The University of Louisiana at Lafayette Foundation honored four exceptional faculty members in April who inspire their students and colleagues.

Michael McClure, professor of architecture, and Dr. Hongyi Wu, associate professor in the Center for Advanced Computer Studies, received the Distinguished Professor Award. Allan Jones, professor of visual arts, and Toni Cade, associate professor of health information management, earned the Dr. Ray P. Authement Excellence in Teaching Award. The awards, which include stipends, are given each spring at a banquet held to honor the recipients.

Julie Bolton Falgout, executive director of the UL Lafayette Foundation, described these exemplary educators as university ambassadors. "They represent the values of the university, expressed in its finest work: helping to transform the lives of our students, collaborating with their colleagues and improving our community and our world."

Honorees are nominated and chosen by their peers. The Distinguished Professor Award has been given since 1965. The Excellence in Teaching Award was established in 1992. It was renamed in 2008 to honor former UL Lafayette President Dr. Ray P. Authement.

Falgout said this year’s award recipients have a lot in common. “They share a passion for teaching, a willingness to experiment with new ideas, techniques and tools — and dedication to their students’ success.”

Professor Seeks ‘Inclusive Solutions’

Michael McClure

Architect Michael McClure is more interested in how a structure works than what it looks like.

His pragmatic design sense has earned him international acclaim. In 2008, he received the prestigious Gorham P. Stevens Rome Prize for Architecture. Past recipients include John Russell Pope, who designed the Jefferson Memorial.

The Rome Prize, created in 1894, enables 30 American scholars and artists from a variety of disciplines to live and work in Rome each year. McClure’s wife and business partner, Ursula Emery McClure, shared the honor with him. She is an associate professor of architecture at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. Together, they are partners in the firm EmeryMcClure architecture.

Michael McClure earned the 2011 Distinguished Professor Award presented by the UL Lafayette Foundation.

Gordon Brooks, dean of UL Lafayette’s College of the Arts and an architect himself, said McClure has integrated highly theoretical research and scholarship into his professional practice in Louisiana. “In a world that has only recently awakened to the value of the wetlands, he provides highly creative solutions to the coexistence of the built environment..."
and the preservation of coastal conditions that protect us from the horrific losses of hurricanes and other natural disasters,” Brooks said.

In 2006, McClure completed a design project called “NOkat: no category, no catastrophe.” It featured designs for high-density housing in New Orleans’ 9th Ward to replace homes destroyed by post-Katrina flooding in 2005. The city is vulnerable to flooding from hurricane storm surge and the Mississippi River. Instead of relying entirely on levees for protection, McClure’s design allows water to rise in low-lying areas.

“For a long time, we’ve been trying to create fail-safe buildings and infrastructure in vulnerable areas, and it hasn’t served us well. Instead of trying to find something that’s fail-safe, it might be better to design things that are safe to fail,” McClure said.

“Design is about finding solutions to problems,” he continued. “I’m looking for inclusive solutions. Instead of looking at a situation and saying, ‘either/or,’ I’m looking for solutions that say ‘both/and.’ ”

One of the courses McClure teaches is Advanced Architectural Design. His students call it “the plant class.”

“I ask them to choose a plant that’s native to the coastal environment. It may be an oak tree or marsh grass. I want them to gain an intimate understanding of how that plant survives in the environment. What strategies has it adopted to be successful? What kind of root system does it have?” McClure explained.

“As students begin to experience the coastal environment, they can apply the design principles they find in nature. If we’re going to build structures in a coastal environment, we really have to understand the dynamics of that environment. That includes its geography and geology, its history and the culture of its people. We’re part of a bigger system.”

McClure joined the UL Lafayette faculty in 2001 after teaching at the Pratt Institute, Tulane University and LSU.

**RESEARCHER THRIVES ON CREATIVE SPIRIT**

**Dr. Hongyi Wu**

Dr. Hongyi Wu considers himself as much an inventor as he is a researcher. “Computer science is different from other science fields like physics, chemistry or even biology. In those fields, we try to understand what’s going on in the world, to understand the theory behind something we observe. But in computing, there’s a spirit of creativity. A computer scientist seeks to invent something — a computer, a program, an application.

“I want to make something new, something that has real-life applications,” the associate professor in UL Lafayette’s Center for Advanced Computer Studies said in a recent interview. He earned the 2011 Distinguished Professor Award presented by the UL Lafayette Foundation.

Wu is known nationally and internationally in the field of wireless technology. In 2004, he became the first UL Lafayette faculty member to receive the National Science Foundation’s Faculty Early Career Development Award. The award is the most competitive and prestigious given by the NSF to young faculty members in the fields of science and engineering.

Wu arrived at UL Lafayette in 2002. In 2008, he was named the Alfred and Helen M. Lamson Endowed Professor in Computer Science.

Dr. Magdy Bayoumi, director of CACS and head of UL Lafayette’s Computer Science Department, said Wu's research is distinguished by “its novelty, its rigorous mathematical foundation and its applicability to real-life problems.”

Wu is applying creative solutions in areas as diverse as offshore drilling and wildlife management.

He is part of an interdisciplinary effort to develop wireless communication networks for offshore oil platforms. He is working on wireless sensors that collect, analyze and transmit data about drilling operations.

The NSF is funding Wu's research in radio frequency identification technology. RFID readers and tags are beginning to replace barcode technology in retail stores, Wu explained.

An RFID tag resembles a paper label. It has an antenna and a computer chip, which gives it a unique identity. An RFID reader transmits a radio signal that energizes the chip. Then the chip sends information through the tag's antenna to the reader.

Because the systems don't require a line of sight, they can track items more efficiently that barcode systems, which require individual items to be manually scanned.

Wu hopes to use the lightweight tags to replace battery-powered tracking devices used by biologists. The devices don’t work well on small animals because they...
are too heavy. RFID tags are less likely to interfere with an animal’s movements, Wu said.

He involves undergraduate and graduate students in his research to give them real-life experience. “They become more capable of doing research. They are prepared to be involved in research projects as they move forward academically and professionally.” He teaches graduate courses in mobile computing and applications, and computer networks. He holds a weekly meeting with graduate students. “We study problems. We discuss ideas and solutions in our meetings. We do experiments, collect results and write papers and proposals together. We are a team,” he said.

PROFESSOR STRESSES ARTISTIC DISCIPLINE

Allan Jones

Each semester, Allan Jones emphasizes the “degree of discipline” art requires.

He tells his freshman students, “We’re artists. Class starts at 8 o’clock. So, if you continue to miss class, you should expect a phone call.

“They don’t believe me,” he added with a smile.

Jones’ message isn’t a threat. It’s a promise. If a student is frequently absent, he delivers a firm but friendly wake-up call.

“I may do that a time or two. Some students won’t tolerate it but others seem to appreciate the fact that somebody cares enough to make a phone call.”

The professor of visual arts has made plenty of those caring calls during his career. He has taught for 46 years, 29 of them at UL Lafayette.

Jones joined the UL Lafayette faculty as an assistant professor in 1986. After five years, he took a job at Antioch College in central Ohio to pursue professional development as an artist and teacher. He remained there for 16 years before returning to UL Lafayette.

A native of Fort Worth, Texas, Jones said the warmth of the Acadiana community drew him back to the university.

“There’s an openness here that you don’t find at many other places,” he said.

Jones received the 2011 Dr. Ray P. Authement Excellence in Teaching Award presented by the UL Lafayette Foundation.

Chyrl Savoy, head of UL Lafayette’s Department of Visual Arts, said Jones provides “support and guidance to students in their pursuit of higher degrees. Our students have consistently been accepted into quality graduate programs. They have gone on to build successful professional careers.”

Gordon Brooks, dean of UL Lafayette’s College of the Arts, noted that Jones “has infused the Department of Visual Arts with many of its best values.”

Jones was head of that department from 1986 to 1989. He initiated a policy requiring all faculty members to serve as academic advisors; that policy is still in place.

Jones said demands on student’s time require careful scheduling. “Students are working multiple jobs, often putting in hours that are equivalent to a full-time job. As an advisor, you’ve got to be aware of what you’re asking of the student and of the faculty,” he said.

The result has been a more cohesive system of planning classes to avoid scheduling conflicts. “The students are better served and faculty communicate more,” he said.

Throughout decades of teaching, Jones has developed a reputation as an accomplished painter and printmaker. His work has been shown at the New Museum in New York, the San Diego Art Institute and the Ogden Museum of Southern Art in New Orleans,

His masterwork is Indulgences: A Book of Common Images. The fine art
book is made up of 23 leaves of mounted plates. Each leaf is an original print, created with a printing process called chine-collé, in which images are transferred to delicate paper, such as rice paper. A copy is held in the rare book collection of Edith Garland Dupré Library.

For Jones, teaching is as important a pursuit as ever. “Artists belong in the university. These days, few students can afford to attend a private school. So, the public university is the place where artists will be trained and, hopefully, nurtured,” he said.

TEACHER PREPARES STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS

Toni Cade

Toni Cade, an associate professor of health information management, describes the profession as “ever-changing.” She should know. She has been involved in the field as a teacher and professional for more than 30 years.

“When I first started teaching in the late ’80s, we were teaching concepts about a paper-based medical record. That has evolved into something much bigger and more important,” Cade said. “Now that we rely on electronic records, students have to learn more.”

For example, they must learn about voice-recognition technology to transcribe medical reports, optical disc imaging to store records and bar-coding technology to locate records.

Cade received the 2011 Dr. Ray P. Authement Excellence in Teaching Award presented by the UL Lafayette Foundation.

Carol Venable, a professor and head of the Health Information Management Department, said Cade has a gift for teaching complex and challenging topics. “She has the ability to take an ordinary course filled with difficult material and make it fun for the students to learn it.

“Her experience in the working world is also an asset in the classroom. She is always updating her professional skills and incorporating them in her classes.”

Cade teaches an array of courses: medical terminology; hospital statistics; health care reimbursement, which includes Medicare and Medicaid policies; quality improvement of patient care and hospital processes; risk management; and case management.

HIM graduates must pass a national certification exam to become registered health information administrators. Cade is co-author of a series of books written to help graduates prepare for the exam.

Over the years, her students have performed well on the national test. As a result, UL Lafayette’s program has achieved a high pass rate. “The book has not only helped our students but students across the United States, to earn that credential. I’m really proud of that,” she said.

“One of the strengths of our program is that students don’t spend all their time in a classroom,” she added. Students complete two semesters of clinical rotations in local hospitals, learning about the clerical aspects of the profession.

The capstone course is a senior internship. Students spend a month learning management practices at a hospital or other health-care facility. Cade coordinates the internships, which take place throughout the United States. “They tell me where they would like to go and I work out a contract, if possible, with the hospital of their choice.”

In 2004, Cade was named a Fellow by the American Health Information Management Association. It’s the highest professional honor bestowed by the organization. She is one of about 100 Fellows across the United States and one of only six in Louisiana.

Cade said she enjoys the freedom that comes with teaching.

“Teaching gives you the freedom to pursue your passion, to specialize in an area of expertise. The freedom to publish, to do consulting … the freedom to work as hard as you would like.”

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