IRSC Foundation Awards Four Endowed Teaching Chairs

April 10, 2019 Suzanne Seldes

Four exceptional Indian River State College (IRSC) professors were surprised with Endowed Teaching Chairs from the Indian River State College Foundation in recognition of their outstanding work at IRSC and to support new initiatives benefiting students and the community.
The recipients are Ms. Kendra Auberry, Assistant Professor/Librarian, Pruitt Campus with the John and Marilyn McConnell Endowed Teaching Chair (any discipline); Dr. Heather Michaels, Master Instructor, Physical Science with the Gladys Williams Wolf Endowed Teaching Chair in Communication; Dr. Bodi Anderson, Associate Professor, Education with the J. Douglas Stephens Endowed Teaching Chair (any discipline); and Dr. John Southall, Professor and Director of Bands and Coordinator of Music Education and Therapy with the Community Endowed Teaching Chair in Fine Arts.

“High quality instruction is fundamental to IRSC’s mission, and we believe it is very important to recognize these outstanding faculty members and reward them with the resources to implement projects that will benefit our students and the community,” shares Dr. Edwin R. Massey, IRSC President. “Their contributions are an essential factor in our recognition as the Top College in the nation with the 2019 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence.”

Dr. Massey and more than 30 IRSC administrators, faculty, and students surprised the recipients with balloons, flowers, and a miniature wooden “chair” for the surprise presentation. The recipients will be rewarded with an annual stipend of $6,000 a year for three consecutive years; $4,000 to implement their initiatives and improve instruction in their field of expertise and $2,000 in recognition of excellence in teaching. The Endowed Teaching Chair program is made possible by contributions to the IRSC Foundation.

Ms. Kendra Auberry will develop the Algorithm Literacy Initiative as an opportunity to teach students, faculty and the community basic algorithm literacy concepts and encourage them to consider the impact of algorithms.

Ms. Auberry, an Assistant Professor and Librarian, joined IRSC in 2013. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Landscape Horticulture and Design from Purdue University, a Masters in Library Science from Indiana University, and is currently working on her Doctorate in Texts and Technology from the University of Central Florida.

Dr. Heather Michaels will create focused student panel discussions comprised of a diverse group of students as well as faculty from various disciplines. The goal is that, through the discussions, we will gain insight from the student perspective on how IRSC faculty can be more effective educators.

Dr. Michaels, a Master Instructor, joined IRSC in 2013. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry and a Bachelor of Science in Forensic Science from the University of New Haven, a Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry from the Florida State University, and was a Post-Doctoral Research Fellow at Torrey Pines Institute for Molecular Studies.

Dr. Bodi Anderson will create a Laboratory for Educational Technology (LET) which will provide IRSC’s pre-service School of Education majors access to trending technologies for educational enhancement. LET aims to provide teacher education students with the real-life tools and experience needed to prepare for the future of technology integration in K-12 classrooms.

Dr. Anderson, an Assistant Professor, joined IRSC in 2012. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in East Asian Studies from the University of Arizona, a Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics and a Doctor of Education in Curriculum and Instruction from Northern Arizona University.
Dr. John Southall will create the Meaningful Collaboration for Lifelong Participation in Music Program. The program will pair community musicians with IRSC instrumental music students in order to create a sustainable environment in which all participants can engage in meaningful music-making activities and develop mentor/mentee relationships.

Dr. Southall, Professor/Director of Bands and Coordinator of Music Education and Therapy, joined IRSC in 2004. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Music Education from Florida A&M University, and a Master of Music Education and Doctor of Philosophy in Music Education from Florida State University.

To date, the IRSC Foundation has awarded 59 honored faculty members with Endowed Teaching Chairs. Other Endowed Teaching Chair awards include the Susan H. Johnson Endowed Teaching Chair (any discipline), Marilyn C. Link Endowed Teaching Chair in Financial Management, Basil L. King Endowed Teaching Chair in Health Science, Patterson Endowed Teaching Chair in Humanities, Richardson Endowed Teaching Chair in Business and Entrepreneurship, BankAtlantic Foundation Endowed Teaching Chair (any discipline), J. Douglas Stephens Endowed Teaching Chair in Technology, Banack Family Partnership Endowed Teaching Chair in Agriculture, and the Endowed Chair in Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

For more information about supporting an Endowed Teaching Chair with a tax-deductible contribution, please call the IRSC Foundation at 772-462-4786.