Magical transformation
John McBratney reflects on earning the Distinguished Faculty Award

The following is the address John McBratney gave after being presented with the award.

One of the odder aspects of winning this award is hearing the different names people give it. Several persons have referred to it as “The Distinguished Teacher Award.” I’ve had to remind them the really good teachers at John Carroll win the other faculty award: the Culicchia Teaching Award. Another person, in an inspired piece of malapropism, called it, “The Extinguished Faculty Award.” I suppose that’s the prize you get after this one, as a kind of academic last rites. But my favorite appellation is my mother’s: “The Top Doc Award.” For pure down-to-earth poetry, it’s hard to beat that title.

I’m immensely grateful to the many people who have helped me earn this award. I thank the team of faculty and students who put my nomination packet together. I thank my colleagues in the English Department, who have been a source of constant inspiration through the years. Bright, imaginative, and tirelessly committed to being the best teachers, scholars, and writers, they have helped me become the professional I am in incalculable ways. And because this award marks, in some sense, a lifetime achievement, I’d like to extend my gratitude to the families who have shaped me profoundly throughout my life: my late wife and her family, my wife Betsy and her family.
TAKE A LOOK

The 10th annual Celebration of Scholarship, which took place March 28-31, showcased the thorough and enlightening work of students, faculty, staff, and administrators in the John Carroll community. The Arts at Lunch segment of Celebration featured eclectic music and vocal performances by faculty and alumni and poetry readings by students and faculty. Celebration also included:

- 17 faculty members who served as moderators.
- 25 paper/panel presentations.
- 30 art submissions in the form of mixed media, ceramic sculpture, watercolor, chalk, photography, charcoal drawing, fiber collage, and acrylic painting.
- 74 poster presentations.
ACCOUNTANCY
Albert Nagy presented a paper titled “Audit Partner Specialization: The Case of Andersen Followers” at the Southeast Regional meeting of the American Accounting Association in Destin, Florida, April 7-9.

BIOLOGY
Gwen Kinebrew served as an invited judge for the annual Aspiring Physicians and Research Scientists Conference (APRSC) sponsored by the Office of Diversity and Inclusion at the Cleveland Clinic on March 24-25. Students from JCU were among participants from colleges and universities that included Spelman College, University of Texas San Antonio, Oberlin College, and the University of South Florida. The students presented results of their research that included the impact of Ramipril on neurogenesis, myogenesis in Xenopus, inhibition of Amyloid beta in Alzheimer’s disease, and prophylactic use of antibiotics in spinal surgery.

CLASSICAL AND MODERN LANGUAGES AND CULTURES


Megan Thornton presented “Breaking the Silence: Literary Resistance in Alicia Gaspar de Alba’s Desert Blood” at the Kentucky Foreign Language Conference at the University of Kentucky-Lexington, April 14-16, 2011.

EDUCATION AND ALLIED STUDIES
Kathleen Roskos chaired the State Advisory Committee that developed the Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Plan for the state of Ohio submitted to the U.S. Department of Education at the beginning of April.


Professor Roskos presented a paper titled “Design Study of an Ebook Instructional Model in Early Literacy: Findings on Functionality and Usability in...

TIM RUSSERT DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS AND THEATRE ARTS
Fern R. Levy gave an invited talk, “Christian Rescuers of Jews During the Holocaust-The Motivating Factors of Altruism,” to the an audience of more than 90 people comprising members of the Gesu Women’s Guild, the Fairmount Presbyterian Church Women’s Guild, and Fairmount Temple’s Sisterhood at their annual Interfaith Day held this year at Fairmount Temple.

For the seventh year in a row, Bob Noll judged the JoAnn Robinson Memorial Scholarship competition sponsored by Scripps Howard Broadcasting Company. The scholarship is open to students nationwide. The cash award is given to a full-time college student who is African-American and majors in broadcast journalism.

Jackie Schmidt presented a paper titled “Helping the First Generation Student Feel at Home” at the Central States Communication Association conference in Milwaukee on April 7.
the Preschool Classroom” and served as a discussant for a paper by Daisy Smeets and Adriana Bus, “Learning Vocabulary from Interactive Electronic Storybooks for Kindergarteners” at the American Educational Research Association annual conference, New Orleans, April 8-12.

**ENGLISH**

Philip Metres published a chapbook of his poems entitled Ode to Oil (Cleveland Heights: Kattywompus Press, 2011).

Tom Pace presented “Contested Land, Contested Language: The Puritan Pedagogy of John Eliot” at the annual Conference on College Composition and Communication in Atlanta on April 8, 2011.

**MANAGEMENT, MARKETING AND LOGISTICS**


Professor Allen and the John Carroll S.I.F.E. (Students in Free Enterprise) team presented in the Regional S.I.F.E. competition at the Renaissance Cleveland Hotel on March 21. Their presentation reviewed four of their 2010-2011 projects:

- African Children Ministries: a project that focused on skill building and fundraising that raised $7,000 that helped purchase a truck for the orphanage.
- Hope for Honduran Children Foundation: a partnering project that created a micro-enterprise to establish sustainable revenue for the children. This program raised $4,000 and resulted in an immersion trip for 11 students that will take place next month.
- Elevate Your Future: an opportunity for students to learn about, practice, and refine their interviewing “elevator speech” through interaction with executives, including members of the John Carroll Entrepreneurs Association.
- Sam’s Club Environmental Sustainability Challenge: in partnership with Geraci’s Italian Restaurant and a grant from Sam’s Club, the students developed methods to make the local eatery more environmentally sustainable.

The S.I.F.E. team was invited to compete at the Nationals May 10-12 at Minneapolis, MN.

**PHILOSOPHY**


**PHYSICS**


**POLITICAL SCIENCE**

Mindy Peden presented a paper titled “Probable Futures” and chaired the panel “Political Theory and Political Economy” at the 2011 meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago on April 1-3.

Elizabeth Stiles and Lauren Bowen presented “The Pre-Emptive Effect of the State Judiciary on State Legislation” at the 2011 meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago on April 1-3.

Jen Ziemke has been monitoring Libya and Japan for crisis mapping on the following link: http://www.wkyc.com/news/article/180173/3/JCU-professor-making-life-saving-connections-in-Japan
NOTES

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SOCIOLOGY AND CRIMINOLOGY

Penny Harris reviewed two grant proposals for the National Alzheimer’s Association: research paper abstracts for the 64th Annual Scientific Meetings of the Gerontological Society of America and a manuscript for the international journal Aging and Mental Health.

In March and April, Professor Harris conducted two focus groups with people who have early stage Alzheimer’s disease and their spouses about dementia and friendship.


Susan Long presented a paper, “Bodies, Technologies and Aging in Japan” as part of a panel entitled Old Age Policies in Japan at the Association for Asian Studies-ICAS joint meeting on April 1 in Honolulu.

Professor Long gave the Stieglitz Memorial Lecture at the College of Wooster, April 12, 2011. The talk was titled, “Bioethics, Cultural Scripts and the Good Death in Contemporary Japan.”

THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES


Professor Lauritzen was a respondent to Nicholas Wolterstorff about the topic “Is a Secular Grounding of Human Rights Possible?” at a symposium on human rights sponsored by the Veritas Forum at Northwestern University on April 13, 2011.


Paul Nietupski presented a paper titled “Reading Asian Art and Artifacts” at the 2011 ASIANetwork Conference in Chicago on April 16.

Professor Nietupski organized the February JCU visit of Dr. Tran Le Hoa Tranh of the University of Social Sciences and Humanities in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Dr. Tranh’s visit was sponsored by The Walter & Mary Tuohy Chair of Interreligious Studies, with additional support from the Program in Applied Ethics and the Department of Sociology.

Professor Nietupski lectured about “The Religious and Literary History of Tibet” at The Rowfant Club in Cleveland on February 16, 2011.

Professor Nietupski conducted a research seminar, “Religion, Governance, and Economy in the Greater Labrang Amdo Community” at Northwestern University on February 20-21.

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(some of whom are here), and my family, represented today by my daughter, Indra. (Unfortunately, my sister Peg and my parents, Betsy and Greer, who were en route from Massachusetts to attend the ceremony, were turned back today because of inclement weather.) I’d especially like to thank my parents, who have taught me key lessons in life: to seek my own road, to work with a steady determination, to find a vocation that pleases me and yet serves others, and never to get a swelled head, especially when you receive an award like this one.

The Distinguished Faculty Award offers the recipient a valuable opportunity: an occasion to reflect on one’s career as a teacher, scholar, and citizen of this university. Instead of looking at the whole of my time here, however, I’d like to examine a single moment—a kind of moment that recurs in all dimensions of our work here but whose nature is easiest to grasp from the standpoint of teaching. I’ve struggled to come up with a name for this instant. The best that I can do is to adapt a phrase from Mahayana Buddhism and speak, rather grandiloquently, of “the moment of magical transformation.” Let me try to convey what happens in this instant from a pedagogical viewpoint. In the English literature courses I teach, I like to ask my students, in a loosely Socratic manner, questions about the texts we read—questions that are difficult to answer, that often have more than one answer, and that sometimes leave the students more up in the air than settled about the matter at hand. The moment I speak of, the moment of magical transformation, occurs when I ask a particularly difficult question. Posing such a question is like dropping a small stone into a still pond. For several seconds, silence ripples through the classroom. For me, this can be a moment of dread. Perhaps the question is stupid or boring, pitched too low or too high. For the students, the moment can also be one of trepidation. “Will I stumble?” one thinks to himself. “Will I say something completely foolish?” another may ask herself. Sometimes it seems the whole class is riding on such an instant. And then a response comes and then another, and in the best of moments, there’s a change in the atmosphere that, though ordinary, is also mysterious. Whereas I previously had the initiative, now the students own it. Suddenly, their potential intellectual energy has turned kinetic.

What comes out of their mouths on these occasions is sometimes rough and halting, but it represents the stirrings of distinctive thought, thought that for each student emerges out of the particular constellation of upbringing, temperament, intellectual bent, and life experience that each brings to the classroom. This moment of magical transformation lies, I think, at the heart of a liberal arts education. If the education we offer is in fact liberal—that is, free and freeing—then in this instant the students and I experience a small but significant measure of intellectual, emotional, and spiritual liberation. We find ourselves engaged in a collective groping toward new truths—or old truths in new forms—an enterprise that represents an essential part of our lives as members of a liberal arts and Jesuit Catholic university, as citizens of a democracy, and as part of an extended human family. Our ability to keep this moment alive—a capacity possible only in the face-to-face classroom—will largely determine the future health of our educational enterprise. Let a hundred other kinds of academic setting bloom—whether long-distance, online, hybrid, or virtual in yet some unimagined way—but without the live classroom as a staple of our students’ experience, our liberal education will wither. May we foster these moments of magical transformation as often as we can in our professional lives. Thank you.
FACULTY RECOGNITION

RETIRING FACULTY
Gwen Kinebrew, Biology
Eric Fuglister, Mathematics
Dave Shirm, Economics and Finance

NEW AND REAPPOINTED CHAIRS/DIRECTOR
John McBratney, English
Cathy Rosemary, Education
Marc Lynn, Management, Marketing and Logistics
Paul Shick, Mathematics
Mary Beadle, Communication and Theatre Arts
Dianna Taylor, Philosophy
Julia Karolle-Berg, Director of the Honors Program

AWARDS
Mike Nichols, Chemistry
Culicchia Award for Teaching Excellence
John McBratney, English
Distinguished Faculty Award
Brent Brossman, Communication and Theatre Arts
Miles Curtis Award for Service

THANK YOU
And thanks for service in the following roles:

DEPARTMENT CHAIRS
Brendan Foreman
Education and Allied Studies
Rick Grenci
Management, Marketing and Logistics
Doug Norris
Mathematics
Karen Gygli
Communication and Theatre Arts

DIRECTORS
Bob Kolesar
Past Director of the Honors Program
Paul Shick
Faculty Council and First Year Seminar
Carl Anthony
Coordinator of Graduate Studies, Biology

ADMINISTRATORS
Mindy Peden
Associate Dean for Advising
Nick Santilli
Associate Academic Vice President for Planning, Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness

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Items of interest regarding faculty activity, including new publications, conference presentations, collaborations with students, community and professional service activities, teaching innovations, etc., will be published. Please include relevant details such as date and place of presentation.

Questions and comments should be directed to:
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