

Professor Wendy J. Palmquist Named PSU's Distinguished Teacher 2006

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At the final meeting of the full faculty for academic year 2006-2007 on May 3, Provost Virginia Barry announced that Professor of Psychology Wendy J. Palmquist is the recipient of the 2006 Distinguished Teaching Award from Plymouth State University. Each year, PSU presents this award for excellence in teaching and service to the University community to one member of the faculty. Nominations for this honor are accepted from faculty and staff, as well as students and alumni.

Palmquist says, "I am honored to be chosen for this award. I have learned so much from the colleagues who have won this award before me, and my other colleagues and students in my 25 years here at Plymouth State. I really want to thank those who nominated me."

Palmquist received the Distinguished Teaching Award for her dedication to teaching, scholarship and meaningful, student-centered education during her 25 years of service to the University. Provost Barry praised Palmquist for her "broad, extensive knowledge of higher education ... qualities of fairness, tolerance and compassion" and devotion to promoting critical thinking as the "cornerstone of a Plymouth State University education."

"I knew I wanted to be a teacher from a very young age, but I also knew I was a pretty quirky kind of person," explains Palmquist. "When I started college I was sure I was going to become an excellent junior high school English teacher. But I chose a path that took me in another direction. I discovered psychology. I discovered that college professors could be excellent teachers. I discovered becoming a college professor was what would be the best choice for me. I care very deeply about my students, first year students making the transition to college, many just learning the skills that will help to make them the adults they will become, and upper level students testing who they are through the process of mastering the challenges of an academic discipline. They are, the same as I did, finding what path is right for each of them. I want to help them in that transition, challenging them, and giving them tools that will serve them well."

Earlier this spring, Palmquist received the 2006 Theo Kalikow Award, presented annually to a PSU faculty or staff member who has significantly contributed to the welfare of women on campus. Palmquist is a founder of the university's women's studies program, a supporter of Title IX sports programs for women and a professor whose excellence in the classroom has been recognized by students and colleagues. She has also been an advocate for women and men on campus through the Safe Zone Program, which promotes awareness and non-judgmental treatment of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people.

Palmquist received her B.A. from Pomona College and her Ph.D. from Cornell University. She joined Plymouth State University in 1981. She also serves as co-director of the Frost Faculty Center.

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