

# AWARDS OF DISTINCTION

## 2020



THE UNIVERSITY  
OF ARIZONA





# THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA AWARDS OF DISTINCTION

## PROGRAM

**DECEMBER 2020**

VIRTUAL CEREMONY

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WELCOME

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**Liesl Folks,**

*Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs & Provost*

### December 1st

Graduate Teaching and Mentoring Awards

The Margaret M. Briehl and Dennis T. Ray Five Star Faculty Award

### December 8th

The Gerald G. Swanson Prize for Teaching Excellence

The Henry and Phyllis Koffler Prize

The University of Arizona Foundation

Leicester and Kathryn Sherrill Creative Teaching Award

### December 9th

Distinguished Scholars Award

Early Career Scholars Award

Outstanding Postdoctoral Scholar Award



# AWARDS OF DISTINCTION

DECEMBER 1ST, 2020





# GRADUATE TEACHING AND MENTORING AWARDS

Presenter: Andrew Carnie, *Dean*  
Graduate College

**Ian L. Pepper, Ph.D.**

Department of Environmental Science, WEST Center, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences

Dr. Pepper is an environmental microbiologist whose research has focused on the fate and transport of pathogens in air, water, soils and municipal wastes. More recently, he has investigated the potential for real-time detection of contaminants in water distribution systems. Dr. Pepper is Professor in the Community, Environment, and Policy Department in the UA College of Public Health, as well as Professor in the Department of Agricultural & Biosystems Engineering. In addition to his duties at the WEST Center, he is director of the National Science Foundation Water Quality Center at the UA. He also teaches a graduate level laboratory class on Environmental Microbiology, and an undergraduate class on Pollution Science. He has co-authored numerous books and journal articles on Environmental Microbiology and Pollution Science, and is a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Academy of Microbiology, the American Society of Agronomy, and the Soil Science Society of America. He received his Ph.D. in Soil Microbiology from The Ohio State University, M.S. in Soil Biochemistry from Ohio State, and B.S. in Chemistry from the University of Birmingham, Great Britain.

**Melissa L. Tatum, JD**

James E. Rogers College of Law

Professor Tatum specializes in tribal jurisdiction and tribal courts, as well as in issues relating to cultural property and sacred places. She was a contributing author to Felix Cohen's Handbook of Federal Indian Law, and has written extensively about both civil and criminal procedural issues, as well as about the relationship between tribal, state, and federal courts. Professor Tatum consulted with the Pascua Yaqui Tribe as it became one of the first in the nation to implement VAWA 2013's special domestic violence criminal jurisdiction. She has also served on task forces in Michigan and New Mexico charged with developing procedures to facilitate cross-jurisdictional enforcement of protection orders, and has taught seminars on domestic violence and protection orders throughout the United States for judges, attorneys, law enforcement, and victim advocates, including at the National Tribal Judicial Center. Between 1999 and 2006 she served as a judge on the Southwest Intertribal Court of Appeals. Professor Tatum joined the University of Arizona faculty in January 2009, after serving as a faculty member at the University of Tulsa for more than thirteen years.



# THE MARGARET M. BRIEHL AND DENNIS T. RAY FIVE STAR FACULTY AWARD

Presenter: Terry Hunt, *Dean*  
The Honors College

First awarded in 1983, the Margaret M. Briehl and Dennis T. Ray Five Star Faculty Award sponsored by the UA Honors College is the only award for faculty at the U of A that is nominated and selected only by undergraduate students. Every year, a committee of undergraduate students reviews all nominations, selects a top five, and conducts interviews and/or class visits in order to choose a winner.

Undergraduate students from across the UA have the opportunity to nominate excellent faculty, and every year a wide range of colleges and majors are represented among nominated faculty. Finalists are selected on the basis of excellent teaching and engagement with students, and our winner stands out in terms of excellent pedagogy and effectiveness in the classroom.

**Faten Ghosn, Ph.D.**

School of Government & Public Policy, College of Social & Behavioral Sciences

Dr. Ghosn is an Associate Professor in the School of Government and Public Policy, as well as Director of Undergraduate Studies. She earned a BA and MA from American University in Beirut, followed by her PhD from Pennsylvania State University. Her research and teaching interests focus on the interaction of adversaries, be they conflictual or cooperative. In particular, she has been interested in how such actors handle their disagreements. A common theme running throughout her professional interests is the importance of the choice of strategy that is picked by the adversaries to manage their conflicts. Her work has been published in multiple journals.



# AWARDS OF DISTINCTION

DECEMBER 8TH, 2020





# THE GERALD G. SWANSON PRIZE FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

Presenter: Andrea Romero, *Vice Provost,*  
Faculty Affairs

**Susan M. Knight, Ph.D.**

School of Journalism, College of Social & Behavioral Sciences

After working for more than a decade as a journalist, Susan Knight began teaching her skills in research, reporting, writing, and critical thinking to students at the University of Arizona, where she became engaged in best practices in teaching. During her 25 years in the School of Journalism, Knight's work has been crucial in the School's curriculum design and assessment. She has created innovative partnerships in the community, including an apprenticeship at the Arizona Daily Star, where hundreds of students in the past 15 years have gained experience in a professional newsroom along with bylines. Knight has also mentored faculty on teaching and assessment, worked with students to form 10 clubs associated with professional journalism organizations, and has taken students to Washington DC as part of her course "Inside the Beltway: Press, Politics, and Power in DC," meeting with dozens of journalists and influencers, many of them Wildcat alumni. In her classes, Knight builds a learning community that encourages personal responsibility for learning as well as excitement for life-long learning.

Knight earned bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Arizona in journalism, nearly 20 years apart. In 1986-87 she was a Kellogg Fellow in the University of Michigan's Journalism Fellows Program, where she focused on the intersection of public policy-making and public affairs reporting. In 2019, Knight completed a Writer in Residence at Wellspring House, Ashland, Massachusetts, and a fellowship examining social media practices at C-SPAN in Washington D.C..



# THE GERALD G. SWANSON PRIZE FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

Presenter: Andrea Romero, *Vice Provost*,  
Faculty Affairs

**Lisa Rezende, Ph.D.**

Department of Molecular & Cellular Biology, College of Science

Dr. Lisa Rezende is an Associate Professor of Practice in the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology at the University of Arizona. Her work focuses primarily on implementing evidence-based learner-centered teaching practices in various settings, from large lecture courses to smaller workshops. She has worked in online education since 2008, developing and teaching 100% online asynchronous versions of several existing courses, helping other faculty adapt their courses to online modalities, and creating an online version of Introductory Biology Lab in 2017. This spring, she collaborated on a project looking at the effective use of learning assistants in online classes. She currently coordinates the online education program and Introductory Biology course in the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology. As a first-generation college graduate, Dr. Rezende seeks out opportunities to promote inclusive practices. She is a member of the Molecular and Cellular Biology Team for the Council for Undergraduate Research Transformation Project (CUR-TP), which focuses on identifying facilitators and barriers to undergraduate research and increasing scientific inquiry skills throughout the curriculum.

Throughout her career, she has worked on many aspects of public understanding of science, from formal biology education of UA students to informal STEM education in the community. She brings that experience to her 100% engagement course on STEM outreach, teaching undergraduate students how to communicate science to various audiences. Her students go into the community and practice their skills at local K-12 schools and events hosted by local organizations, including Southern Arizona Research, Science, and Engineering Foundation and the Children's Museum Tucson. For the past decade, Dr. Rezende has also worked with national nonprofit cancer organizations to help create and assess patient-facing materials focusing on genetic testing and understanding media reports of cancer research. She currently serves on steering and advisory committees for several collaborative patient advocacy programs.



# THE GERALD G. SWANSON PRIZE FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

Presenter: Andrea Romero, *Vice Provost,*  
Faculty Affairs

**Robert A. Williams, Jr., JD**

James E. Rogers College of Law

Robert A. Williams, Jr. is the Regents Professor, E. Thomas Sullivan Professor of Law and Faculty Co-Chair of the University of Arizona Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy Program. Professor Williams received his B.A. from Loyola College (1977) and his J.D. from Harvard Law School (1980). He was named the first Oneida Indian Nation Visiting Professor of Law at Harvard Law School (2003-2004), having previously served there as Bennet Boskey Distinguished Visiting Lecturer of Law. He is the author of *The American Indian in Western Legal Thought: The Discourses of Conquest* (1990), which received the Gustavus Meyers Human Rights Center Award as one of the outstanding books published in 1990 on the subject of prejudice in the United States. He has also written *Linking Arms Together: American Indian Treaty Visions of Law and Peace, 1600-1800* (1997) and *Like a Loaded Weapon: The Rehnquist Court, Indian Rights and the Legal History of Racism in America* (2005). He is co-author of *Federal Indian Law: Cases and Materials* (6th ed., with David Getches, Charles Wilkinson, and Matthew Fletcher, 2011). His latest book is *Savage Anxieties: The Invention of Western Civilization* (Palgrave Macmillan 2012). The 2006 recipient of the University of Arizona Koffler Prize for Outstanding Accomplishments in Public Service, Professor Williams has received major grants and awards from the Soros Senior Justice Fellowship Program of the Open Society Institute, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Council of Learned Societies, the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Justice, and the National Institute of Justice. He has been interviewed by Bill Moyers and quoted on the front page of the New York Times.



# THE HENRY AND PHYLLIS KOFFLER PRIZE

Presenter: Liesl Folks,  
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs & Provost

**G. Dirk Mateer, Ph.D.**  
Department of Economics, Eller College of Management

Dr. Mateer is a Senior Lecturer in Economics. He joined the Eller College of Management in 2014. In addition to teaching at Eller, he has also taught at the University of California-San Diego, the University of Kentucky, Penn State University, Grove City College and Florida State University. In 1991, he earned his PhD in Economics from Florida State University. His area of expertise is economic education.

His Principles of Economics course has helped more than 30,000 students understand and appreciate the core concepts in econ. Dirk's use of pop culture is part of his signature teaching style. He's collected many of the resources he uses in class to help you learn econ and have fun in the process.



# THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA FOUNDATION LEICESTER AND KATHRYN SHERRILL CREATIVE TEACHING AWARD

Presenter: Amy Smith, *Director*,  
Foundation Relations / GIFT Center

**Joela M. Jacobs, Ph.D.**

Department of German Studies, College of Humanities

Dr. Joela Jacobs is Assistant Professor of German Studies, and she is affiliated with the Institute of the Environment, the Department of Gender and Women's Studies, and the Arizona Center for Judaic Studies. She earned her Ph.D. in Germanic Studies at the University of Chicago, where she subsequently held a postdoctoral position as Humanities Teaching Scholar. Prior to coming to the US from Germany, she studied at the Universities of Bonn, St. Andrews, and the Freie Universität Berlin to receive her M.A. in German and English Philology.

Dr. Jacobs' research focuses on 19th-21st century German literature and film, Animal Studies, Environmental Humanities, Jewish Studies, the History of Sexuality, and the History of Science. She has published articles on monstrosity, multilingualism, literary censorship, biopolitics, animal epistemology, zoopoetics, critical plant studies, cultural environmentalism, and contemporary German Jewish identity. She also founded the Literary and Cultural Plant Studies Network together with Isabel Kranz (Vienna) and the help of Dani Stuchel (Tucson).

Currently, she is working on a monograph that examines a preoccupation with non-human forms of life in the micro-genre of the literary grotesque (*die Grotteske*) around 1900, which begins with Oskar Panizza's neo-romantic work in the 1890s, becomes a central element of modernism with authors such as Hanns Heinz Ewers and Salomo Friedlaender, and culminates in Franz Kafka's unique oeuvre. This genre creates a field of artistic experimentation that allows for the transgression of categories such as species, race, and gender by introducing a non-human perspective on sexual and linguistic normativity. The vegetal, animal, and marginalized human figures at the center of these grotesque texts challenge biopolitical measures of control through, for instance, their non-conformity with standard human language. This linguistic limitation is reinforced by the genre's response to mechanisms of literary censorship, which resulted in new modes of expressing political dissent during modernity's language crisis. One of these central strategies is the texts' provocative use of grotesque humor *vis-à-vis* normative conceptions of what it means to be human, which also marks the genre's distinct historical scope, as it perceptively critiques the rise of the New Human from 19th-century physiognomy to the wake of the Nazi rule.





# AWARDS OF DISTINCTION

DECEMBER 9TH, 2020





# DISTINGUISHED SCHOLARS AWARD

Presenter: *Andrea Romero, Vice Provost,*  
Faculty Affairs

**Ali Behrangi, Ph.D.**

Department of Hydrology & Atmospheric Sciences, College of Science

Dr. Behrangi is a University Distinguished Scholar and Associate Professor in the department of Hydrology and Atmospheric Science, a Joint Associate Professor in Civil Engineering-Engineering Mechanics and Geosciences. He joined the Department of Hydrology and Atmospheric Sciences at the University of Arizona as an associate professor in January 2018. His doctoral work at the University of California, Irvine was on developing high-resolution precipitation products using satellite images and his postdoctoral work at California Institute of Technology (Caltech) and Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) was on analysis of cloud and precipitation products from multiple sensors. As a NASA JPL scientist (2012-2018) he was involved in several projects (as principal investigator or co-investigator) on various topics including precipitation retrieval, pathfinder for microwave sounding instrument, tropical cloud and precipitation, water and energy budget studies, GRACE based water storage anomaly, hydrologic modeling, extreme weather and climate studies, mission concept and proposal development, and using diverse data sets across multiple disciplines to quantify precipitation amount and distribution over cold regions. He co-lead efforts for extending the application of the Atmospheric Infrared Sensor data to drought monitoring in support of the U.S. drought monitor. Current research within his group at the University of Arizona follows his previous interests and, given the recent project grants, will also include advancing the global precipitation climatology project in high latitudes using diverse data sets. He also contributes to the efforts in support of the Earth Dynamics Observatory goals at the University of Arizona, the international precipitation working group (IPWG), and WCRP/GEWEX weather and climate extreme grand challenges.

**Kacey Ernst, Ph.D., M.P.H.**

Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics,  
Mel & Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health

Kacey C. Ernst, PhD MPH joined the faculty in 2008 as an infectious disease epidemiologist. Her primary projects examine the environmental determinants of vector-borne disease transmission and control; primarily dengue and malaria. Current research projects include an examination of insecticide treated bednet use in western Kenya. Comparisons between determinants of use and effectiveness in highland and lowland areas are underway. She is also working with investigators in entomology to examine the role of *Ae. aegypti* population dynamics in the potential expansion of dengue from northern Mexico to southern Arizona under climate change scenarios.

Locally, Dr. Ernst takes an active role in working with the local health departments to examine questions related to vaccine preventable diseases. Her work seeks to understand the reasons behind increasing vaccination exemption rates in Arizona and the development of programs to increase vaccination uptake.



# DISTINGUISHED SCHOLARS AWARD

Presenter: Andrea Romero, *Vice Provost*,  
Faculty Affairs

**Jonathan Sprinkle, Ph.D.**

Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering, College of Engineering

Dr. Jonathan Sprinkle is the Litton Industries John M. Leonis Distinguished Associate Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Arizona. In 2013 he received the NSF CAREER award, and in 2009, he received the UA's Ed and Joan Biggers Faculty Support Grant for work in autonomous systems. His work has an emphasis for industry impact, and he was recognized with the UA "Catapult Award" by Tech Launch Arizona in 2014, and in 2012 his team won the NSF I-Corps Best Team award. His research interests and experience are in systems control and engineering, and he teaches courses ranging from systems modeling and control to mobile application development and software engineering.

Before coming to Arizona, Dr. Sprinkle was the co-Team Leader of the Sydney-Berkeley Driving Team, a collaborative entry into the DARPA Urban Challenge with partners Sydney University, University of Technology, Sydney, and National ICT Australia (NICTA). In 2004, he led a team from UC Berkeley which autonomously flew against an Air Force pilot in autonomous pursuit/evade games in the Mojave Desert at Edwards Air Force Base (the UAV successfully targeted the human pilot). In his teaching career spanning Arizona, Berkeley, and Vanderbilt, he has taught or largely assisted in the graduate courses on hybrid systems, unmanned systems, and model-integrated computing. Dr. Sprinkle graduated with the PhD from Vanderbilt University, and with his MS in 2000. He graduated with his BSEE in *cursu honorum, cum laude*, from Tennessee Tech University in Cookeville, TN, in 1999, where he was the first graduate of the Computer Engineering program, and the first Electrical Engineering double major.



# EARLY CAREER SCHOLARS AWARD

Presenter: *Andrea Romero, Vice Provost,*  
Faculty Affairs

**Ann Shivers-McNair, Ph.D.**

Department of English, College of Social & Behavioral Sciences

Dr. Shivers-McNair is a faculty in the English Department and the Director of the Professional and Technical Writing Program. She studies writing, rhetoric, and design in professional and community contexts, like technology companies and makerspaces, as well as in academic classrooms and programs. Her book, *Beyond the Makerspace: Making and Relational Rhetorics*, is forthcoming from the University of Michigan Press, and her work also appears in journals, edited collections, and conference proceedings. She has received national awards for her coauthored work, including the 2018 Society of Technical Communication Frank R. Smith Distinguished Article Award, and she is an associate editor of *Technical Communication Quarterly*. At the University of Arizona, she is the director of professional and technical writing in the English Department, affiliated faculty in the School of Information, and a co-organizer of UX@UA, a user experience professional community in Tucson, Arizona.

**Vasiliki (Vicky) Karanikola, Ph.D.**

Department of Chemical & Environmental Engineering, College of Engineering

Dr. Karanikola is an Assistant Professor of Chemical and Environmental Engineering. Prior to her assistant professor position at the ChEE UA, Dr. Vicky Karanikola was a postdoctoral fellow at the Chemical and Environmental Engineering department at Yale University. Dr. Karanikola has an interdisciplinary engineering background combining a BS in Mechanical Engineering from the Technological Educational Institute of Central Macedonia, Greece an MSc degree in Civil Engineering from San Diego State University (SDSU), and both MSc and PhD degrees in Environmental Engineering from the UA. Her PhD research focused on off-grid water and wastewater treatment through hybrid thermal processes (Membrane Distillation) and Nanofiltration. During her postdoctoral appointment she focused on membrane material synthesis and modification for water and wastewater treatment.

Alongside with her academic career, she is very strongly involved with EWB (Engineers without Borders), an organization that works on engineering projects in developing communities. She served as the mentor of the UA chapter and is currently involved with the EWB-USA headquarters as the vice president of the EWB Mountain Region Steering Committee. Dr. Karanikola's research work with marginalized communities at Tribal Nations was recently recognized with the Agnese Nelms Haury Program in Environment and Social Justice Faculty fellowship.



## EARLY CAREER SCHOLARS AWARD

Presenter: *Andrea Romero, Vice Provost,*  
Faculty Affairs

**Caleb Simmons, Ph.D.**

Department of Religious Studies & Classics, College of Humanities

Dr. Caleb Simmons (Ph.D. in Religion, University of Florida) specializes in religion in South Asia, especially Hinduism. His research specialties span religion and state-formation in medieval and colonial India to contemporary transnational aspects of Hinduism. His book *Devotional Sovereignty: Kingship and Religion in India* (Oxford University Press, 2020), examines how the late early modern/early colonial court of Mysore reenvisioned notions of kingship, territory, and religion, especially its articulations through devotion. He is currently working on a second monograph, *Singing the Goddess into Place: Folksongs, Myth, and Situated Knowledge in Mysore, India* that examines popular local folksongs that tell the mythology of Mysore's Chamundeshwari and her consort Nanjundeshwara. He also edited (with Moumita Sen and Hillary Rodrigues) and contributed to *Nine Nights of the Goddess: The Navarātri Festival in South Asia* (SUNY Press 2018) a collected volume that focuses on various aspects of the important festival of Navaratri. He also has publications and continuing research interests related to a broad range of contemporary topics, including ecological issues and sacred geography in India; South Asian diaspora communities; and material and popular cultures that arise as a result of globalization—especially South Asian religions as portrayed in comic books and graphic novels. He teaches courses on Hinduism, Indian religions, and method and theory of Religious Studies.

## OUTSTANDING POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLAR AWARD

Presenter: *Jenny Hoit, Director of Postdoctoral Affairs*

**Rachel A. Neville, Ph.D.**

Department of Mathematics & Statistics, College of Science

Rachel Neville is the Hanno Rund Postdoctoral Research Associate in the Department of Mathematics. Her research is in topological data analysis, using the geometric structure of data to characterize complex patterns. She has been at the University of Arizona since 2017. She earned her PhD from Colorado State University in mathematics. In addition to mathematics, Rachel is passionate about mentoring. This fall, with colleagues in the math department, she launched a Women in STEM Mentorship project that connects first-year STEM women with a small group of peers and an upper-class-women mentor. The project is designed to build a sense of belonging, self-efficacy, and resilience in the participants through close mentoring.





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The University of Arizona BookStores

The University of Arizona Foundation

UAHS BioCommunications