

# 2016 Teaching Excellence Award Winners

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This year, the Society for the Teaching of Psychology (STP; Division 2) celebrated the 37th year of its annual Teaching Awards Program at the STP's Annual Conference on Teaching (ACT) in Atlanta, GA. Each 2016 winner was selected by a different three-member panel<sup>1</sup> of past winners in that category and received a plaque and a check for US\$1,500. This year, the STP recognized outstanding teaching in five categories (a) Wayne Weiten Teaching Excellence Award (2-year college), (b) Mary Margaret Moffett Memorial Teaching Excellence Award (high school), (c) Wilbert J. McKeachie Teaching Excellence Award (graduate student), (d) Jane S. Halonen Teaching Excellence Award (first 7 years of full-time teaching at any level), and (e) Robert S. Daniel Teaching Excellence Award (4-year institutions). There was no award this year in the Adjunct Faculty Teaching Excellence Award category.

The achievements of the award winners serve as a window into the nature of expertise in teaching, a quality which is easier to identify but harder to define. The best scholarship about expert teachers highlights several features including having rich content-specific and pedagogical knowledge, engaging in reflective and insightful practices, and solving problems effectively (Berliner, 2004; Schoenfeld, 2011; Shulman, 1987; Sternberg & Horvath, 1995). Many of these features are related to the criteria for the teaching excellence awards. To a person, the award winners innovate their pedagogy based on their personal connections with the students to ensure that learning outcomes are met. Their reflective and insightful practices play out not just by innovation in the classroom but also in their scholarship of and service work related to teaching and learning.

However, scholars also note that the features of expertise are best thought of as prototypes or central tendencies and not as necessary and sufficient conditions (Sternberg & Horvath, 1995). The consequence is that two expert teachers may not demonstrate the same behaviors in the classroom but still demonstrate strong connections to the prototypes. This reflects the importance of expert teachers adapting their knowledge, practices, and skills to their unique institutional environments, background of their students, and their professional roles, among other social and contextual factors.

There is something of a journey that expert teachers must undertake in working through the rich complexity of

instructional options to find ones that overcome the challenges in their particular social context. This complexity issue and the challenges it creates for the science of learning was emphasized in a recent paper in *Science* by Koedinger, Booth, and Klahr (2013). They calculate that variations in how and when empirically based instructional strategies can be delivered creates a solution space of trillions of options. In the biographies that follow, I highlight how these award winning instructors focus their talent and energies on the complexity and related teaching issues in the social context of their institutions. The goal is to highlight the range of ways of being and becoming an expert teacher in the discipline.

## Mary Margaret Moffett Memorial Teaching Excellence Award

The 2016 winner of the Mary Margaret Moffett Memorial Teaching Excellence Award for outstanding high school teaching is Terri Lindenberg. She has taught psychology and advanced placement (AP) psychology classes at Lake Park High School in Illinois for over 20 years. She graduated with honors from the University of Michigan with a B.A. degree (distinction in psychology) and a secondary teaching certificate to teach psychology, sociology, the U.S./world history, political science, and journalism. She continued her education at Roosevelt University, where she earned a master of arts (MA) degree in teaching and educational leadership. She is a member of the Psi Chi Honors Society, selected as a Teaching of Psychology in Secondary Schools (TOPPS) essay contest reader, served as a keynote speaker at a Lake Park High School Honor Roll Assembly, serves as a table leader and exam leader at the Educational Testing Service AP Psychology Exam Readings, and has been awarded the American Psychological Association APA TOPSS Charles T. Blair-Broeker Excellence in Teaching Award.

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Described by colleagues and supervisors alike as a master teacher and having a contagious passion for teaching psychology, Ms. Lindenberg channels her abundant energy into student success. Carole Dean, a 1997 Moffitt Award winner and Ms. Lindenberg's mentor at Lake Park, noted that her AP pass rate is extraordinarily high. The Lake Park High principal, James Roberts, estimates that 80–90% of her students received a score of 4 or 5 on the AP tests. What makes her so successful as a teacher of high school students can be traced back to qualities of expertise previously discussed.

Ms. Lindenberg's philosophy of teaching echoes the discussion of complexity of teaching in recognizing that there is an "unending list of characteristics of an excellent teacher." But she focuses on key features which work for her students. Her goal is "to teach the students the scientific nature of psychology and hopefully show them how psychology is ubiquitous." A focus on foundational issues of the science of the discipline and its application is notable, given the stereotypes held about the discipline and challenges in overcoming them (Amsel, Ashley, Baird, & Johnston, 2014; Brinhaupt, Hurst, & Johnson, 2016; Pettijohn et al., 2015). It also represents an important pedagogical and curricular movement away from the personal and more toward the scientific within the teaching of high school psychology (Keith, Hammer, Blair-Broeker, & Ernst, 2013).

Tailoring her instruction to the students' age and high school context, Ms. Lindenberg focuses on "developing lessons that truly interest and engage students and to find different ways to help students achieve and succeed." She addresses the foundational issues in the discipline by being as creative and insightful

as she can to engage students in psychological science. One example of this engagement is a psychology fair that Terri Lindenberg had worked on with Carol Dean. Relying on the old adage that teaching is the best form of learning, Ms. Lindenberg had teams of psychology students prepare activities and reports to present the discipline as a science. Over the years, the fair caught the attention of local media, whose articles about the event not only further the impact of the message but also additionally recruited students to the class. For the students themselves, presenting the science of psychology to peers is a powerful antidote to the skepticism they may have harbored about the discipline's scientific basis and range of application.

As state mandated testing took over the time, space, and concentration of the students, teachers, and administrators, the end-of-year fairs gave way to "awareness weeks" of the Psychology Club that Ms. Lindenberg advises. The club brings the science of topics such as brain processes and mental health to other students. Whether by fair or club, having students engage in the science of psychology helps when drilling down to the critical details of that science so that they not only learn the facts but also appreciate the excitement and challenges of the discipline.

Ms. Lindenberg readily acknowledges that it is a challenge to truly interest and engage her students, a sentiment I am sure is repeated often across the country among the teachers of over 1 million students enrolled in high school psychology classes (APA, 2013). But true to her commitment to excellence and characteristic of her expertise, she strives to improve her instruction through reflective practices. One way she engages in reflective practice is by actively seeking out feedback from colleagues, students, and parents. As one parent whose five children all went through Terri Lindenberg's class wrote in support of the application:

Ms. Lindenberg helps her students develop and use their critical thinking skills. She also encourages the growth of study skills that prepare students for the rigors of collegiate class by creating a college-like experience in her classroom. She motivates her students by keeping the subject of psychology relevant, interesting, and challenging. Her teaching is second to none. Her love for teaching psychology is evident in her mannerisms and conversations with students and parents alike. She has high expectations for all her students and makes clear that she believes every student can be successful.

The parent's comments suggest a remarkable ability of Ms. Lindenberg in communicating to all constituencies her carefully defined teaching goals and strategies for the course.

A second way she engages in reflective practice is by actively immersing herself in a community of professionals who are similarly committed to teaching excellence. She was a participant in the National Science Foundation-sponsored 4-week institute on teaching the science of psychology. Another community of excellence in which she participated involved those who serve as AP test readers. She was recently invited to serve on the AP Psychology Test Development committee and the AP Psychology articulation project. Finally, Ms. Lindenberg was a cofounder of the *Chicagoland Teachers*

of *Psychology in Secondary Schools* conference (funded by an American Psychological Foundation grant) and hosted the meeting on four occasions.

Terri Lindenberg's teaching rises to a level of expertise by both its effectiveness and focus honed over years of critical reflection on her practices and insight and creativity in and attunement to the needs of her students. In recognition of her effectiveness as a teacher, leadership in the field, and dedication to students of psychology, the STP is pleased to award Terri Lindenberg the 2016 Mary Margaret Moffett Memorial Teaching Excellence Award for high school teachers of psychology.

### Wayne Weiten Teaching Excellence Award

The 2016 Wayne Weiten Teaching Excellence Award for faculty teaching at the 2-year college level goes to Dr. Katherine Wickes. Dr. Wickes is a professor of psychology and serves as department head in the division of social sciences at Blinn College at the Bryan Texas campus. Bryan is stone's throw from College Station, home of Texas A&M University, where Dr. Wickes earned her M.A. and Ph.D. after completing a bachelor's degree from George Mason University. Her thesis work was on adolescents' and college students' conceptions of creativity which, as she describes it, gave her a firm appreciation of the challenges found in creating "authentic" assessments. She served as the regional vice president (Southwest), president-elect, president, and now past president of Psi Beta, the national honor society in psychology for community and junior colleges.



Dr. Wickes is a 13-year veteran at Blinn College, where psychology is a 12-credit emphasis within the division of social sciences. She teaches introductory psychology and life span development in face-to-face, online, and blended formats. She described her teaching philosophy as having evolved from a focus on students' understanding of course content to a broader concern about their thinking *about* and *with* the discipline. Her

goals for students are largely metacognitive in nature—for them to learn to think like psychologists and apply that thinking to their own lives. As she notes, "my hope is that, by the end of my class, my students will not only be able to recall content for a grade but use it in their future experiences."

Dr. Wickes' journey is consistent with the idea of expert teachers exploring the complex solution space of instructional strategies until finding those which work for their students. She indicates that most of her current students are college freshmen and sophomores seeking prerequisite psychology courses for entry into the health professions. She notes the ways that her teaching practices have been shaped by these students from "traditional lecture" to "a combination of methods, such as group discussions, online assessments, and 'flipped' classroom activities." To achieve her metacognitive goals, she requires weekly written assignments for students to apply what they learned from the textbook to their own lives. Despite the reaction (described as grumbling), the assignments hone students' critical thinking skills to improve them not only as college-level learners but also as emerging medical professionals "who most likely will need to use what they know in a very real setting."

The written assignments have grading rubrics which include critical thinking that specifically addresses the depth and quality of analysis of theory–evidence relations. The rubrics are readily available to students so they can focus on the requirement as they prepare the assignment and better understand the feedback they receive once the assignment is graded. These rubrics are meant to be internalized as well to "serve the purpose of teaching students how to self-assess what they know about the material in all of their classes." The rubrics for critical thinking were developed not just for her own classes but also for psychology classes taught by other instructors in various class formats. This was accomplished when Dr. Wickes served as chair of her institution's division assessment committee. As assessment committee chair, she gathered the assessment data, analyzed it by class format, and shared the results with colleagues in the institution and at the 2012 APA conference.

Dr. Wickes extends her work with students beyond the classroom by serving as advisor to both the Psychology Club and Psi Beta chapter on campus. She describes just how important she considers this work to be and the impact it has on students in remarks she prepared as national president of the Psi Beta for the Fall 2014 Newsletter (Wickes, 2014):

As I contemplate what makes Psi Beta so special, it is this sense of collaboration that exists between advisors and students. Our mission asks advisors to help their students foster a knowledge of research, provide service to their community, and a greater understanding of the psychological field. This is no small task and often we find ourselves, as advisors, looking for advice and assistance. It is my goal this year to foster that sense of collaboration between advisors and between Psi Beta and other organizations within this field.

True to her commitment, Dr. Wickes collaborates with her community college students on research, most recently supervising

two projects with students presented at this past year's Southwestern Psychological Association. I particularly note the word *collaborate* in her comments as it goes beyond and transforms the student–faculty relationship into an expert–novice one in which each is as invested as the other in an authentic process leading to a meaningful outcome (Collins, 2006). She also works with students in both Psi Beta and the Psychology Club on activities in the community by raising money for community organizations and donating their time to these community agencies. The committee reviewing Dr. Wickes was particularly impressed with this aspect of her work with students:

The committee was particularly impressed with the service work she does with the students through Psi Beta and the Psychology Club. Two-year institutions are the start of the educational pipeline for psychology students, so these projects that engage students to become interested in the field go a long way to making our discipline strong.

In working with these groups in the manner that she does, Dr. Wickes not only provides a key support for students' psychology-related engagement (the pipeline discussed by the committee) but also reinforces the general educational outcomes supporting their growth as stronger learners and more well-rounded persons. This way of engaging students and promoting their achievement in ways the students may not expect of themselves reflects the very best characteristic of expert teachers

Like other expert teachers, Dr. Wickes is committed to reflective practices. She engages with others in assessing “what works” each semester. The experience has deepened her understanding of teaching as a complex science and an art. Her reflective practices also include elevating her position as department assessment guru into substantial scholarship on teaching and learning that she has presented nationally. Finally, her reflective practices have motivated her to connect with other faculty who share the goal of teaching excellence in the professional organization Psi Beta, where she held national office.

Dr. Wickes' excellence in community college teaching reflects someone who has tailored her teaching strategies to the needs of her community college students and in so doing embodies the best of expert teaching—being flexible and adaptive in the service of being effective. The STP is pleased to present Dr. Katherine Wickes with the Wayne Weiten Teaching Excellence Award for instructors at 2-year institutions.

### Robert S. Daniel Teaching Excellence Award

The 2015 winner of the Robert S. Daniel Teaching Excellence Award for outstanding teaching in a 4-year institution from is Dr. Erin Hardin. She is an associate professor of psychology at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, TN. Dr. Hardin earned her bachelor's degree with honors in interdisciplinary studies with a concentration in Chinese studies from Grinnell College. She completed an M.A. and a Ph.D. in counseling psychology from The Ohio State University and interned at the Counseling Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She began her career as an assistant professor at Texas Tech

University in 2002 and was promoted to associate professor at Texas Tech in 2008. She moved to the University of Tennessee in 2013, where she serves as an associate department head and the director of undergraduate studies.



In her almost 15 years of teaching, Dr. Hardin has amassed an impressive array of 13 teaching awards from the various institutions where she has worked. For example, she earned the *Senior Faculty Outstanding Teaching Award* from the University of Tennessee, the *President's Excellence in Teaching Award* from Texas Tech University, and the *Graduate Associate Teaching Award* from the Graduate School at The Ohio State University to name a few. Adding to her credentials as an excellent teacher are her glowing course and peer evaluations. To get a glimpse of this, consider the summary comments of her most recent peer review:

We agreed that Erin generally offers a role model for college teaching, and at least one of us thought the session we observed was suitable for videotaping for use in training college teachers. Overall our evaluation of Erin Hardin's teaching: outstanding and far exceeds expectations.

Again her excellence can be traced to the characteristics of expertise we have been noting. Like others, her teaching philosophy makes clear that her goals are not to instruct but to transform students. As she writes:

I tell my introductory psychology students that my modest goal is to change the way they see the world. I strive to help students apply the science of psychology to ask more thoughtful questions in their daily lives and to rely less on intuition and more on critical thinking.

Again, the focus of Dr. Hardin is like those of other award winners to get students to think *about* and *with* the discipline, that is, to learn how psychologists think and apply that thinking to their own lives. As she notes:

My goal is to teach students to identify the questions about important social issues and the questions in their daily lives that can be answered with science and then to convince them that such questions should be answered with science.

To realize these goals, Dr. Hardin uses a variety of tactics, beginning by creating a classroom environment that is warm and friendly in order to support student dialog, engagement, and excitement about learning. She notes the time she invests in explaining to students the meaning and value of the material that they are learning as they are learning it. This process of talking to students about what and why they are learning is time well spent as it orients them to the deeper and more significant meaning of the content.

Additionally, she uses various technologies including clickers and online discussion boards and innovative assignments that are carefully designed to effectively support her teaching goals. For example, one innovative assignment is for upper division students enrolled in a service learning course and involves writing a short op-ed piece in which they bring scientific findings to social problems that they are exposed to in their placement. The assignment not only promotes students learning to apply science to social problems but also practicing to engage in public advocacy for the use of science for social policy. The second innovative assignment involves essays that are embedded in the final exam which are designed to promote integrative and applied learning. One question requires the integration and application of course content to students' vocational interests, which they explore throughout the course. The second question is similarly an exercise in integration and application of course content selected from a larger set of questions which students can prepare before the exam. The integration and applied learning tapped by these questions are student learning outcomes that are aligned not only to APA Guidelines 2.0 for psychology students but also to American Association of Colleges & Universities (2011) Essential Learning Outcomes for General Education. These questions reflect Dr. Hardin's general orientation that students should acquire both specific content and enduring learning skills in her classes (Jhangiani & Hardin, 2015).

Dr. Hardin also serves as a research advisor to undergraduate and graduate students. At Texas Tech, she typically involved three to eight undergraduate research assistants per year in her lab who worked closely on team projects with graduate students. She has regularly presented and published with graduate and undergraduate students and notably mentored them professionally. She also participated in a mentoring program for underrepresented undergraduates who had weekly contact with a faculty member. She served as both a mentor and trainer who ensured program fidelity. Her move to the University of Tennessee and additional administrative responsibilities has minimized her work with undergraduate students. But her supervising and mentoring of students in authentic collaborations continues in a variety of ways, including the service learning course and a graduate College Teaching seminar. Such collaborations seem to be in Dr.

Hardin's DNA, as suggested by one student who describes her as "exceptionally and unusually skilled at motivating, mentoring, and educating her students."

Her focus on the broader teaching goals in the classroom and collaborations outside the classroom is a product of a great deal of reflective work. As she notes, "I have been fortunate to have mentors who modeled that good teachers are never done learning how to be better teachers." Her reflective work is realized in a variety of ways including actively seeking feedback from students and colleagues, reading current literature on the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL), and attending workshops and conferences on teaching.

She notes that teaching others to teach is a particularly effective means to reflect on her own teaching. Teaching has been a passion of hers since she was a graduate student at The Ohio State University and continued as a faculty member at Texas Tech University and the University of Tennessee. She additionally has been involved in promoting the professional development of adjunct and tenure-track faculty using her background and skills in performing peer observations, creating repositories of teaching ideas, and serving as a teaching consultant.

Perhaps the most powerful means of reflection on her teaching is the work that Dr. Hardin does in the SoTL. Complementing her scholarly contribution to counseling psychology, her SoTL scholarship includes 5 published papers, 2 chapters, 11 presentations, and a grant. Her work has explored the effective use of technology, the creation of positive class climate, and the importance of broader skill development in a content-rich introductory psychology class to name a few. Her performance in the classroom and scholarship about the classroom converge on key characteristics of expert teaching. These characteristics can be conveniently summarized as developing strategies that realize broader and more enduring student learning outcomes that can transform not just educate students. The STP is proud to honor Dr. Erin Hardin with the 2016 Robert S. Daniel Teaching Excellence Award honoring instructors at 4-year institutions.

### **Wilbert J. McKeachie Teaching Excellence Award**

The 2016 winner of the Wilbert J. McKeachie Teaching Excellence Award for outstanding teaching as a graduate student is Leslie Bernsten from the University of Southern California. Ms. Bernsten received her B.S. in psychology from New York University and an M.A. in brain and cognitive science from the University of Southern California, where she expects to complete her Ph.D. in 2017. Her teaching skills have already been recognized as being exceptional. She has won the *Award for Excellence in Teaching* from the USC Center for Excellence in Teaching (CET). In addition, she has earned various fellowships for her teaching and is presently serving as the chair of the Teaching Assistant Fellows program in the USC CET.



Past winners of the McKeachie award have gone on to great teaching and research careers. For example, George M. Slavic, the 2005 McKeachie award winner (when it was first presented exclusively to graduate students) was recently awarded the 2016 *Outstanding Research Mentor Award* from the department of psychiatry and biobehavioral sciences, UCLA. Similarly, we noted last year (Fineburg & Amsel, 2015) that Lynne Kennette, the 2011 winner of the award, had won the 2015 Wayne Weiten Award. This speaks well to the talent identified by those winning this award having their first teaching experiences predict later excellence and expertise.

Leslie Berntsen already has many of the characteristics of an expert teacher. The epigraph which introduces her teaching statement picks up a main theme we have been discussing about expert teachers: “Good teachers explain material well. Great teachers explain why the material matters. The best teachers convince you that it does.” All award winners acknowledge that as teachers they have an agenda above and beyond the goal of transmitting knowledge. They have goals to impact students’ beliefs, attitudes, and skills as psychological scientists. In Ms. Berntsen’s case, she too wants students to see the world “through the lens of psychological science” and she does so in a range of ways using a variety of tactics. Like others, she focuses on helping student apply psychology personally and works hard to make the classroom safe for students to engage the material and share their own stories. Her goal in making the environment safe is not necessarily to make them comfortable but for students to challenge themselves, as the topics she addresses are often controversial. She highlights the science of the discipline by addressing how it can be used in the service of social justice. She makes this point explicit in her teaching philosophy when explaining, “as a scientist, I strive to

be the change I wish to see in the world. But as a teacher, I strive to inspire and empower others to realize they can do the same.”

One common characteristic of the award winners which has yet to be explicitly discussed is that they share themselves and their passion for the discipline with their students. That is, they are personal with their students but not simply to create a sense of classroom intimacy. The goal is to be not just an instructor but also a role model who embodies the disciplinary beliefs, attitudes, skills, and knowledge they want students to internalize. The classroom provides opportunities to share ways a “psychologist” conceives of and reacts to ideas in the textbook, situations in the classroom, or event in the news. Expert teachers do this in different ways, and Ms. Berntsen does so by providing students with a role model of a psychologist as an advocate for social justice. She makes clear what this means with an example.

When discussing the consequences of stereotypes, I am absolutely going to share some of the comments I’ve received as a budding scientist who “[doesn’t] look like one” and as a Latina who “[doesn’t] act like one” and asks any students who feel comfortable sharing their stories to do so as well.

Ms. Berntsen has been a TA as an undergraduate and graduate student. She developed and teaches a course titled *Psychological Science and Society*, which is a monthlong course delivered through USC to high school students admitted to USC summer programs. She brings students on field trips, has them do oral presentations, and invites them to share a geek minute (reporting on psychological science in the news) for extra credit. Like other expert teachers previously described, she requires students to reflect on what they are learning by writing, and there are a number of writing assignments embedded in the course. Three required chapter-application papers are promoted by thoughtful and engaging questions which direct students to reflect on the meaning and significance of each chapter to their own lives. A final research project is also required which involves her mentoring individuals or groups of students on a soup-to-nuts research project. She breaks down the assignment into manageable chunks and helps them work through hypotheses, data collection, data analysis, and oral presentations.

The feedback from students, supervisors, colleagues, and even a parent has been very positive about Ms. Berntsen and for the course. Students fashioned a “soap box” and gave it to Ms. Berntsen as a gift reflecting their appreciation of her style of standing on one as an instructor advocate. Perhaps not surprisingly, she was selected to teach an upper division neuroscience class titled *The Frontal Lobe: From Function to Philosophy*. It explores the significance of the frontal lobe for the human experience and employs many of the same features used in *Psychological Science and Society*.

Ms. Berntsen is deeply engaged in SoTL even as a graduate student who is developing a primary research focus. As chair of the TA Fellows program at the Center for Teaching

Excellence, she has worked with other TAs to improve their teaching. She has presented at panels and in discussions hosted by USC's CET as well as professional teaching societies and organizations. She has presented her work on SoTL at various teaching conferences associated with Association of Psychological Science, Society of Personality and Social Psychology, and the National Institute on the Teaching of Psychology. There seems little doubt that Ms. Berntsen's career trajectory will involve more teaching and further honing of her instructional practices. In recognition of her teaching excellence, the STP bestows the 2015 Wilbert J. McKeachie Teaching Excellence Award honoring graduate student teachers of psychology to Leslie Berntsen from the University of Southern California.

### Jane S. Halonen Teaching Excellence Award

The 2016 winner of the Jane S. Halonen Teaching Excellence Award for early-career teachers is Dr. Jordan Troisi of Sewanee: The University of the South. He has been at Sewanee since 2014 and was previously a visiting assistant professor of psychology at Widener University. A social psychologist by training, he completed his M.A. and Ph.D. at The State University of New York at Buffalo. He graduated summa cum laude with college honors from Albion College, where he was a dual psychology and English major.



Like the other winners, Dr. Troisi has been showered with awards. In addition to various leadership and research awards, he was the APA Early Career Achievement Award winner in 2014. Acknowledging his contribution to SoTL in psychology, he was appointed as a consulting editor of *Teaching of Psychology* and an associate editor of the STP's e-book on the Annual Conference on Teaching (Jhangiani, Troisi, Fleck, Legg, & Hussey, 2015). He is in demand as a speaker, giving the invited STP lecture at the Southeastern Psychological Association Meeting and the keynote at the Michigan Undergraduate Psychology Research Conference.

Comments and evaluations of students and supervisors paint a picture of Dr. Troisi as a remarkable classroom teacher in being able to convey the discipline while being attuned to students' needs and aspirations. At the core of his success as a teacher is a philosophy that identifies four primary objectives which have been themes seen for each award winner and characteristics of expert teachers. The themes and characteristics are (a) creating a rich learning environment, (b) having ulterior goals beyond just teaching content, (c) modeling how to be a psychologist, and (d) critically reflecting on practice. Expert teachers fashion classroom environments that promote learning. To Dr. Troisi, this means ensuring that the social roles and norms in the classroom are conducive for students engaging in a process of *constructing* rather than *receiving* knowledge. That is, students are not just active in the classroom (essential for memory), they are also agents in the authorship of knowledge by exploring what new ideas mean to them and how they apply to their lives (essential for understanding).

Similar to other award winners and expert teachers in general, Dr. Troisi has an agenda to transform students beyond just adding to what they know about psychology. He focuses on "fostering critical thinking and lifelong learning" by supporting students to continue the learning process described above. One student noted this transformational quality of Dr. Troisi's course as:

a quintessential college class because it was filled with such rich meaning. It not only benefited me as a student, but also benefited me as a person and member of society. One of the few classes that I can boldly say that changed my life.

As we have seen in other award winners, Dr. Troisi also enhances the presentation of the discipline to students by modeling being a psychologist. He expresses this as someone who shares his excitement with students about the discipline. Although the excitement may be contagious, it is the reasons for the excitement that reveal to students how a psychologist sees the world and thinks about it. Similar to other award winners and expert teachers, Dr. Troisi highlights the importance of critical reflection on his practices "to constantly improve his teaching and mentoring abilities." He actively seeks out feedback from students in a variety of ways, including 1-min papers at the end of a class to see if key class objectives were achieved.

He also uses student management teams (SMTs; Handelsman, 2012) that function as student-informants (in the anthropological sense) for instructors to continually discuss the strengths and weakness of the class with students. The impact of SMTs is also a topic of Dr. Troisi's (2014, 2015) research and he found that students who serve on SMTs increased their course engagement which in turn predicted improved class performance. More generally, students in courses with SMTs were also positively impacted having feelings of greater autonomy in the course compared to courses without SMTs.

For Dr. Troisi, teaching is both performance art that is practiced and improved and a topic of scholarly investigation that can be explored and understood. Both of these components were in clear evidence in his teaching philosophy, which included not only citations and quotes from scholars and researchers but also the comments from students. The use of scholarly analysis and student feedback were each significant to him and a source of evidence to improving his teaching. It is a sign of his expertise that Dr. Troisi's teaching practices and SoTL research is so synergistically connected.

Another quality of Dr. Troisi is that he easily shares time and expertise with students as their research supervisor and faculty mentor. His letters are replete with comments of his commitment to students outside the classroom. He has supervised and mentored a large number of students at each of the three institutions where he has worked. But it is the quality of the research that he produced with his students that is truly notable. His students' projects win awards at conferences and are published. It is not the work but its impact that makes Dr. Troisi not just excellent but expert.

He also shares his time and expertise with university colleagues by serving on committees related to teaching and learning. As a junior faculty member at Sewanee, he worked on remaking the university course evaluation form and redesigning the faculty retreat from a 2-day to a yearlong event. He served on a committee redesigning and reenvisioning the university's Center for Teaching and became a member of its first advisory board. He has led faculty book group discussions on teaching, giving him perspective on teaching practices outside of psychology. As one of his supervisors characterized it, "he seems to do it all and does it all amazingly well." But here again it is not the service work he provides that is notable, it is the impact that he makes.

Finally, he shares his time and expertise with members of the STP and the broader discipline by serving on STP committees (often in leadership positions). Letters from stalwarts of Division 2 leadership note that his extensive work in STP is having an impact. As one reviewer puts it, he:

truly cares about ways to improve teaching and learning and he is always a workhorse and dedicated member or leader who is highly productive, thoughtful, and committed. Jordan is truly a rising star in STP because of his hard work and intellectual contribution. It is my belief that Dr. Troisi has excelled in this endeavor beyond all expectations and will continue to do so.

In recognition of his professional accomplishments, commitment to innovative teaching practices, dedication to sharing those practices with others through peer review, and success in mentoring students into the profession, the STP presents the 2015 Jane S. Halonen Teaching Excellence Award for early-career teachers to Jordan Troisi of Sewanee: The University of the South.

## Discussion

This review of the individual award winners shows that their day-to-day work schedules, behaviors in the classrooms, and even their interactions with students reveal few underlying commonalities that make them excellent. But what they lack in similarity with each other they share in alignment with the prototype of the expert teacher broadly described by Sternberg and Horvath (1995, p. 14) as "a teacher who displays a wealth of highly organized content knowledge and a teacher who is adept at generating insightful solutions to classroom problems." Our award winners are not just excellent but expert because they align so well to the prototype. In fact, this review provides richer insight into the prototype of expertise in the discipline.

It seems expert teachers in psychology are committed to engaging and transforming students, although how they do both varies by the particularities in which they find themselves—the background of their students, their professional roles, the institution's mission and culture, and so on. They actively solicit feedback from their students, colleagues, and supervisors to find the most effective ways achieving their goals and relentlessly try to implement strategies. They also engage in critical reflection on their practices and do so in a professionally public way through publications, presentations, or discussions. It seems that the reflection process needs to be shared. Our experts sometimes create the scholarly arenas for sharing their own and others' insights and often provide service to ensure that these professionally public outlets function well.

Our high school, community college, and 4-year college winners are perhaps the most different from each other because of who and where they teach. Nonetheless they strongly share the prototype and maybe some scars from the journey in learning to become an expert. The talents and skills in becoming an expert can be seen in our graduate and early career winners who already show these prototypical characteristics and remain deeply dedicated to taking the journey. These stories tell us much about how the expert teachers among us are sharing our discipline with novices.

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