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Contact: Mike Singer

(760) 341-2883, ext. 78107

msinger@csusb.edu



CSUSB College of Arts and Letters Lecturer Wins Coveted 2022-23 Outstanding Lecturer Award

PALM DESERT, Calif. – In a surprise announcement, communication studies lecturer Lacey Kendall was named the winner of Cal State San Bernardino's 2022-23 Outstanding Lecturer Award for her exceptional instruction, capacity to engage her students and the extremely positive feedback she receives from those she has taught.

Kendall was lecturing her oral communication class in the Mary Stuart Rogers Gateway Building at the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus on May 2 when university president Tomás D. Morales, accompanied by more than 45 colleagues, fellow faculty members, staff and administrators, barged in to make the announcement.

Morales said it is a university tradition to present these outstanding faculty awards through a surprise declaration, where the president and fellow faculty members come right into and interrupt a classroom, lab or lecture hall to make the proclamation in front of the faculty member's students so the students can see their professor being honored.

"This is a special occasion as we are here to present the 2022-23 Outstanding Lecturer Award to Lacey Kendall," said Morales. "She is a dedicated educator, has an extraordinary teaching record and is a tremendous asset to CSUSB."

The award comes with a \$1,000 Faculty Professional Development Grant, being honored at the Faculty Recognition Luncheon and recognition at the awardee's spring college commencement ceremony.

"She has taught 17 unique undergraduate and graduate courses at the Palm Desert and San Bernardino campuses. She has also spearheaded initiatives, which have had a significant impact on the university community," Morales added. "The 'My Awesome Empire' syndicated radio program, development of a multi-media internship training program, along with playing an instrumental role in the creation of the Coyote Advertising department are all down to her."

"Lacey is everything a faculty member ought to be," said Rafik Mohamed, provost and vice president for academic affairs at CSUSB. "She is an excellent instructor, she has real-world experience, but beyond that, she is caring and as we saw today, she has had a profound impact on the lives of our students, so I couldn't be happier."

"I've worked with Professor Kendall for the last few years and she is a passionate person, not only in supporting students, but supporting everything we do at our campus," said Jake Zhu, dean of the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus. "I want to thank Lacey for her support of our students and the university. Students are so lucky to have a wonderful professor like this."

Kendall was shocked when the group entered her classroom and became emotional when listening to all of the positive things her colleagues had to say about her.

"I have a wonderful family here, much greater than I could have ever dreamed or found anywhere else," said Kendall. "You changed me, you saved me and I appreciate you all very much."

Kendall has an associate of arts degree in telecommunications from San Bernardino Valley Community College, a bachelor of arts degree in broadcast communications from the University of La Verne and a master of arts in communication studies from CSUSB (where she graduated magna cum laude).

She first came to CSUSB in 2007 as a broadcast media specialist and began teaching for the university in 2016 as a lecturer in the communication studies department.

The awards committee, composed of Kendall's faculty peers, said this about her: "Professor Lacey Kendall is a passionate, engaged and dedicated lecturer who has excelled in the area of teaching and supporting student development."

The committee further summed up her achievements by stating, "When evaluating Professor Kendall's track record as a teacher, (the committee was) incredibly impressed that she has achieved and sustained consistently high levels of performance in that role."

The 2022-23 committee is headed up by co-chairs Mark Agars (Department of Psychology) and Mike Stull (School of Entrepreneurship). Other members include Todd A. Johnson (representing the College of Arts and Letters), Ghulam Sarwar (representing the Jack H. Brown College of Business and Public Administration), Jemma Kim (representing the James R. Watson and Judy Rodriguez Watson College of Education), Christopher Gentry (representing the College of Natural Sciences) and Rajrani Kalra (representing the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences).

Her nomination was filled with enthusiastic comments from her students. "Professor Kendall is amazing. She is very knowledgeable and wants to share her knowledge. She wants you to succeed," said one.

Added another, "Professor Kendall contributes to my education outside of the classroom – she not only builds better students, but better people."

The student who wrote her nomination letter said, "In class, she's a passionate lecturer that introduces students to the wonders of audio engineering. Her expertise in this field is (complemented) by her joy of teaching students, and this engages them in a way that would make even the most apathetic individual care. Professor Kendall's commitment to students is apparent in everything she does. To me, it seems like her life is arranged around her students' needs as I have frequently walked into her office and interrupted a meeting between her and a student. All in all, Professor Kendall is one of a kind. I am fortunate to be her student and even more fortunate to work for her."

A further student expressed their enthusiasm for Kendall by stating, "Lacey is AMAZING! She gives her students room to breathe and understand the material. She makes her teaching personal and (relates) it back to her students and modern times. I loved this class and her teaching style. The best class I have taken at CSUSB."

Her impact on her students can be further summed up by this student's observations: "The quality of the instruction of this course felt as if we were all friends in the class. Professor Kendall was incredible, with amazing energy to teach the class, which engaged me to try my best. Thanks to Professor Kendall, I am comfortable giving speeches and (communicating). Each day of class was really fun and a joy to be in each one."

About PDC: The CSUSB Palm Desert Campus offers bachelor's and master's degrees, a doctorate in educational leadership, teaching credentials and certificates. Serving more than 2,200 students, it is the Coachella Valley's four-year public university and plays a vital role in educating and training the region's growing population.

For more information about the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus, contact Mike Singer in the Office of Strategic Communication at msinger@csusb.edu or (760) 341-2883, ext. 78107, or visit the PDC website at www.csusb.edu/pdc.