

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Faculty and Staff Award Honorees - 2024



College of Science

Kathy Anderson – Assistant Department Head

Professional Achievement Award



As an assistant department head, Kathy has significantly enhanced many different aspects of departmental operations. She has identified a variety of innovative solutions to help navigate a wide range of changes in structures and personnel, leading to virtually seamless transitions and uninterrupted services. She is an outstanding liaison for the department with connections all across campus. Last, but certainly not least, she is an outstanding mentor and is deeply valued as a supervisor to key members of our staff.

Ximena Bernal - Professor

Graduate Student Mentoring Award



Ximena is a selfless mentor with a mentorship approach that is holistic - guiding her graduate students through professional and personal aspects of their journeys as early career scientists. She creates a safe environment for sharing personal issues without judgement and provides guidance for such matters with the same level of concern and thoughtfulness as in professional contexts. She instills in her graduate students the importance of taking action to ensure that all voices and perspectives in the lab, program, and field are valued, respected and supported.

Outstanding Service Award



Brooke does an excellent job supporting the Apple classrooms in CHAS which are vital to teaching efforts. In the first 2-3 weeks, of each semester she visits every lab class to troubleshoot computer issues that repeatedly arise. This is a very demanding task since labs run 12 hours a day, every day. In spite of this, she always maintains a cheerful face for the students and makes them feel like they can ask questions and receive help. We are lucky to have her assisting us.

Maria Cox - Administrative Assistant

Customer Service Award



Maria has consistently exemplified the highest standards of customer service. Her unparalleled dedication ensures that faculty are shielded from the myriad of administrative tasks, allowing them to focus solely on their academic and research endeavors. She is always willing to help find answers and figure out how to navigate the Purdue bureaucracy. Her commitment streamlines these processes, but above all that, it's her approachable and endlessly positive attitude that truly elevates the entire department's efficiency and morale. Maria makes the faculty she supports an utmost priority and is an exceptional asset to the department.

Jimmy Dooley - Assistant Professor

Undergraduate Advising Award



Jimmy challenges his undergraduate researchers to look deeper into their goals, aspirations, and ambitions, and ensures that his student's best interests are put first. He fosters curiosity and a love of learning while installing a belief that it's okay to fail. He believes that the most important thing for anyone who has spent time in his lab is the ability to say what they've learned and, just as importantly, what they didn't know.

Janice Evans - Professor and Previous Dept. Head

Leadership Award



The description of this award has Janice's name all over it! While department heads are in positions, which by default means they need to be leaders, few fully rise to the expectations of inspiring and effective leadership. Her tactful and people-oriented strategies encourages and motivates us all to be our best. She truly leads by example and promotes a supportive and welcoming environment that nurtures outstanding performance across all levels. She goes the extra mile to recognize efforts in alignment with promoting academic excellent and creating a positive environment.

Becky Harding - Senior Administrative Assistant

Professional Achievement Award



Becky's work entails significant multi-tasking as she supports multiple faculty (and at their own admission, are often cantankerous), and the NIH T32-award-supported Molecular Biophysics training program. She also serves as the building deputy for Hockmeyer Hall, and all of her work in these various capacities is deeply valued.

Sue Heidi Loperena-Medina – Instruction Specialist

Diversity Award



Heidi, as lab coordinator of BIOL 22100, works tirelessly to ensure the success of all of her students. Teaching labs in LILY are not readily accessible to anyone needing to use a wheelchair or with other physical disabilities. She has taken the lead in modifying a classroom for a student in a wheelchair by working with John Bowman to build a lab bench and create a path through the lab so the student can move freely. Most recently, she met with a Provost's office representative to discuss accessibility issues and is pursuing grant opportunities to address this important problem.

D. Riley Rackliffe – Senior Instruction Specialist

Leadership Award



The TAs who work with Riley note that he is the epitome of a leader, extremely professional and most importantly, open to the TAs suggesting ways to improve the long-running courses that he oversees. This has resulted in collaborative efforts such as beta testing of an online version of the course, restructuring of answer keys, and gathering of feedback to improve the course. He remains present, considerate, available, and is pleasant to work with, which creates an environment that is equitable and promotes a happy work-life balance.

Kim Vestal - Executive Assistant

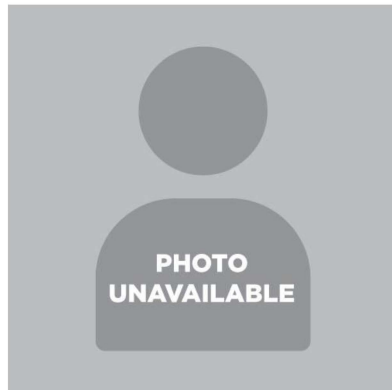
Leadership Award



Kim has distinguished herself as an outstanding leader and teacher. She always takes the time to make sure everyone has what is needed to succeed. She cares deeply for the department and is always trying to find ways to bring everyone together. Often times she will go out of her way to help students, faculty or staff and does so with the upmost respect and a happy demeanor. Her integrity and support for those around her are two of the biggest attributes that make her an outstanding employee - not only within the department but also for the University.

Lonny Williams – Sr Facilities Maintenance Technician

Customer Service Award



Even though Lonny is relatively new to his position here in our department, he has immediately increased and improved our maintenance team's reputation for solid customer service and communication. It is obvious that an orientation towards customer service comes to him very naturally, and his work ethic and attitude are paying significant dividends for our maintenance group.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Thank you to all of our honorees for your persistent efforts to create a culture of respect, inclusion, innovation and growth.

We appreciate you!



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