Award-winner James Zhang (at right), associate professor of engineering and technology, develops student hands-on learning experiences that benefit organizations such as Blue Ridge Paper and the Watershed Association of the Tuckasegee River.

New Award Rewards Faculty for Engaged Teaching

The inaugural winners of the Chancellor’s Meritorious Award for Engaged Teaching have involved students in activities from development of a combination stretcher-wheelchair to visiting death row as part of a discussion of capital punishment.

The honorees, who were named this month, each receive a $1,000 raise to their base pay retroactive to July and will be recognized at the Spring General Faculty Meeting and Awards Convocation.

“This is a small way of honoring the tremendous investment of time and energy by our faculty to benefit our students in ways that make Western what we want to be – an engaged university,” said Chancellor John W. Bardo. “The faculty members recognized through these awards have not only connected with students, but also connected students to the course material and to the community through developing creative, thought-provoking and meaningful learning experiences inside and outside the classroom.”

The awards are designed to support Western’s increasing emphasis on fostering engaged teaching and integrated learning, a key element of the recently adopted Quality Enhancement Plan, also known as the QEP. Winners were selected based on how they implemented the principles of the scholarship of engagement into their teaching – how they created learning environments based on principles of discovery; integration; analysis and application; knowledge transmission and transformation; and an understanding of real-world social, civic or ethical issues.

Deans and faculty advisory committees reviewed the nominations and supporting materials, including syllabi, class assignments, samples of student work and other documents to select finalists. Those nominations and supporting materials were then forwarded to the Office of the Provost.

“These awards demonstrate that engagement is a core university value that is to be encouraged and rewarded,” said Provost Kyle Carter. “It is our intent to make these annual awards that affect the faculty member’s base salary. We believe the awards are even more meaningful because they are highly competitive and the recipients are chosen by their colleagues.”

Winners listed on page 3
Ask Provost Kyle R. Carter about Taiwan, and he might describe the parents he met there willing to go great lengths to get the best education possible for their children. Ask Carter’s wife, Sarah, about the Netherlands, and she might talk about everyday, casual dinners that last two hours or more – meals centered more on spending time together than eating. Ask Kyle Carter about an experience before Sept. 11, 2001, when an X-ray of his luggage – specifically of gift-wrapped letter openers bearing a university seal – sparked questions from an officer armed with an automatic weapon. “At that moment, I knew how frightening it could be to be in a country and not speak the language,” he said.

The Carters value their experiences traveling abroad as among the most enriching educational experiences of their lives. “We gained an appreciation of how travel expands one’s vision of the world,” said Sarah Carter. “It’s an amazing opportunity that opens your mind to questions you might not have asked or even considered. Travel is especially important for young people so they can broaden their perspective.” In order to enhance those opportunities for students at Western, the couple has created an endowed fund through The Campaign for Western that will generate money each year to help a WCU student participate in study abroad.

The Carters know how much the experience meant to their own children. Their daughter, Heather, spent a year in Ireland, and their son, Travis, went to France. “Neither of them would trade that experience for anything,” said Kyle Carter. “We want to encourage and help more Western students have experiences like our children had. Going abroad gives students opportunities to meet people from different cultures and backgrounds in their country rather than in the United States. When our students travel abroad they become the international student in a host country. As a consequence they get a much more realistic view of how citizens of other countries view education, science, politics, religion and the United States. They will learn about different practices and ideas. They will also discover there are common values and beliefs that bind humanity regardless of culture.”

The history of the Carters’ commitment to education is long. They met on their first day of college at Mercer University, where they both earned their bachelor’s degrees. They went on to earn graduate degrees at the University of Georgia. She earned a master’s degree in early childhood education, and he earned master’s and doctoral degrees in educational psychology. She worked as a teacher in first-grade and kindergarten classrooms for more than 20 years. He worked as a faculty member and leading administrator on college campuses from Colorado to Missouri before becoming WCU’s first provost in 2004.

At first, their travel abroad was linked to trips planned to strengthen and establish international partnerships among institutions of higher education. Other excursions included traveling to volunteer with Habitat for Humanity or visiting friends and family. What got them hooked was the realization that they, as adults, were students, and their classrooms were countries: Taiwan, Thailand, Holland, Belgium, Germany, England, Ireland, Sweden, Wales, Nicaragua, Mexico, eastern and western Caribbean and Aruba.

Their teachers were people they met along the way, people with different ideas about whether a car, train, water taxi or monorail is the best way to get across town, or whether a roof should be built to last 30 years or 100. The Carters know the more international experience and understanding that Western graduates have, the more prepared they will be able to succeed in a marketplace that is increasingly global in nature. “We hope others will think this is a good investment and will join us in supporting study abroad for students at Western,” Kyle Carter said. “Others don’t have to create an endowment to help students travel abroad. Our international programs and services office would welcome annual gifts to support Western students.”

By TERESA KILLIAN
Recipients Named for Chancellor’s Meritorious Awards for Engaged Teaching

Kathleen Brennan, assistant professor of sociology, co-led a student group that developed heritage materials about the region’s outdoor community and involved classes in the American Democracy Project’s voter registration initiative. Carroll Brown, assistant professor of hospitality and tourism, helps students apply marketing and research theory to Mountain Heritage Day planning and debriefing, and to initiatives such as analyzing eco-tourism feasibility on DuBuisson Island, Ga. Mae Miller Claxton, assistant professor of English, helped students create “place” with a person’s identity through coursework examining Appalachian residents, service learning at Appalachian Homestead Farm Preserve and digital heritage projects. Chris Cooper, assistant professor of political science, has led students in public policy surveys that inform government leaders and developed coursework where students plan campaigns from fundraising methods to publicity. Cynthia Deale, associate professor of hospitality and tourism, crafted assignments that support Mountain Heritage Center efforts and that invite students to work on real projects needed by area businesses in the tourism and industry.

Sharon Dale, assistant professor of special education, encourages students to attend an event where they are part of a minority, to apply for grants for projects that help people who have special needs, and to work at the Cullowhee Creativity Camp. Jeanne Goins Dullworth, assistant professor of social work, links students with “clients” at a Cullowhee nursing home, organizes service to social work-related advocacy projects, and leads trips abroad to help students experience and reflect on diversity. Claire Eye, assistant professor of stage and screen, guided students in Theatre in Education productions created in collaboration with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, and helped create “Broadway in the Mountains” summer camp. Chip Ferguson, assistant professor of engineering and technology, has involved students in developing an innovative orthopedic rehabilitation machine and a packaging product for Christmas tree ornaments prepared by Watauga Opportunities Inc.

Leah Hampton, instructor of English, directs a program where she recruits and trains WCU students to mentor children at the Cherokee Youth Center and also develops community-minded writing assignments in her classes. Glenda Hensley, assistant professor of stage and screen, led students to help with and create a documentary of a Tony-award winning costume designer’s symposium, and included topics from recycling to Cherokee culture in the Theatre in Education program.

Jean Hill, assistant professor of nursing, teaches students about community health through coursework that offers students experiences with agencies from grant-writing to preparing informational materials such as patient care brochures in Spanish and English. Kelly Kelley, instructor of special education, links students to field experiences with families of people who have disabilities and facilitates bringing people who have disabilities to meet and work with special education students on campus. Mark Lord, associate professor of geosciences and natural resources, co-developed Cullowhee Creek Environmental Field Station for students and has taken students to Nevada for environmental and forestry research.

Alvin Maleksy, assistant professor of psychology, has organized field trips for forensic psychology students to correctional facilities including death row, and involved students in service-learning experiences for a crisis hotline. Maurice Phipps, professor of health, physical education and recreation, teaches students about situational leadership and group-dynamics through coursework including planning, leading and analyzing outdoor, multiple-day expeditions. Mickey Randolph, professor of psychology, offers students learning experiences through serving the Life Fit program, which helps pre-teen girls develop healthy lifestyles, and through assignments such as a self-modification behavioral change project.

William Richmond, associate professor of computer information systems, links students with “clients” such as the Jackson County Department of Social Services, to analyze needs and then recommend software or technology to improve efficiency. Phillip Sanger, associate professor of engineering and technology, has guided students in projects such as a study of the strength of the beam structure at a Cullowhee church and relocating an organization that employs people who have disabilities. Wes Stone, assistant professor of engineering and technology, has guided students in service-learning experiences for a crisis hotline.

Benjamin Tanner, assistant professor of geosciences and natural resources, guided students in research to restore rivercane, a once-plentiful plant used by the Cherokee; studies of hurricane frequency; and restoration of the Cullowhee Creek.

Mary Teslow, assistant professor of health sciences, teaches students through hands-on projects such as conducting a quality improvement project at Harris Regional Hospital that yielded implementation of a proposed birth certificate process.

Bradley Ulrich, professor of music, has guided the student-run WCU Trumpet Festival, the largest festival of its kind in the United States, for the past six years, and links students with community service such as performing at funerals or athletic events.

Jayne Zanglein, associate professor of business law, involves students in hands-on initiatives, from developing a campus mediation program involving Student Judicial Affairs to working on statewide agricultural mediation cases. James Zhang, associate professor of engineering and technology, led student development of a remotely accessible engineering laboratory, and supervised student projects that aided organizations such as Blue Ridge Paper and a water quality group.

For more information about the awards, contact Carol Burton, assistant vice chancellor for undergraduate studies, at 227-7497 or check out www.wcu.edu/provost/resources/awards.html.

Twenty percent of WCU first-year students participated in a service learning activity as part of a course, compared to 13 percent at peer institutions and 12 percent nationally. Twenty-four percent of WCU seniors took part in service learning, compared to 20 percent at peer institutions and 17 percent nationally.

Twenty-one percent of WCU first-year students worked with faculty on activities other than coursework, compared to 14 percent at peer institutions and 14 percent nationally. Twenty-nine percent of WCU seniors worked with professors outside of course requirements, compared to 23 percent at peer institutions and 21 percent nationally.

Seventy-nine percent of WCU first-year students gave their professors high marks for being available and helpful, compared to 70 percent at peer institutions and 73 percent nationally.

In addition, WCU has one of the highest percentages of students participating in undergraduate research, sending finalists to the National Conferences on Undergraduate Research every year in the recent past. Eleven percent of WCU’s first-year students had already worked with a faculty member on a research project outside of course or program requirements, compared to only 5 percent at peer institutions or nationally.

“We are pleased to see that our students understand the value of working closely with professors on research projects,” said WCU Provost Kyle Carter. “Students learn more when they are actively involved in their education, and undergraduate research provides important hands-on experience that pays off not just in terms of learning, but also when students graduate and go out into the world and begin their careers.”

For more information about engaged learning at WCU, visit www.wcu.edu/engagement.

—By BILL STUDENC
Monday, Nov. 19
Presentation/Panel Discussion—“American Indian Foods and Health,” by the North American Indian Women’s Association. 1–3 p.m. Theater, UC. (227-3623)
Concert—WCU Concert Choir and WNC Civic Orchestra, Handel’s “Messiah.” $ 7:30 p.m. FAPAC. (227-7242)

Tuesday, Nov. 20
Catamount basketball—vs. UNC Asheville. $ 7:03 p.m. RRAC. (227-7338)
Films4Thought Series—Spanish and Latin film festival: “The Official Story,” with a discussion following the film. 7:30 p.m. Theater, UC. (227-3872)

Wednesday, Nov. 21–Friday, Nov. 23
Thanksgiving Holiday—No classes meet. (227-7216)

Monday, Nov. 26

Tuesday, Nov. 27
Films4Thought Series—Spanish and Latin film festival: “Volver,” with a discussion following the film. 7:30 p.m. Theater, UC. (227-3872)
Catamount Concert Series—Smoky Mountain Brass Quintet. 8 p.m. RH. (227-7242)
Catamount basketball—vs. Elon. Southern Conference game. $ 7 p.m. Elon. (227-7338)

Wednesday, Nov. 28
Lady Catamount basketball—vs. UNC Asheville. $ 7 p.m. RRAC. (227-7338)

Thursday, Nov. 29
Galaxy of Stars/ Something for Everyone Series—“Jungle All the Way Christmas Show,” the Animal Band. $ 7:30 p.m. FAPAC. (227-2479)

Friday, Nov. 30–Saturday, Dec. 1
Madrigal Dinner—A recreation of the pageantry, music and food of 16th-century England, with authentic madrigal entertainment. $ 6:30 p.m. Grandroom, UC. (227-7206)

Saturday, Dec. 1
Catamount basketball—vs. College of Charleston. Southern Conference game. $ 7:03 p.m. RRAC. (227-7338)

Sunday, Dec. 2
Concert—School of Music Holiday Concert, featuring vocal and instrumental performances by faculty and students. $ 3 p.m. FAPAC. (227-7242)
Concert—Inspirational Choir Holiday Concert. $ 6 p.m. Location TBA. (227-7242)
Arti-Facts!—Pinhole Lanterns and Ornaments. 2:30–3:30 p.m. MHC. (227-7129)

Exhibits
Fine Art Museum, Fine and Performing Arts Center
ONGOING EXHIBIT: “Worldviews.” Selections from Western Carolina University’s permanent collection in all media by local, regional, national and international artists.
School of Art and Design Student Portfolio Exhibition. Through Dec. 1.
Fine Art Museum hours: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays 10 a.m.–4 p.m.; Thursdays 10 a.m.–6 p.m.; Saturdays 1–4 p.m. Donations appreciated. (227-3591 or http://fapac.wcu.edu)

Mountain Heritage Center
SLIDESHOW SPOTLIGHT FOR NOVEMBER: “Irons in the Fire.”
SLIDESHOW SPOTLIGHT FOR DECEMBER: “Mountain Trout.”

Gallery A: “Migration of the Scotch-Irish People.” Includes text panels, illustrations, artifacts and vibrant murals that trace the Scotch-Irish Appalachian settlers from Ulster to Pennsylvania, through the Shenandoah Valley, and into Western North Carolina. Permanent exhibit.

Gallery B: “Southern Stews: Traditions of One-Pot Cooking.” A national, traveling exhibition organized by the McKissick Museum at the University of South Carolina. Through March.

Gallery C: “After the War: Conflict and Domestic Change in the North Carolina Mountains.” Portrays how wars and their aftermath have shaped the lives of people and communities in Western North Carolina. Through December.

“Let the Thunder Roar: A Photographic Glimpse of the African Americans of Jackson County.” Through November.

Online Exhibits (http://www.wcu.edu/2397.asp):
“After the War”
“Horace Kephart: Revealing an Enigma”
“Southern Appalachian Quilts”
“Watts in the Mountains: Rural Electrification in Western North Carolina”
“Craft Revival: Shaping Western North Carolina Past and Present”

Mountain Heritage Center hours: 8 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday–Friday. (227-7129 or http://www.wcu.edu/2398.asp)


Submissions: Send news items, calendar notices and address changes to WCU Calendar, 420 H.F. Robinson Bldg, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC 28723 or e-mail to: Reporter@email.wcu.edu. Submit items for the university’s online calendar at least one week prior to the event.