

## **2010 I.N.S.P.I.R.E. Award Recipients**

### **Matthew Klara, Visiting Director, College of Nursing**

"He takes great pride in serving the College of Nursing (CON) Community and is an example and inspiration to all in the dedication he shows to the well-being of the college and its people." (Judy Zerwic)

"Matt strives to provide the best service he can to CON prospective and current students, faculty, staff, affiliates, and he therefore works hard to make sure all the necessary systems are in place to support those services." (Tracy Bartholomew)

"Not only has he organized an efficient and effective work flow in the office, but through role-modeling a caring attitude toward those with whom he interacts, he has instilled a sense of collegiality and cohesion among the staff. He not only enriches the quality of work we do together, but his integrity and pride in the accomplishments of the CON community and his sense of humor make work enjoyable." (Lynda Slimmer)

"Matt respects what the students have to say and takes a lot of pride in the CON. He reaches out to all of the students by helping us to achieve our dreams of becoming nurses and by encouraging us to strive for excellence." (Jennifer Dugal, CON Student)

### **Robert Mark Moranetz, Recruitment Coordinator, Recruitment and Admissions**

"As a graduate of the university, Rob always takes pride in representing this institution not only as an alumnus, but also as a current employee and he demonstrates it through the work he does every day. Rob is well aware of UIC's history, architecture, organizations, faculty members, multiple programs, etc. He is the "go-to" person if you need a question answered. Anytime he has a new idea, he cannot wait to share it with everyone." (Cynthia Corral)

"He is always looking for ways to improve processes and information, not just in our unit and office. It is not uncommon for Rob to consult with other units to help clarify information. He consistently goes well beyond his responsibilities to provide complete and accurate information to UIC students. He is an amazing role model to his peers, the recruitment staff and anyone who interacts with him. His energy, enthusiasm and desire to help students is contagious and motivating. He is very supportive of his peers, providing helpful information and feedback so that we all can be better recruiters and ambassadors." (Fernando Planas and Dan DiCesare)

### **Heather McCallister, Assistant Director for Transfer Recruitment, Office of Admissions and Records Administration**

"I am always impressed with her knowledge of issues facing transfer students—knowledge that spans the spectrum of our academic programs. She manages to keep us, the recruiters, in step with the myriad of changes that often take place within the various colleges at UIC, as well as with community colleges and four-year universities throughout Illinois." (Chuck Cunningham)

"She gives up much of her personal time to work evenings and weekends at both Transfer and Freshman events. She is very focused on customer service and works to meet the needs and issues of students. She has a great rapport with students and is an excellent listener and counselor. She goes above and beyond to provide complete, accurate and thorough information and assistance to students." (Dan DiCesare)

"Heather is very thoughtful, generous, and considerate. For example, she always remembers birthdays and will be the first person to volunteer to buy a birthday cake and card for our staff." (Fernando Planas)

**Demetra John, Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Physical Therapy, College of Applied Health Sciences**

"Dr. John has served UIC in many capacities. But what sets her apart is not so much the quantity of her service as her enthusiasm for the tasks at hand and the caring attitude she shows to the individuals she encounters from all walks of life with their unique concerns and aspirations. In spite of her heavy workload, her service is rendered with enthusiasm and sensitivity to all the people she comes into contact with and is accompanied by a supportive and nurturing attitude that is devoid of any personal or political agenda." (Christina Hui-Chan)

"Dr. John is an engaged faculty member across the spectrum of educational and service experiences at our University. In spite of the current economic uncertainty that challenges our University, she shines in the face of challenges and radiates an uplifting spirit to all of those with whom she interacts. It is apparent that the students and patients she serves are her first priorities regardless of whether her efforts are recognized or noticed by others." (Dr. Shane A. Phillips)

**Tanya Berger-Wolf, Professor, Department of Computer Science, College of Engineering**

"Tanya has been a wonderful guide and mentor to her own Ph.D. students, but what is extraordinary is how much research help and career coaching she has given to other people's Ph.D. and master's students. She has a knack for bringing out the best in each student.

Tanya has also inspired her own students to do wonderful volunteer outreach work. At least two of her students have won the Chancellor's Student Service and Leadership award in the past few years. Tanya's work in this area has been recognized by the UIC Mentor of the Year Award, but I feel her continuing work in this area makes her also an outstanding candidate for the INSPIRE award. Tanya has been very active in outreach to students in the K to 12 world as part of the Chicago-area Alliance for Broadening Participation in Computing. She has also incorporated computational thinking activities into the Summer SuperMath program of the Oak Park, elementary school district so one can clearly state she has impacted students from the second grade through Ph.D. programs." (Robert H. Sloan)

**Karrie L. Hamstra-Wright, Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Kinesiology and Nutrition, College of Applied Health Sciences**

"Dr. Hamstra-Wright inspires and challenges her students to push themselves academically, professionally, and personally. She brings a consistent and positive energy to her position, setting an unwavering example for students and staff alike. She always takes special care to help students who may be struggling academically to ensure they obtain the resources to be successful in their coursework. Many times, this involves dedicating her own time outside of class to further explain and break down material for individual students." (Mary Lou Bareither and Staci Molinar)

"Dr. Hamstra-Wright never gives up on her students, and is always pushing them to strive for success. She makes a special point to congratulate students on their personal victories and takes pride in them." (A student)

"As an exceptionally skilled clinical assistant professor and our Assistant Director of Undergraduate Studies, she has played a vital part in the growth of the Kinesiology program. Her multiple roles as teacher, mentor, and administrator provide ample opportunity to inspire a broad range of students and she fulfills that opportunity remarkably well." (Dr. Charles Walter)

**David Taeyaerts, Director, Office of Campus Learning Environments, Office of Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs**

"It is no exaggeration to say that David Taeyaerts inspires thousands of students, staff, and faculty members every single day. How could he? Because he's the man behind all the beautiful Oases and renovated classrooms on our campus! When you first walked into the newly renovated Lincoln Hall classrooms last semester, weren't you inspired? How about when your path took you through a new Oasis for the first time? Beautiful little oasis spaces, full of color and comfortable furniture, are sprinkled all over campus.

To do his job, Dave must work with many others, on and off campus: architects, engineers, trades people, staff, faculty, students, administrators, etc. Dave is the perfect kind of person to interact with so many different groups with a personality marked by flexibility, good humor, and excellent communication skills. Because so many other people have noticed this, Dave has an excellent reputation on campus." (Bette L. Bottoms)

*Editors Note: It is important to note that Mr. Taeyaerts received over 22 statements of support for this award!*

**Rocio Garcia,  
Graduate Programs Administrator, Cultural Studies and Linguistic Literature**

"In addition to all of her regular responsibilities as the only assistant for several large graduate programs, Rocio Garcia has also frequently acted as my personal assistant and messenger to ensure the completion of internal and external grant proposals, fellowship and travel award applications and administrations, often dropping everything else and scrambling at the last minute to help us make a deadline. There is no doubt in my mind that, were it not for Rocio, I would have had numerous delays in my academic progress after moving to Texas and I probably would not be graduating this May 2010. Rocio's exceptional performance extends beyond her strong work ethic. Her attitude and respectful treatment of others are exemplary. Her positive attitude and sense of optimism is encouraging and fosters an atmosphere of pride and accomplishment." (Jill Jegerski, Ph.D. Candidate)

"Although administrative restructuring and belt tightening is making everyone's work load bigger, (and this represented a substantial increase in Rocio's workload) she took the initiative to develop a more efficient system for handling all of the applications and inquiries. She asks intelligent questions when she is uncertain, but in a matter of weeks, she had everything running like a well-oiled machine." (Jessica Williams)

**2010 UIC Luminary Award Recipients**

**Steven Hurder, Professor, Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science**

Dr. Steven Hurder has made outstanding efforts to recruit and retain UIC students. He was an outstanding advocate for our students both in and out of the department and somehow found new sources of money to fund student research travel. He was instrumental in developing a strong spirit of camaraderie among our students. First Steve took over the math club. He turned it into an intellectually stimulating group that not only enjoys sharing pizza and camaraderie, but also includes lectures from faculty and advanced graduate students, visits from people in mathematically oriented industrial positions and discussions on graduate school." (David E. Marker)

"My first impression of Professor Hurder, like many of the department's other graduate students, was of an energetic and affable host welcoming us to UIC at the department orientation. His door was always open to us, and his advice was always sound. Professor Hurder has helped every level of student in the Mathematics Department become better students and teachers. His support for this award nomination would be widespread and great among the students in our department." (Nicholas Gardner, Math Department Graduate)

**Stacie Williams, Assistant Dean for Student Services, Honors College**

"Stacie Williams is a unique individual who understands every aspect of the Honors College because at one time or another, she has been in nearly every position herself (including a student in the Honors College). I know that when I need something done, done immediately, and done right, she's the one to call. And I call on her for things that are definitely stretching her beyond what is technically in her portfolio." (Bette L. Bottoms)

"Stacie is extremely bright, highly organized, and goal oriented. She is a model and mentor to her junior colleagues and a one-person anxiety-reducing relief package to those of us who know we can depend on her to get the job done. Stacie is a master advisor. She has been advising students in the Honors College as a holistic and developmental advisor for well over 10 years. She is masterful at creating a robust interaction between the programmatic information on the one hand and the individual's needs on the other. Stacie also serves as a strong representative for the college on a myriad of campus-wide committee. Her attention to, and retention of, detail is legendary." (Lon Kaufman)

*Editors Note: It is important to note that there were over 50 statements of support for Ms. Williams' nomination.*