

2010 Chancellor's Academic Professional Excellence Award Recipients:

Karen Su
Debra Simpson
Stacie Williams
Tom Moss

Karen Su, Director, Director, Asian American Resource and Cultural Center

The founding Director of the Asian American Resource and Cultural Center, Karen Su is an inspiration and mentor for students, staff and faculty. It is not unusual to see throngs of students around this popular director. She is a vital liaison between the students, the center, faculty and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and is deeply committed to productive collaboration among them all. Karen's productivity, leadership, and accomplishments are of immeasurable value for improving the quality of education not only for Asian American students, but for all students at UIC. She has assumed leadership roles in local and national organizations that bring visibility to UIC. She also founded Families and Friends of Asian American Students, a community organization vital to the Asian American experience. Too often, Asian Americans are regarded as successful and so not needing support—an inaccurate and harmful stereotype. Karen is a leading voice with a national platform advocating that the Asian American dimension of diversity be acknowledged and addressed. Congratulations Karen.

Debra Simpson, Coordinator, Recruitment and Admissions Counseling, African American Academic Network

As Coordinator of Recruitment and Admissions Counseling for the African American Academic Network, Debra Simpson is an advisor known for going beyond the call of duty. As alumna Alyssa Humbles said, "She always pushed me for more, and to know of the greater that was within me." Thanks to Debra's work, the number of applications and admissions of African American students has increased, along with the visibility of UIC in the African American community. Debra is an advisor who has enhanced her student organizations' ability to excel. Her recruitment responsibilities involve much time and travel, yet she always finds the time to give her students great insight and wisdom regarding academics and future careers.

As alumnus Emmanuel Bansa said, "God sent Ms. Simpson to my family when we needed her most. Ms. Debra Simpson has dedicated her life to helping students succeed in this university and does not stop until she sees them walk across that stage." Now it is Debra's turn to walk across our stage today and be honored. Congratulations Debra.

Stacie Williams, Assistant Dean for Student Services, Honors College

One faculty member wrote of Stacie Williams, the Honors College's Assistant Dean for Student Services, "I think the successful launch of the Honors College was due to Stacie's efforts and dedication." She has been called the "face of the Honors College"—the primary go-to person for anything and everything. Stacie coordinates admissions, participates in grade review, advises students, and organizes convocation. It is common for her to be in close contact with students from their senior year of high school, to years after they graduate. When alumni come back to visit, Stacie is the person they want to see. She has been called a "genius" in analyzing data. Give her any problem, and she will come up with one or more solutions. UIC's Rhodes Scholar, Rudyard Sadlier, wrote, "Stacie Williams is the greatest champion of students' abilities and ceaselessly encourages them to seek the greatest opportunities UIC students can achieve."

We have our own opportunity today to honor this champion. Congratulations Stacie.

Tom Moss, Special Projects Coordinator, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs, College of Liberal Arts and Science

Now Special Projects Coordinator for Undergraduate Affairs, Tom Moss is receiving this award for his exemplary work in the Department of English with the First-Year Writing Program from 2001 to 2010. Tom has transformed the academic lives of UIC's students for the better, and through his leadership has been able to get diverse individuals to focus on one goal: helping students succeed. Equally valuable for faculty, Tom improved working conditions for lecturers in English, including instituting a coveted senior lecturer position. Tom has been recognized nationally on assessing student-learning outcomes, yet this national figure also volunteers every week at a food pantry at a local church where he cooks, packs grocery bags, hands out supplies to the needy, and serves food. Tom is known for giving much; now we have the opportunity to give him some well-deserved recognition. Congratulations Tom.