

RIT PRESIDENTIAL AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING STAFF

Congratulations to the 2017 Nominees:



Access Services Diversity Outreach Committee

Angela Hauser, Denise Herrera '04,'07,'08 , Daron Ladson, Kristi Love-Cooper

These four individuals have demonstrated outstanding teamwork and commitment to our Department, the field of interpreting, NTID's Interpreting Education major, and RIT. They raised awareness of deaf culture and ASL in the Rochester community in a long-range effort that may attract students (and future interpreters) to RIT/NTID; they raised awareness of the challenges for AALANA interpreters within RIT; and they represented us, in a way that only they could, at professional conferences, highlighting opportunities RIT and NTID have for AALANA people.



Jeff Arbegast, '93

Senior Associate Director/ Director of University Design, Marketing and Communications

Jeff has an uncanny ability to re-orient perspectives, and encourage people to break out of tunnel vision. I am personally recommending Jeff not only based on his performance and contributions, but also his collegiality and mentorship. He is always glad to help answer questions from co-workers and students, and pushes the people he works with to try new things.



Belinda Bryce, '01

Director, Arthur O Eve Higher Ed Opportunity Program (HEOP)

For nearly a decade Belinda has poured her heart and soul into developing one of the most successful student support programs at RIT. As Director of HEOP, she is committed to the recruitment and academic success of historically disadvantaged students who exhibit strong academic potential and personal initiative --- students who would otherwise be excluded from the benefits and experience of a college education at an institution of RIT's caliber.



College of Science Staff Advisory Council (COSSAC)

Mark Gillespie, Valerie Hemink, Cari Hindman, Jennifer Liedkie, Jane McGowan, Jessica Small '06,'08, Melanie Warren

COSSAC provides a forum within which staff from diverse areas within the college can come together and share their experiences and skills with one another. In the ever-changing environment of RIT they look for ways to welcome new staff, share best practices, and support one another through staff retreats, and team building opportunities as well as recognition and social events. As with many colleges at RIT, our staff reside in a number of different buildings. COSSAC helps to bridge these distances and foster professionalism and a positive morale.



Mike D'Arcangelo, '03

Director of Diversity Education, Diversity and Inclusion

As the original instructional designer, director and presenter of RIT's Multicultural and Diversity Education offerings, Mike has created a portfolio of diversity education programs that is extensive and addresses the unique needs of the RIT community.



Jayne Downes, '08

Professional Advisor, CAST Student Advising

Jayne is an inspiration to others due to her professional work ethic and compassion. I don't know what our department would do without her because she connects us all and makes us a stronger department. She is probably more vital in student retention than anyone in our department. Why? Because she goes far, far out of her way to take care of the HTM students.



Jessica Ecock

Associate Director, Center for Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution

I have observed many students have a conversation with Jess and have that 'aha!' moment when they understand why the choice they made was not the greatest and how they should move on from it. Simply put; Jess raises RIT's standards, improves our consistency, questions our values, reinforces our integrity. She treats students fairly, encouraging students to take advantage of their rights, giving them appropriate chances to make amends; to learn.



Kerry Foxx

Director, Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement

In his relatively short time on campus, Kerry has updated and re-envisioned leadership and civic opportunities, developed and delivered an award winning 'Roar the Vote' campaign, developed and delivered the 'Into the Roc' initiative connecting RIT students with civic and cultural opportunities in the Rochester community, and expanded the Alternative Spring Break program. Kerry has quickly become a highly respected and much admired student advocate, leader and supervisor.



Adel Henen

Custodian, FMS (Retired)

When I walk our hallways, and enter our classrooms, I KNOW that Adel has worked his magic. Not only does he do an incredible job keeping our work-place pleasant/fresh, he is one of the most winsome and engaging folks in our building. He genuinely CARES about the humanity with whom he interacts. He checks in with students ... makes them laugh ... notices when they're having a bad day ... helps us faculty notice if they're having a bad day ... He is a genuine day-brightener.



Char Ipacs

Communications Analyst II, ITS

Char has worked with many students over the years as a mentor and supervisor. She makes them feel important and truly cares about them. It amazes me the number of students that stay in contact with her and even come back to visit years later. I have met students that she has worked with long before I met her 18 years ago and they don't even live in the US—not even North America! They come to campus to visit her, they send her cards for holidays, and keep track of each other online. She makes them family.



I'm First Program Staff

Elizabeth Bremer and Bernadette Lynch

Bern and Liz identified a need on campus to focus on first-generation college students. They strengthened existing partnerships and developed new ones in order to get the program up and running. Within a year they were serving over 150 students, providing mentoring and coaching, and connecting them to vital resources. They created a faculty/student mentoring program with over 100 first-gen faculty and staff attending the kick-off event.



Ellen Johnson

Senior Staff Assistant, NTID Business Studies

Ellen has crafted a niche in her department and has taken on responsibilities beyond those of her job description. She has an outstanding rapport with faculty, staff and students in her department and the RIT Community. She provides tremendous assistance to the academic advisors in her department to resolve student issues. Ellen is excellent at asking the right questions and reaching out to the appropriate people.



David Krohn

Res Life/Safety/Health/Conduct Interpreting Team Coordinator, NTID Access Services

DK is an incredible example of what it means to be dedicated to his job and to have a genuine passion for the work and for those with whom he works. He is wise, respectful, dedicated, and always willing to empower others to be successful. He coordinates an incredible volume of interpreting requests, but somehow is always available as a sounding board when we need to offload some of the emotional challenges that we face when interpreting in emotionally charged situations.



Debra Kusse, '83, '03

Executive Director, Procurement Services

Through Deb's leadership, Procurement Services has developed a partnership with FMS that has brought considerable value to the university. She has lead efforts to look for alternative suppliers, alternative procurement methods and worked with FMS to negotiate exceptional contracts. All of these efforts have saved the university millions of dollars over the past 5 years.



Clare Lagiewski, '94

Assistant Dean, CIAS Office of the Dean

I have been amazed by Clare's unfailingly professional, positive, and humorous approach to work, and its transformative effect on our office and college community as a whole. She truly cares about the programs and faculty she works with, and takes pride in helping others. I've been so impressed by her disciplined but balanced approach to her job. She is serious and firm when required, but relaxed and flexible when possible. She treats all with respect, regardless of their position or rank.



Bill Landers
Chief Engineer, CIAS Facilities

Bill has an absolute command of his job. He knows what the faculty want and what the students need. He not only keeps current on what equipment the faculty need in order to do their best, but he understands that the students may not know what they need, or want, and makes continual strides to assess these needs. He is looking out for everyone, running the show from behind the curtains and supporting everyone.



Stephanie Lenhardt, '09
Academic Advisor, University Advising Office/CIAS

Stephanie is an exceptional academic advisor. She is approachable, resourceful, warm, professional and a strong advocate for her advisees. She is thorough, detail-oriented, and meticulous in her record keeping. She frequently collaborates with faculty and staff of all levels and across departments. She is student-centered and always has their best interests in mind. She is honest, fair and trustworthy.



Catherine Mahrt-Washington, '08
Assistant Dean, COS Office of the Dean

Catherine as a consummate professional. She adds value to each and every situation by her analytical and thoughtful approach to problem solving, keeping in mind not only policies and procedures, but also people, to find solutions that address the causes of the problem and result in lasting benefits. She rejoices in the success of our students and advocates for them when necessary. More importantly, she encourages them to learn how to advocate for themselves.



Cheryl Merrell
Staff Assistant, COS Center for Imaging Science

Cheryl's time is split between the Laboratory for Multiwavelength Astrophysics, the Center for Detectors; the laser & wavefront sensing laboratory within the Center for Imaging Science (CIS); and the CIS more generally. She transitions regularly and incredibly smoothly between her administrative support roles at these four different labs/centers. While her staff duties cover an unusually wide range of responsibilities and tasks, she handles all of these duties expertly, with a highly professional degree of efficiency and courtesy.



Venessa Mitchell
Director of Engineering Diversity, KGCOE Office of the Dean

In the past two years, Venessa has established a series of signature events to recruit and retain AALANA students in RIT's engineering programs. One event – the ECCO experience (an overnight program for accepted high school students) – nearly doubled in size from 2016 to 2017. Over 85% of the students who attended the ECCO experience last spring enrolled in the Kate Gleason College of Engineering this fall.



Stacy Nation-Knapper
Assistant Director, Academic Support Center

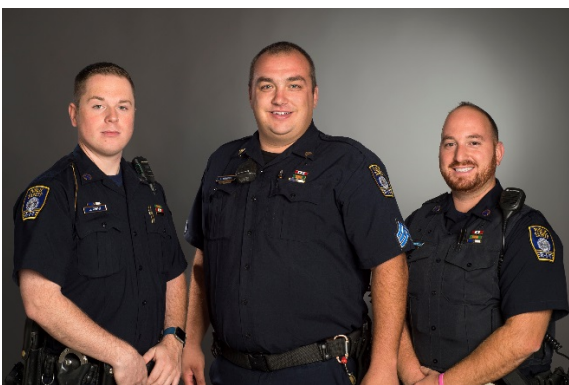
When Stacy was hired as the Assistant Director just over a year ago, she immediately brought a sense of energy and warmth to the Academic Support Center. Through her authentic approach to every person and task she encounters, she models thinking thoughtfully, speaking honestly, and acting creatively. She is humble to a fault, the consummate professional, and role-models the impact that staff can have on the campus community each and every day.



Network Sustainability Project Team

Andrew Elble, Greg Gardner, Mark Kimble, Angel Male, Kevin Schoenfeld, Christine Snell, David Thelen (we also recognize and appreciate student team members Michael Doyle, Joe Garcia and Kortni Sheldon.)

Our Campus Network is a vital resource. Faced with an ever growing but aging network, the Data Network Team realized that customers were keeping unused network ports active to avoid a chargeback for re-activation. They worked to eliminate the chargeback, then worked with customers to shut off ports that were not needed. They consolidated the remaining ports on fewer back-end switches, thus saving over \$800,000. They even completed the project eight months early!



Public Safety Second Platoon

Jake Griffin, Adam Liesegang, Matteo Martusciello

On November 20, 2016 these officers demonstrated compassion and dedication unequalled in our community. They saved a student's life, successfully reestablishing the student's pulse just as emergency medical services were arriving. The student survived for several days following this event, allowing their family and loved ones to share their final days with them, a gift that may not have been possible if it were not for the quick and decisive actions of this team.



Residence Life Apartment Staff

David Bagley, Cate Fox, Adam Griffith, Sharon Kompalla-Porter, Ashley Meyer, Tarra Ognissanti, Chelsea Sims

These staff members are incredible resources to our students. They work hard to identify students in need and to link them to supports before a crisis/emergency happens. They consistently work to help craft creative out-of-the-box plans to reduce the impact of these needs on a student's academic performance. Without the tireless efforts of the Apartment Area staff, many hundreds of students would not get the support that they need to be successful here at RIT.



ROAR the Vote Implementation Team

Kerry Foxx, Marc Goldman, Kathryn Horan, Bill St. Jean, Phyllis Walker (We also recognize and appreciate non-staff team members Christina Burnett, Rebecca Johnson, Shena Marshall, and Karen Van Meenen.)

This team's work demonstrated a collective – unshakable – commitment to the larger purpose of higher education - the public good. They focused efforts on increasing student voter registration, increasing understanding of absentee and in-person balloting, offering debate-watching parties and increasing voter turnout for the 2016 presidential election; all to raise awareness and inspire civic action.



School of Mathematical Sciences Staff

Ginny Gross '17, Shawna Quinn '02, '04, Corinne Teravainen '14, Tina Williams

There are 71 faculty, 15 adjuncts, and approximately 12,000 enrollments in over 350 sections of math or statistics classes for each of the last two academic years. Sometimes I wonder how these amazing women make it through the day... The only way, of course, to deal with all this is through harmonious teamwork – and this is where our staff is truly exceptional.



Colette Shaw
Assistant Director, Center for Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution

Colette has been the driving force behind the Gray Matter series, where students find a supportive space to voice their opinions and share perspectives on those topics that no one, or very few, address, but are very important to our students and members of the community. She has created special topics depending on the political or social climate in the country or around the world so that anyone that has been impacted has a space to share their experiences.



Jessica Small
Senior Staff Specialist, COS School of Physics and Astronomy

As a result of Jess's obvious excellence, faculty are more willing to trust her with tasks that they previously would have handled, often riddled with mistakes, themselves. This has increased efficiency at every level. It is not a coincidence that student applications to our program have doubled since Jess joined us; her organization and presentation as "face of the program" have been game-changing.



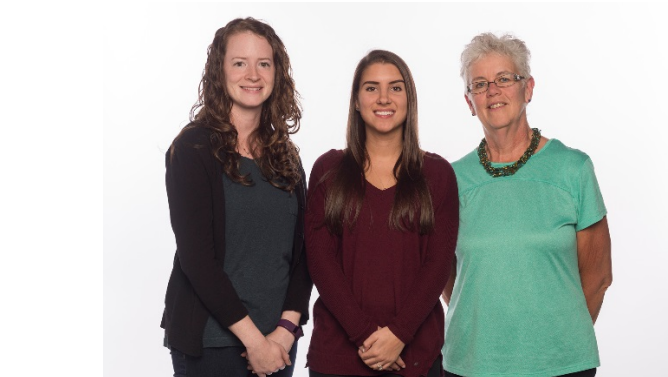
Debbie Spencer, '05
Senior Human Resource Services Manager,
Human Resources (Retired)

What I most appreciate about Debbie is the kindness and appreciation she has for our hourly workers. She is a staunch advocate for those who are in need of support and direction while navigating through HR processes. Through her partnership with our department, we have seen lower turnover of employees, improved hiring processes, increased diversity in all of our areas and improved engagement of our staff.



Corinne Teravainen, '14
Student Support Services Specialist, COS School of Mathematical Sciences

As one of the first points of contact, Corinne receives numerous requests from across all colleges and handles them with ease and professionalism every single time. It has happened numerous times that I learn after the fact that Corinne solved a problem without it ever reaching my desk; and of course I learned this from the affected student casually praising Corinne, who is way too humble to even mention these issues herself.



Thomas H Gosnell School of Life Sciences Staff
Gabrielle Crandall, Alison Healy, Jennie Liedkie

Many students who are now on successful career trajectories are the product of something extremely special and unique that this team is responsible for. They recruit, train and supervise the student Bioprep team, comprising Lab technician, Security, Greenhouse, Stockroom and Lab prep groups. They are truly amazing to watch. Each semester, you can see how proud these 20+ students are to be serving their school and community; and they do so to a remarkably high standard.



Peggy Tirrell, '95
Senior Associate Director of Graduate Programs and Admissions, SCB Student Services

One of the greatest illustrations of Peggy's contributions to pluralism within the college and RIT as a whole can be seen by simply walking into her office – it is a veritable cultural smorgasbord. Every corner of the office contains an array of gifts with profound cultural significance from one of the students that she has helped to achieve their scholarly ambitions.



Susan Tontarski, '01
Senior Staff Assistant, COS Office of the Dean

Susan has brought a formidable talent for logistics and planning to more than 100 events a year—adding class and flavor to the many gatherings and ceremonies the college hosts for its faculty, staff, and students. She is impeccably well organized and often helps her colleagues remember the many details needed to stage successful events. I am so grateful to have her as part of our team, and I don't know what we'd do without her.



Lorrie Jo Turner
Senior Staff Specialist, GCCIS Graduate Studies & Research

Lorrie Jo organizes and manages all the activities of the Ph.D. Program of GCCIS. She also works closely with each student individually to help them follow the steps required for timely graduation and dissertation. Her careful, meticulous and efficient efforts have not only ensured smooth running of all the program activities but also established a supportive environment for students' success.



Lana Verschage, '02, '09
Director of Women in Computing, GCCIS Office of the Dean

Lana's knowledge of running student organizations, the technical industry, and expertise in diversity are a huge advantage to Women in Computing. She put this skillset to work in order to help double the gender ratio for Golisano College of Computing and Information Sciences in her first three years as director.



University Arenas Ice Operations Staff
Jeff Flowerday, Tom Hickey, Stuart Hughes, Nick Koch, Brent Warren

Consistency, hard work and attention to detail are trademarks of the entire team. The condition of the buildings is impressive. In fact, in March, the Gene Polisseni Center was voted "Best Ice in Rochester". But that's only a small part of what makes this group special. Their interactions with all of their clients is what sets them apart. When the various groups come into their arenas, the clients feel like it's their home.



Tomicka Wagstaff
Senior Director for Academic Access and Support Grants, Diversity & Inclusion

Tomicka's work within her community and family is a reflection of her desire to always give back, learn and elevate not only herself but her community as well. She is compassionate, generous and helps everyone feel like they are at home.



Devon Watters, '14
Communication & Design Specialist, Diversity and Inclusion

Devon led the division's branding efforts. Because of her ability to connect with people, listen carefully to them and acknowledge concerns and their focus, she was able to make the division materials come to life. She also led our division's website conversion, which has won three separate awards: the Academy of Interactive & Visual Arts 2017 Communicator Award—Social Responsibility category; the 2016 Horizon Award—Advocacy/Non-Profit category; and the 2016 Summit Emerging Media Award.



Lisa Whitley
Staff Assistant, CHST Physician Assistant Program

Lisa is our 'Radar O'Reilly' and we often tease her about this special and much-appreciated talent. I often go to her to request information that I need for an upcoming project and she hands me the data before I even ask! She is loved and respected by her colleagues and the students. She has a clear sense of right and wrong and shows our students what work ethic and integrity mean through her daily interactions.



David Woodhams
Building Services Supervisor, Facilities Management Services

Within my first week of working at RIT, I learned what a reliable, hard-working and exceptional colleague Dave is. Now, a year later, he has become someone I count on to provide guidance during planning stages, support during events, and a good laugh after an exceptionally long day. On top of that, Dave even taught me how to request and confirm his crew's services.