

Western Award of Excellence

The third annual Award of Excellence generated a huge increase in nominations for Western's highest recognition for staff members. These staff members, including one team, embody the best of qualities. Reporter Paul Mayne researched the nominations to create these profiles. This year we also include the list of nominees.



SANDY PAIVA AND NICOLINA FICCA

Hospitality Services – Tim Hortons

It just tastes better knowing Nicolina Ficca and Sandy Paiva are the ones serving up your Tim Hortons coffee with a double-double of conversation at Lucy's everyday.

Day in and day out, the pair bring good cheer to the myriad of customers who make their daily java jaunt to Somerville House.

"It is so uplifting just walking by their counter on other business, let alone stopping to be served by them," says Kinesiology professor Bob Vigers. "The merriment, courtesy, and friendly chatter that emanates from these two effervescent women makes the day for many of us."

While Ficca has worked the longest at Lucy's Tim Hortons outlet, Vigers says her subtle yet solid leadership skills never fail in recreating a positive down-home working atmosphere with each new partner. Smiles and good service have become the Tim's trademark.

He adds he's delighted to see Western paying tribute to front line people who are not in the same position to garner public recognition and accolades that are available to teachers or coaches.

"When I see people like Nicolina and Sandy giving their best every day in the job they do, it uplifts me and makes me feel thankful and appreciative of my role here at Western," says Vigers. "And they inspire me to remind myself to always give my best to my students and student-athletes under my charge."



BARRY PRICE

Department of Earth Sciences

Barry Price is best described as the guy behind the scenes. Beginning his career at Western in 1970 as a technical staff member in the Department of Geophysics, his duties involved support of undergraduate and graduate students, other staff and faculty in the general area of electronics.

For 37 years, Price has been the dependable, reliable, patient and cheerful "technical specialist" in the Department of Earth Sciences. He has seldom been in the limelight yet has been the backbone of teaching support in the department for many years.

His education-related roles include keeping the teaching microscopes in working order; solving emergencies related to audio/video equipment in classrooms; and maintaining graduate and undergraduate computer laboratories.

"Barry has a very quiet personality but he is a very dedicated conscientious, tireless worker. He never complains about anything and is willing to put in long hours when the need arises," says Professor Emeritus Bob Mereu. "It is people like Barry that keep the wheels of the department turning."

While Price's work might appear to involve inanimate things, such as computers, it is interaction with the people who work with these instruments that sets him apart.

"I can always call Barry with a problem knowing that he has the experience and know-how to resolve it, and that he will always accomplish this with a smile," says Earth Sciences professor Cam Tsujita.

Fellow professor Kristy Tiampo says two qualities stand out from her interactions with Price.

"The first is his patience and persistence - he treats every task with the same level of professionalism, no matter how big or how small, and sticks with it until it is complete," she says. "The second is the professionalism and respect that he demonstrates in dealing with everyone."



DEBBIE GREY

Western Libraries

Throughout 20 plus years working in Western Libraries, Debbie Grey has taken great care to provide the highest level of service to users. She has developed procedures for processing reserve materials that culminated in the creation of a Reserve Procedures manual for the Law Library, which introduced an extra term in 1998 called the "January Term."

The introduction resulted in a greater workload for reserve processing which Grey took in stride. Often she would stay late or come to work early to ensure materials were available for students.

In her current role as a Reference and Instructional Librarian in the Law Library, Grey enjoys the teaching aspect of her position.

"She is a fine team player, an inspiring role model to us, and truly, a person who makes Western a great place to work, learn and live," says Catherine Morrissey, Resource Support Services at The D.B. Weldon Library. "We are so appreciative of the major contribution she makes to our daily lives here at Western."

While working at Western, Grey has expanded her knowledge and personal growth by taking college and university courses. Recently, to fulfill a personal goal of becoming a Professional Librarian, she embarked on a Master's degree in Library Science part-time while continuing to work at the Law Library full-time. She earned her MLIS in 2004, and immediately decided to pursue a PhD in Library Science.

Grey has previously been honoured for her work by students and staff. In 1999, she was given the Student Legal Society "Staff Member of the Year" award and was later recognized by the Student Legal Society as a part of the "Staff of the Year" in 2004. In 2006, Grey was nominated, along with Western Libraries Interlibrary Loans staff, for a Western Award of Excellence.



DOUG GILLIAN

Physical Plant and Capital Planning Services

While supporting others in many fields, Doug Gillian never hesitates to share his knowledge with others, providing an excellent example of a positive attitude.

Based in the Medical Sciences building, Gillian at times finds his services in need in the dissection room where he has no hesitation in helping students with whatever they want or need in order to get the job done. Going above and beyond his job to help students, is a very important trait of Gillian.

Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry Professor Khadry Galil says since Gillian began in 1992, he has been a tremendous asset to the university.

"He always maintains high standards in his work and is a very enthusiastic person," says Galil, which is demonstrated through his membership on the Fit For Life committee, a wellness group within the Physical Plant department. His capacity to help is exemplified by him being a physical plant trainer, ensuring new staff learn the correct way of handling tasks.

His popularity with graduate students in the building was never more evident than during the Christmas season when they decided to decorate his caretaking cart.

"His enthusiasm and positive attitude towards his job, his co-workers and Western in general is infectious," says Haley Linklater, Anatomy and Cell Biology technician. "I know I speak for many others when I say that I couldn't get along without him."

She adds Gillian is one who will always give 110 per cent in any job he takes on.

"His record of commitment to service, and fostering relationships with staff, faculty and students is impeccable," she says. "His outgoing nature and willingness to get the job done is a source of inspiration to those around him. He never forgets a name or a face and is always welcoming to new students or staff."

With Ashford's pending retirement on June 30, the department is honouring her and her strong commitment to feminist education by organizing a conference in her name next spring.



JULIE ASHFORD

Department of Women's Studies and Feminist Research

As assistant to the Chair of the Department of Women's Studies and Feminist Research, Ashford is described as an inspirational person.

A constant feature since the inception of the Centre for Women's Studies and Feminist Research 20 years ago - and more recently the Department of Women's Studies and Feminist Research - Ashford is said to have the attitude that 'no question is trivial, no student crisis too small or emotional meltdown too troublesome.'

"Julie is the living embodiment of a culture of respect. She treats with dignity all those who seek her assistance, and she commands the instant respect of everyone who meets her," says Arts and Humanities Dean Kathleen Okruhlik.

"Julie has been a role model for students, staff, and faculty members, making Western a better, more equitable place to work and study."

Failure to solve a problem is not something Ashford would accept. The more complex the problem, the more she seems to thrive on the challenge. Her attention to detail and thoughtful consideration for students has served many of them well.

Ashford's dedication to students stems from a faith in the power of education to transform the individual and make the world a better place. She takes pleasure in watching the growth from a confused first-year student into a confident, mature and focused graduate.

"It is without a doubt that she exemplifies the criteria of this award by showing a genuine commitment to enhancing students' experiences," says graduate student Jaclyn Isen. "She continues to be a source of information and encouragement, always placing student success and well-being at the centre of her personal philosophy."

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PATRICIA CONNOR

Department of Geography

While she doesn't teach cartography, Patricia Connor is the 'go-to person' for cartographic advice, encouragement and appraisal. As head of the only cartographic service on campus, Connor provides advice on content, design and execution to undergraduate and graduate students.

Cartography has changed immensely in recent years and Connor has pioneered campus innovations by taking courses with software companies to expand her skills. She led the initiative to develop digital campus maps available to everyone within the university, yet customizable to meet the needs of individual departments.

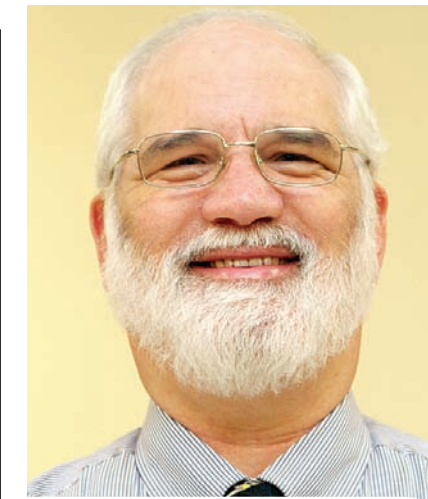
Connor's expectations of herself and what she brings to the university on a daily basis are best summarized by the Oscar Wilde quote she uses in the signature block to her correspondence - "I am not difficult to please; I am always satisfied with the best."

University of Victoria Social Sciences Dean Peter Keller has known Connor since he was a Western graduate student in the early '80s and recalls to this day the respect he was given by Connor.

"I have learned to respect and value Patricia for her dedication to her work and profession, for her respect for anybody asking her advice, for her willingness to take the time to address questions - however silly - and her will to always go the extra mile," says Keller. "Her leadership in workshops, her academic presentations resulting from her own research, her contributions on the executive and her engagement in the social life of the organization all stand out."

In 2006, Connor received the Award of Distinction for exceptional contributions to the Canadian Cartographic Association and cartography in Canada.

Joan Finegan, Associate Professor (Psychology), recognizes Connor for her remarkable creativity, dedication, energy and willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty.



WALTER ZIMMERMAN

Western Libraries

Mr. Google! The simple yet identifiable moniker of Walter Zimmerman.

As a Senior Reference Librarian in The D.B. Weldon Library, and a staff member since 1971, Zimmerman has joyfully provided ongoing research assistance to the entire campus community and significantly contributed to Western's international reputation as a technologically advanced research institution.

In holding the distinction of bringing Google and Turnitin.com to Western, Zimmerman has changed the technological and research landscape. Zimmerman is lauded for his encyclopedic knowledge, cutting-edge computer/research skills, and enthusiasm.

"He's the man with all the answers," says Monda Halpern, Assistant Professor in the Department of History. "He simply loves helping others discover the endless possibilities of effective research. Walter is all about combining personal growth with serving others through his technological talents and vision."

Professor Emeritus Peter Neary agrees, calling Zimmerman "the most knowledgeable, the most able, and the most helpful of the very distinguished group of library professionals."

"Walter is a pioneer in his field and a practitioner who has gone from strength to strength in a period of revolutionary change for his profession. He is admired by his library colleagues and is celebrated by readers and researchers far and wide. He is at the top of his form and at the top of his profession."

Zimmerman describes helping one student in particular as his "most satisfying experience" when for four consecutive years he assisted Alexandra Papaiconomou, who is blind. "He treated me with dignity and respect as a person with a disability and also as a student. He worked with my technological limitations, and was able to break down barriers for me that were insurmountable otherwise."

Nominations up for top staff

The entire list of nominees, including winners, for the Western Award of Excellence is provided below with the exception of those who asked that their names not be made public.

INDIVIDUAL

Nancy Warren, *Student Health Services*
Linda Chapman, *Robarts Research Institute*

Julie Ashford, Department of Women's Studies and Feminist Research

Nicolina Ficca, *Hospitality Services*

Kim Norton, *Department of Oncology*

Jennifer Symmes, *School of Kinesiology*

Alan Noon, *Department of Biology*

Doug Gillian, Division of Physical Plant and Capital Planning Services

Michael Mics, *Campus Community Police Service*

Holly Gati, *Department of Alumni Relations and Development*

Diane Mills, *Faculty of Music*

Dan Lajoie, *Department of Biology*

Meghan Cocurullo, *Department of Alumni Relations and Development*

Susan Bock, *Mechanical & Materials Engineering*

Gail Wright, *Faculty of Social Science*

Christina Fox, *Department of Alumni Relations and Development*

Marta Valovcik, *Hospitality Services*

Walter Zimmerman, Western Libraries

Debbie Grey, Western Libraries

Jennifer Holburn, *Faculty Relations*

Jennifer Tramble, *Department of Film Studies*

Diana Timmermans, *Faculty of Engineering*

Nanette Love, *Faculty of Law*

Linda Brock, *Department of Social Science*

Cheryl O'Meara, *Department of Chemistry*

Denise Statham, *Department of Sociology*

Judy Collis, *Faculty Relations*

Shelley Clark, *Writing Program, Arts & Humanities*

Jan Cook, *Housing and Ancillary Services*

Linda Brown, *Faculty of Health Sciences*

Dylan Foley, *Housing and Ancillary Services*

Cheryl McGrath, *Department of Computer Science*

Barry Price, Department of Earth Sciences

Bert Verhagen, *Mechanical & Materials Engineering*

Nanda Dimitrov, *Teaching and Learning Services*

Christine Seres, *Mechanical & Materials Engineering*

Ruth Heard, *Faculty of Education*

Reina Tebby, *Division of Information Technology Services*

Wendie Crouch, *Faculty of Information and Media Studies*

Mihaela Harnos, *Teaching and Learning Services*

Clare Tattersall, *Faculty of Graduate Studies*

Barb Froats, *Division of Human Resources*

Georgina Ioannidis, *Hospitality Services*

Elaine Zibrowski, *Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry - GAMES Office*

Rosemary Lewis, *Teaching & Learning Services*

Carol Hooper, *Faculty of Education*

Dorota Cuprjak, *Division of Physical Plant and Capital Planning Services*

Brenda Hutcheson, *Department of History*

Daniella Chirila, *Department of Psychology*

Louise Gadois, *Graphic Services*

Tigger Jourard, *Faculty of Law*

Judy La Forme, *Department of Classical Studies*

Sheila Nicol, *Department of Biology*

Janet Smith, *Hospitality Services*

Katherine Manweiler, *Faculty of Engineering*

Linda Monteith-Wilson, *Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry*

Michael Coleby, *Hospitality Services*

Faith Hennessy, *Department of Psychology*

Janice Mathers, *Department of Chemistry*

Faye Murphy, *Department of Political Science*

Debbie Mayea, *Department of Mathematics*

Cécile Daoust-Mallanphy, *Department of Modern Languages & Literatures*

Janice Brown, *Department of Political Science*

Patricia Connor, Department of Geography

Donna Moore, *Teaching and Learning Services*

Rose Aquino, *Student Development Services*

Nancy Bell, *Department of Physics and Astronomy*

TEAMS

Hospitality Services - *Social Science Team*

Department of Psychology - *University Laboratory Preschool*

Western Libraries - *Education Library*

Department of Communications and Public Affairs - *Western News Team*

Hospitality Services - *Manchu Wok Team*

Hospitality Services - Tim Hortons (Lucy's)

Robarts Research - *Information Technology*

Registrar Services - *Student Administration Upgrade Team*

Department of Applied Mathematics

Department of Alumni Relations and Development - *Program Events*

Division of Physical Plant and Capital Planning Services - *Service Centre*

Division of Human Resources - *Pension Administration and Counselling*

Richard Ivey School of Business - *HBA Program Services Office*

