

Distinguished Professor Awards 2002-2004

*In recognition of their sustained excellence in
teaching effectiveness and service.*

Victor A. DeCarlo Jr., Professor of Physics and Astronomy—Page 2

Marcia A. McKelligan, Professor of Philosophy—Page 3

Gloria C. Townsend, Professor of Computer Science—Page 5

Victor A. DeCarlo Jr., Professor of Physics and Astronomy, joined the faculty as an Instructor in Physics in 1981; he was promoted to Assistant Professor in 1983, Associate Professor in 1988 and Professor in 1996. He earned his B.A. in Physics and Mathematics from Southern Connecticut State College in 1974 and his Ph.D. from The Pennsylvania State University in 1983. He has taught a wide range of courses, including practically every physics course offered by his Department. In addition he has taught an honor scholar science seminar and an interdisciplinary course in Cosmology with Marcia McKelligan in the philosophy department.

Students from his twenty years of teaching at DePauw, from those he taught in his first year to those he taught most recently, attest to his effective teaching which inspired them to continue and succeed. Their comments also frequently note his accessibility, his patient exposition, and his support for their growth and development both in and out of the classroom. One of his first students writes, "He provides clear explanations appropriate for his students, whether they are in introductory or upper level courses. His lectures are clearly organized, but he delivers them in a relaxed manner and with a sense of humor that encourages discussion and exchange." Another writes, "I thought his testing was the most effective I had to endure. Each was a kind of numerical essay exam, with explanations and equation solving required." From a student from a different generation, "He presented material in an organized way that made it easy to take notes and understand difficult concepts. He helps his students relate the physics they are learning to their everyday lives." His students from all of his years agree that his teaching was among the best they experienced at DePauw. His explanations of complicated topics were clear, and his prompt return of assignments and exams with comments and helpful remarks was deemed exceptional. Among his many projects with students, he took several to work at FermiLab the National Accelerator Laboratory while he was doing his own research there.

He has served two terms on the Committee on Faculty and currently serves as chair of that committee as it works its way through the largest number of cases in a single year in the history of DePauw. He has also served a term as chair of the Physics and Astronomy Department. His other University service includes chairing Division III and membership on the Committee on Administration, the Science Scholarship Committee which he also chaired for two years, and the Fifth-Year Student Selection Committee. He has frequently served as a first-year student adviser and carries a heavy load of student advisees. His recent leadership for his department includes his spearheading of a recent change in the curriculum involving a modification of the introductory physics course from an encyclopedic survey of many topics to a focus on a smaller set of topics and organizing principles.

By the testimony of his colleagues, he has been an inspirational model of dedication to his teaching, devotion to his students and their learning, and commitment to mentoring his and collaborating with this faculty colleagues.

Marcia A. McKelligan, Professor of Philosophy, joined the faculty as an Instructor in Philosophy and Religion in 1976; she was promoted to Assistant Professor in Philosophy and Religion in 1979, to Associate Professor of Philosophy and Religion in 1987 and to Professor of Philosophy in 1995. She earned her A.B. in Religion at Mount Holyoke College in 1971, her M.A. in Philosophy at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, in 1976, and her Ph.D. in Philosophy at U. Mass., Amherst, in 1979. Her areas of specialty include early modern philosophy, philosophy of religion, ethical theory, applied ethics, business ethics, metaphysics, philosophical cosmology, and death.

She has taught and developed a wide range of courses for the philosophy curriculum and she has also taught interdisciplinary courses and seminars, often collaboratively, including Women's Issues in Philosophy and Literature; a first-year seminar: Body, Mind and Death; Cosmology with Vic DeCarlo in Physics; and Leadership and Responsibility with President Bottoms. She frequently offers both S and W courses.

She is noted by students as an especially effective and rigorous teacher, respecting each student's opinion yet challenging each student to understand and to question philosophical arguments at a high level. The rigor of her teaching is indicated, in part, by her extensive use of primary sources and by her insistence on careful and effective writing; often she requires students to rewrite their papers to achieve clarity and precision. For decades students have attested to their learning in her courses, guided by high standards and by her infectious enthusiasm for her subjects. One wrote, "[She] is able to take the most complex philosophical arguments and present them in a way such that they are accessible to introductory level students. By allowing students to understand these arguments, [she] opens the door to the true work of philosophy: critical discussion." Another writes, "Her enthusiasm and preparation for the material was evident, encouraging students to participate in class. ...[S]he never hesitated to stay after class and discuss various matters with me." Many say she is the best teacher they have ever had.

In her service to her department and the university, she served three terms on the Committee on Faculty for a total of seven years, including two years as chair; she served twice as a member of the Resource Allocation Subcommittee for a total of four years; she served twice as a member of the COF Review Committee; she served in the inaugural year as a member of the Institutional Review Board on Research with Human Subjects; and she is currently in her second term on the Committee on Administration. She helped to plan the Winter Term Core and helped to design the S Program, later serving on the S oversight committee. She is now in her third term as chair of the Department of Philosophy and has served at all levels as an officer of Division II. She has been a senior mentor to junior faculty colleagues, a member of the Selection Committee for Rhodes and Marshall Scholarships since 1978, a member of the Media Fellows Governing Board for ten years, and a member of the Management Fellows Advisory Board for fifteen years. She has participated as a first-year adviser for many years and has been the major adviser to nearly half of the philosophy majors over the last 23 years. In recent years she has also helped to organize the DePauw University Team to participate in the Indiana Ethics Bowl.

Admired by many colleagues as they testified in their letters, she is regarded by many of them as the quintessential liberal arts college professor, superb and dedicated in her teaching, devoted to each of her students, and committed to serving the institution through making its committees and governance work effectively.

Gloria Childress Townsend, Professor of Computer Science, joined the faculty as an Assistant Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science in 1980; she was promoted to Associate Professor of Computer Science in 1991 and Professor of Computer Science in 1999. She earned her A.B. in Mathematics from Indiana University in 1968, her M.S. in Mathematics from Purdue University in 1972, her Ph.D. in Mathematics Education from I.U. in 1979 and her M.S. in Computer Science from I.U. in 1987.

She is a dedicated teacher, supplementing traditional teaching techniques with original methods to reach students with a wide range of learning styles. She complements class presentations with group work, class discussions and writing assignments. She also has promoted the use of service learning to reinforce student learning and to contribute to growth and development of the students being served. She is renowned among her students for her patient exposition, her enthusiastic encouragement, and her rigorous teaching. She is cited by many as being "both challenging and inspiring." Many students attribute their continued success in Computer Science to her recruiting and mentoring efforts. She has taught and revised many courses at the behest of her department and she has developed new interdisciplinary courses such as Artificial Life which she taught with Wade Hazel. She also developed a text with Carl Singer "More Problems, Algorithms, Programs: Fundamental Concepts in Computer Science" (first issued in 1998), which the department uses for teaching Computer Science II.

She has developed and sponsored a program for over a decade to encourage women to pursue coursework and careers in Computer Science. One student among many wrote, "It was because of her invitation to attend a "tryout" session, during which I met current majors and was able to walk through the first Computer Science lab, that I took CS1. After one semester with her, I was hooked." She maintains newsletters, websites and bulletin board displays and offers lunches and other meetings which build enthusiasm and confidence. She has worked to advance these goals through programs during the academic year and in the summer, working both with DePauw students and with colleagues and students at Purdue and Rose Hulman. Her record of encouragement and mentoring has had a remarkable impact on the lives of her students, leading to an unusually high number of women majoring in computer science at DePauw.

In her departmental and University service she has also given time to the Committee on Faculty, the Hartman Center Steering Committee, the Science Research Fellows Program and the Commencement Speaker Committee. She served as chair of the Mathematics and Computer Science Department and as the first Chair of the Computer Science Department. She is Q and S certified and regularly offers courses with each competency.