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K-STATE'S PRESIDENTIAL AWARDS RECOGNIZE EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING, ADVISING AND ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP

MANHATTAN — Six Presidential Awards are being presented to honor outstanding teaching, advising and administrative skills at Kansas State University.

The awards, which consist of a \$2,500 honorarium and plaque, are sponsored by the K-State president's office and Curtin Property Co., a real estate development firm with offices in Manhattan and Kansas City. The awards are coordinated through the Kansas State University Foundation.

Receiving the Presidential Awards for Teaching Excellence are David R. Brown, a graduate teaching assistant in economics, [Sutton, Neb.](#); David Lehman, an instructor of marketing; Charles Sanders, an associate professor of history; and Michael Wesch, an assistant professor of anthropology.

The Presidential Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Advising recipient is Daralyn Gordon Arata, the university's pre-law adviser.

Bradley Kramer, professor and head of the department of industrial and manufacturing systems engineering, is receiving the Presidential Award for Outstanding Department Head.

"The Curtin Property Company, our affiliated organizations of Westchester Park and Georgetown Apartment Homes, along with our associates, are pleased to join with the K-State president's office in recognizing and rewarding these highly talented educators," said Chris Curtin, company president. "Their commitment to the pursuit of excellence is exceptional and inspirational. As teachers, advisers or department heads, each has contributed significantly to the education of undergraduates at Kansas State University. Their success serves as a bright path for others."

"These Presidential Awards acknowledge the truth that any great university owes its reputation to the creativity, dedication and excellence of its faculty members," said Jon Wefald, K-State president. "We appreciate that Chris Curtin and the Curtin Property Company continue to help K-State reward such efforts."

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Brown, a doctoral candidate in economics, has taught intermediate microeconomics at K-State since summer 2006, and will teach principles of microeconomics starting this summer. "I want my students to be able to think about economics in their everyday lives," Brown said. "I don't want students simply 'learning something' by memorizing cause-and-effect relationships, definitions and graphs. I want them to learn something useful by knowing the intuition behind the economic theory and how this material can relate to events in their lives." Brown earned his bachelor's degree in economics and computer science from Hastings College.

Lehman has taught marketing since joining K-State in 2005; he also coached the student teams that placed first in a national marketing competition in 2006 and 2007. "Teaching is a living, changing partnership between student and instructor," Lehman said. "As I facilitate students' learning, I'm also constantly striving to learn more about marketing and teaching." He earned his bachelor's degree in agricultural economics from K-State and his master's in business administration from the University of Missouri at Columbia. "Students deserve the best from me because their success is my success."

Sanders, a specialist in 19th century history, promises all of his students that they will work hard, they will learn more history than they ever thought possible, and they will thoroughly enjoy themselves while doing it. "The sort of history I promise is that which historian Bruce Catton characterized as 'history with the blood in it.' I encourage students not only to think, but also to imagine and to dream," he said. Sanders earned his bachelor's degree in history from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. He has a master's degree in political science from North Georgia College in Dahlonega and a master's in national security and strategic studies from the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, R.I. He earned his Ph.D. in history from K-State.

Even in his 400-strong introductory course on cultural anthropology, Wesch rejects the trickle-down model of the lecture and instead constructs a virtual globe in which students become responsible for teaching one another. "Because I don't know everything, and the simulation attempts to simulate everything, I am in the wonderful but awkward position of not knowing exactly what I am doing but blissfully learning along the way," Wesch said. "My job becomes less about teaching and more about encouraging students to join me on the quest." The quest gets help from a Web platform that fosters media literacy through a wiki, blogs, mobile phones and other applications. Wesch earned his bachelor's in anthropology from K-State and returned as a faculty member in 2004 after receiving his Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Virginia.

Arata has been K-State's pre-law adviser since 2002, and she has learned to tailor her approach to diverse majors. But even among students who share a major, course work must be custom-fitted, Arata said. "You might assume an architecture graduate would likely go into land-use or building law, but sometimes you have a student who wants to do something environmentally oriented, or because of an internship in the developing world, they'll want to do immigration law." Just as college gives undergraduates the chance to discover their true interests, law school presents a similar opportunity for graduates to re-create themselves, she said. "It makes it really interesting for me, because each year all my students are so different."

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Arata earned her bachelor's degree and her law degree from the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Va. She earned a master of laws in taxation from George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

In addition to his role as head of the department of industrial and manufacturing systems engineering, Kramer directs the Advanced Manufacturing Institute. "I believe that the academic department exists to serve the citizens of Kansas in general and the students in the department in particular," he said. "I am blessed to work with outstanding colleagues who are diligently working together to advance my alma mater." Kramer believes that advancing a department requires a vision for the program that can be translated into specific plans and assignments. Kramer warns that "the inertia of status quo or the inability to motivate people to achieve the collective goal can put a department head on the path to stagnation." Kramer earned bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in industrial engineering from K-State.

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