the outside world. Rare TV allowances afforded her exposure to nature-themed shows with hosts such as Jacques Cousteau. Decades-outdated science books were some of her earliest reading materials, purchased for pennies from local auctions. Her love for science inspired a high school teacher to educate Fromherz on what he had learned while earning

a college degree in forestry and oceanography. Later, a field trip to Oregon State University convinced her to pursue her passion in a postsecondary setting. She went on to earn a bachelor's in marine biology at that same institution and, later, moved to the east coast to earn a Ph.D. in cell and molecular biology at Brandeis University. In between, she spent two years at the Marine Biological Laboratory at Woods Hole, Massachusetts.

She has remained involved in higher education ever since, transitioning from student to a research-driven educator intent on empowering students who share her passion for STEM. When Fromherz joined SVSU in fall 2015, she continued a student-supported research project she began years earlier at another institution. She and her undergraduate students are studying sensorimotor development in the embryonic chick.

In her classrooms, she uses active learning strategies and online enhancements to help her students better connect with the science she began to love as early as childhood. The practice allows students to watch a recording of Fromherz teach biology on their computer screens from a cozy spot outdoors, near where spiders sometimes weave their webs.



Professional Profile

• **George Corser**, assistant professor of computer science & information systems, published a white paper titled “Internet of Things (IoT) Security Best Practices” in the IEEE Internet Initiative. He was elected lead author by the IoT team within the Experts in Technology and Policy (ETAP) forum. This “readable” paper targets a non-technical audience of government and business policy makers. IEEE is scheduling webinars in June 2017 to disseminate the results of this work to the international community, and Corser is leading the IoT team in the preparation of additional papers for the IEEE.

• **Julie Foss**, associate professor of modern foreign languages, served as editor of the Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages’ 2017 volume of conference proceedings, Performance + Proficiency = Possibilities. She also presented the session “Promoting Proficiency in a Conversation Course” at the conference March 11 in Chicago.

• **Mike Mosher**, professor of art/communication & multimedia, presented “Community Art Machines of a New Design Curriculum” at the 11th Design Principles and Practices conference, March 2-4 at George Brown College, Toronto. Mosher’s painting, “Motion Picture Shot Here,” depicting the 2014 shooting of Aura Rosser by Ann Arbor police in her home, was exhibited March 18 at the Social Justice Art Festival, University of Michigan Trotter Multicultural Center.

• **Angela Pohl**, associate athletic director/senior woman administrator, was appointed to the NCAA Division II Baseball Committee. Her term of service continues through Aug. 31, 2021.

• **Scott M. Youngstedt**, professor of anthropology, presented a paper titled “New Year’s Eve in the Sahel” at the “Everyday Life on the African Continent: Fun, Leisure, and Expressivity” symposium that took place in February at the University of Oregon.

• **Matthew Zivich**, professor of art, on March 11 gave a talk on his art that is on exhibit at the What Pipeline gallery in Detroit. The show features Zivich’s earlier works, including the architectural models from middle to late 1980s, and later caulk paintings of the “Leviathan” series from 2007-2009. The What Pipeline gallery, now in its third year, has mainly featured new artists from Detroit, New York City, Los Angeles, Germany and France.

Condolences

• To the family of **Harold W. Peterson**, professor emeritus of education (1968–1985), who passed away March 14.

New Cardinals

• **Meghan** and **Randy Baruth** announced the birth of twins: Calvin Joseph Baruth and Camden Gene Baruth, March 27. Meghan is an assistant professor of health sciences; Randy is head men’s basketball coach.

• **Cynthia Hupert**, assistant professor of nursing, announced the birth of twins: Audrey Jane Hupert (4 lbs., 11 oz.) and Wyatt Lee Hupert (5 lbs., 11 oz.), March 12.

• **Danielle Premo**, nursing clinical coordinator, announced the birth of a son, Joseph Michael Anthony Premo (7 lbs., 10 oz., 21 in.), March 16.

• **Rebecca Schlaff**, assistant professor of kinesiology, announced the birth of a son, Parker Scott Schlaff (7 lbs., 5 oz., 20 in.), March 23.

Briefly Speaking

• Faculty and staff may present the diploma jacket to graduating members of their immediate family during the Commencement ceremonies at 7:30 p.m., Friday, May 5, and/or at 11 a.m., Saturday, May 6. Please call the Alumni Relations Office at ext. 4196 to make arrangements. To confirm your regalia order, call the Bookstore at ext. 4277.

• Spring/Summer 2017 Zahnnow Library hours and closing exceptions can be found at svsu.edu/library (click the red “Library Hours” button). No changes to the schedule are anticipated due to the ongoing renovation project. For more information, contact Access Services staff at ext. 4240.

• SVSU is preparing to host the statewide FIRST Robotics competition, Wednesday through Saturday, April 12-15. This competition will bring nearly 5,000 high school students to campus, plus their teachers, coaches, parents and others. For many, this will be their first visit to SVSU, and we want to make our first impression the best possible. We have a great need for volunteers. If you would like to volunteer during your normal work hours, please talk to your supervisor. If you are a supervisor, please do all you can to make arrangements to allow your staff to participate. You can register online at svsu.edu/firstvolunteers. When you sign up, click the blue (Join New Volunteer) button. You will be able to log in to see shift schedules and other volunteers.

The Interior is published on the last Tuesday of each month for faculty and staff at SVSU. University departments sponsoring activities or events listed in the Interior will provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities when contacted at least three days in advance.

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