

# That's Smarts

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY®

JMU's annual James Madison Day celebration was held this year on March 17. The day commemorates James Madison, his birthday and the founding of James Madison University. As part of the program, the following students and faculty members received awards.

## Samuel Page Duke Awards

In memory of the late Samuel Page Duke, president of James Madison University 1919-1949, this honor is awarded annually to the member of the junior class who has the highest scholastic record for five semesters as a JMU student.

### **Benjamin Eddy Shindler, Major in Interdisciplinary Social Science, Colonial Heights, Va.**

Involved with the Wesley Foundation and the Alternative Spring Break program, junior Benjamin Shindler was surprised to receive the Samuel Page Duke Award.

"I did not know I had the highest GPA and I did not know there was an award," said Shindler who plans on teaching after graduating in 2001. Majoring in Interdisciplinary Social Science, Shindler will be qualified to teach history, government, geography and economics at the high school level.

## Faculty Awards

This award is presented to students in the graduating class with the highest grade point averages, 100 or more hours of course work at JMU and an average of 14 hours earned each regular semester of attendance.

### **Gretchen Margaret Eckard Major in Biology, Falls Church, Va.**

"When I came to college, my only goal was to do my best. I wanted to glorify God through my work and it was only by His blessing that I was able to do so well," said Eckard who plans to work with high school students with disabilities after college. She will either go on to graduate school and become certified as a rehabilitation counselor or start teaching in the fall.

### **Duy Tran Nguyen Major in Biology, Fairfax, Va.**

For Nguyen, attaining a high GPA was just one of the perks of preparing for his future career. "I would like to travel to developing countries to provide medical care to people who are in need. Essentially, this has been my strongest motivation for working so hard during my four years at JMU," said Nguyen. Nguyen says he will take a year off and then apply for medical school so that he may ultimately practice as a primary care physician in America.

### **Adi Raz Major in Economics, Irvine, Calif.**

"I worked very hard the past four years so, yes, I did expect one of the highest GPA's," said Adi Raz, who already has a job set up for after graduation. She will be working as an analyst with Circuit City after May but doesn't have any firm career plans yet. She plans on continuing her education in two to three years.

## Distinguished Teacher Award

Established in 1981, this award honors exemplary teaching at the rank of assistant professor or above, with full-time status and at least five years of service at JMU. Award winners are selected by their respective colleges.

### **James F. Kluesner, Professor of Music, College of Arts and Letters (Carl Harter Award)**

The Head of the Music Department, Mellasenah Morris credits Kluesner with "student successes, innovative programming such as creating new music festivals to attract teachers, high school and college students to our campus." According to Morris, he was also recognized for "selection of such honors as teaching master classes and giving a recital at Northwestern as part of a sabbatical replacement for an internationally known professor at that institution."

## **Bruce G. Brunton, Assistant Professor of Economics, College of Business**

"Among other things, Dr. Brunton was cited for his continual development and refinement of pertinent learning experiences for his students, the level of academic vigor in his classes and his heavy involvement with the Assessment Process within the economics program and its use to continually improve course offerings," said Charles Bilbrey, associate dean of human resources and administration in the College of Business.

## **Jack H. Presbury, Professor of Psychology, College of Education and Psychology**

"I described him in the award ceremony as combining the spirits of Socrates, Carl Rogers, and Yoda in helping students crack the secrets of the universe," says Jane Halonen, director of the School of Psychology, about Jack Presbury's nomination. Presbury said he was very honored to receive the award, especially because he was selected by his peers.

## **Brenda C. Seal, Professor of Speech Pathology, College of Integrated Science and Technology**

"Semester after semester, from one course to another, students consistently rate her as an excellent teacher who is knowledgeable, challenging, caring and inspiring," says Nicholas Bankson, head of the Speech Pathology Department.

"I hold the other candidates in high regard. The committee's decision had to be difficult," said Seal. "I do love my teaching and am so grateful to be acknowledged among the many here at JMU who have also been, and will in the future be, identified as outstanding teachers."

## **Carter G. Lyons, Professor of Mathematics, College of Science and Mathematics**

Like his fellow award recipients, Lyons did not expect to be chosen for the award. "I just happened to have some very good students who must have made me look good to my peers," says Lyons, who holds his colleagues in high regard. According to the personal advisory committee that nominated Lyons, he "is not just a purveyor of information; his pedagogy gives students responsibility for discovery as well as application." They went on to report that Lyons "teaches the teachers."

## **Distinguished Service**

This award, presented by the College of Education and Psychology, recognizes outstanding professionally related service at the university, local, regional and/or national levels. The recipient must be full-time and have completed at least five years of JMU service as assistant professor or above.

## **Violet L. Allain, Professor of Education**

According to Interim Director Elizabeth Morie, Allain "has consistently been rated exceptional in service during her annual performance reviews while balancing this with her responsibilities in scholarship and teaching." Allain was surprised that she was chosen because she knew what past recipients had accomplished. Balancing teaching and service activities, Allain has an impressive resume of committee work with the university. "I know of no other faculty member in our School who has been so consistently and deeply involved in major committee work at the university level than Dr. Allain." said Morie in her nomination letter. President Rose recently named Allain as the chair of the search committee for the new Vice President for Academic Affairs, just one example of one of her many committee responsibilities.

## **Madison Scholars**

This award recognizes scholarly achievement in a particular discipline, and award winners are selected by their individual colleges. The winners will present a scholarly lecture on an area of their expertise during the upcoming academic year. Recipients must teach full-time and must have completed at least five years of service at the rank of assistant professor or above.

### **Daniel E. Flage, Professor of Philosophy, College of Arts and Letters**

"It was a very pleasant surprise," says Dr. Flage about receiving a Madison Scholar Award. Flage, whose specialty is European philosophy from the 17th and 18th centuries, plans on presenting his lecture in the fall. Flage received the Edna T. Schaeffer Humanist Award in 1994 and has written three monographs, one textbook, and several dozen articles and book reviews.

### **J. Barclay Rosser Jr., Professor of Economics and Marina V. Rosser, Associate Professor of Economics, College of Business**

"While this award normally goes to a single individual in each college, the Rossers have done extensive co-authored research over the past 10 years; both have presented the results of their research at a number of national and international conferences. They have published both research papers and textbooks and both have achieved a level of national recognition based upon this research," said Charles Bilbrey, associate dean of human resources and administration in the College of Business. The Rossers are planning on presenting a lecture, tentatively titled "Transforming the Teaching of Comparative Economics in a Transforming World Economy," some time in the fall. They are currently working on the second edition of their textbook, *Comparative Economics in a Transforming World Economy*. (1996)

### **Reid J. Linn, Professor of Special Education, College of Education and Psychology**

"I tend not to focus on myself as I work in my discipline and at JMU - so I really did not give any thought to the notion of actually being selected," says Linn. He works with classroom behavior and management and teaching students with disabilities.

"I was fortunate enough to receiving training under some of the best special educators in the nation and have worked along side marvelous teachers at every level from elementary schools to residential centers to

institutions of higher education," says Linn. According to the nomination letter of Elizabeth Morie, Linn has accumulated a total of \$2 million dollars from five special education grants given to the school.

"Through these funded programs, Linn has had, and now continues to have, a unique and powerful influence on the training of special education teachers and on the content of educational programs for students with special needs," wrote Morie in the nomination letter.

### **Maria C. Papadakis, Associate Professor of Integrated Science and Technology, College of Integrated Science and Technology**

"My college is filled with very high caliber faculty who do important scholarship, so I was very honored," says Papadakis, who plans on presenting her lecture some time next year. Papadakis focuses her work on assessing the social and economic impacts of new technologies. According to Richard Roberds, Papadakis was chosen "particularly because of the work she did for the National Science Board for a chapter on the social and economic impacts of information technology for "Science and Engineering Indicators," a publication of the National Science Foundation."

### **Gary L. Peterson, Professor of Mathematics, College of Science and Mathematics**

When nominating Peterson for this award, the personnel advisory committee and department head David Carothers, spoke of his 18 publications in refereed journals and his multiple meetings, conferences and presentations on the national and international level. In the summer of 1999, Peterson was invited to give an address about his ongoing work in mathematics in an International Conference in Edinburgh, Scotland. Peterson is currently co-authoring a book with a JMU colleague, his fourth book to date.

"Above all else, Gary is a dependable and steady classroom teacher and his students appreciate his clear

and precise teaching style," say the nomination materials.

*By Anna Lucas ('00)*