
Faculty & Staff Awards

09/03/2021

2021 Faculty Honors



Ascendant Scholar | Dr. Julena Bonner

Julena Bonner, an assistant professor in Marketing & Strategy, was recognized as an Ascendant Scholar by the Western Academy of Management. The award recognizes outstanding research, teaching, and professional service. Dr. Bonner, the 2020 Huntsman School Researcher of the Year, received her PhD from Oklahoma State University. Her research in behavioral ethics, ethical leadership, moral emotions, and workplace deviance has been published in the leading academic journals in the fields of management, organizational behavior, and applied psychology. She has also consistently received high marks in the classroom, with students highly ranking the rigor and incredible content of her classes. Jim Davis, the department head of the Marketing & Strategy Department, noted that “in all my years of academia, I have not come across such a strong research scholar, especially at this early phase of her career.”



Faculty Research Fellow | Dr. Katarzyna Bilicka

Economics assistant professor Katarzyna Bilicka has been appointed a Faculty Research Fellow of the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER). “This is a singular honor in the economics profession,” said Huntsman School Dean Douglas D. Anderson, “but for a young scholar like Kat, it is simply extraordinary.” The NBER, a private nonprofit organization based in Cambridge, MA, counts thirty-two current and former affiliates as Nobel laureates in Economic Sciences, with 13 having chaired the President’s Council of Economic Advisers. Dr. Bilicka’s research focuses on public economics, public finance and applied microeconomics, with a focus on corporate tax avoidance of multinational firms. Prior to joining the Huntsman School faculty in 2018, she obtained a PhD (DPhil) in June 2017 from the University of Oxford and Nuffield College.



2020 Woman of the Year | Dr. Susan Madsen

Susan Madsen, the Karen Haight Huntsman Endowed Professor of Leadership in the Huntsman School, and the Founding Director of the Utah Women & Leadership Project, was named a 2020 Woman of the Year by Utah Business Magazine. Dr. Madsen’s research and outreach focuses on strengthening the impact of Utah girls and women through increasing college completion rates and helping girls and women find their voices and become leaders. She has become the leading voice in the State of Utah for women in business and higher education and has been heavily involved for decades in researching the lifetime development of prominent women leaders, personally interviewing a host of female university presidents, U.S. governors, and international leaders. Dr. Madsen has authored or edited six books, published hundreds of articles, chapters, and reports, and is a sought-after speaker in local, national, and international settings. Dr. Madsen received her doctorate from the University of Minnesota in work, community, and family education with a specialization in human resource development.

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Faculty Researcher of the Year
Todd Griffith, Assistant Professor, Economics & Finance

Todd is an incredibly productive researcher. Not only has he published a large number of his academic studies, but he has also managed to publish his work in some of the most elite finance journals.

— Ben Blau, Department Head, Economics & Finance



Cazier Professor Lifetime Achievement
Randy Simmons, Professor, Economics & Finance

Randy has taught and mentored thousands of students at USU during his prestigious career. His legacy has left an incredible mark in the lives of his students and the university as a whole.

— Ben Blau, Department Head, Economics & Finance



Undergraduate Research Mentor of the Year
Alex Romney, Assistant Professor, Marketing & Strategy

Alex has found his passion in mentoring, coaching and advising undergraduate student research. His work this year with undergraduate students is noteworthy as it has established a formal structure that makes it possible for any interested undergraduate student to engage in meaningful research.

— James Davis, Department Head, Marketing & Strategy



Undergraduate Faculty Mentor of the Year
Lianne Wappett, Lecturer, Data Analytics & Information Systems

Lianne's commitment to mentoring students outside of the classroom is astonishing. She has volunteered to serve as an advisor for the Huntsman Scholar program and the Huntsman School's Women in Business Association. Lianne also serves as a USU Connections instructor to mentor incoming freshman.

— Chris Corcoran, Department Head, Data Analytics & Information Systems



Outstanding Graduate Mentor of the Year
Yong Seog Kim, Professor, Data Analytics & Information Systems Department

Yong is easily the most active faculty graduate mentor in the DAIS department. He continually includes graduate students in his research projects, and frequently has student coauthors involved in his conference presentations and published papers. Yong has an incredible talent for helping students make independent contributions that significantly enhance their professional profiles and employment opportunities.

— Chris Corcoran, Department Head, Data Analytics & Information Systems



Faculty University Service Award
Zsolt Ugray, Professor, Data Analytics & Information Systems Department

I have been deeply impressed by Zsolt's continual willingness to pitch in wherever needed within the department and across campus. He has an astonishingly extensive record of service. Just over the past few years, he has served as a USU Faculty Senator and as a member of at least 6 committees within the college and across campus.

— Chris Corcoran, Department Head, Data Analytics & Information Systems



Employee of the Year
Shara Gibbons, Webmaster and Marketing Automation Specialist

Shara's thoughtfulness, attention to detail, and incredible organization skills have made her a trusted resource across the Huntsman School. In the past year, she and her team undertook a comprehensive redesign of the website that involved multiple collaborators. The end result of many months of work is a robust and up-to-date web presence, with clear and informative content displayed in a clean and consistent design.

— Dave Patel, Associate Dean



USU New Advisor of the Year
Dawnetta Mahnken, Undergraduate Advisor

Dawnetta's early career accomplishments represent the best of academic advising. She has centered the needs of students in her advising practice, implemented tools and technologies to improve persistence and completion, and contributed to the development of her colleagues in advising.

— Ruth Loveland, Director, FJM Center for Student Success