

Professor Lin Aanonsen Wins Thomas Jefferson Award

St. Paul, Minn. – **Lin Aanonsen**, O.T. Walter Professor, Biology, and Chair, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, has been awarded the 2014 Thomas Jefferson Award. The award was established in 1961 by the Robert Earl McConnell Foundation to honor faculty members who exemplify the principles and ideals of Thomas Jefferson. Aanonsen was selected by a committee of past Jefferson Award winners.

Here's the abbreviated citation:

Lin Aanonsen, you have served the College, and especially our students, in almost every imaginable way possible, and with unwavering passion and commitment ever since you arrived at Macalester 25 years ago. A neuroscientist by training, you exemplify what it means to be a scientist at a liberal arts college. While you teach courses for bio majors such as, Human Physiology, Cell Biology, Cellular and Molecular Neuroscience, Neuroanatomy, and Seminar in Neuropharmacology, you also offer non-majors courses with friendlier names, like The Enchanted Cortex, Mind and Matter, and The Heart and Soul of Biology. But no matter what the course, no matter what the name, the student evaluations are always the same - outstanding!

Your devotion to your students is unmatched. Since at least 2000, you probably have touched the lives of more Macalester students in a personal way than any other faculty member. As Chair of the Health Professions Advisory Committee since 1994, you have provided guidance to more than 1500 students interested in pursuing careers as doctors, nurses, physical therapists, and other health professionals. Students flock to you as an advisor, and you almost never decline a student's request to become your advisee. It is true; you have been cutting back on advising in recent years. Currently, your number of official advisees has dropped to 65. In your prime (not that you're not still in your prime) you were the academic advisor to as many as 72 students, which meant that roughly one of every 25 students at Mac at that time was your advisee.

Lin, you have provided needed leadership to the College whenever asked, and in many ways. You chaired the Biology Department for eight years and are currently chairing the Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexual Studies. You served two terms as the Director of the College's Affirmative Action Committee, and you have served on most of the faculty-standing committees, including FPC (Faculty Personnel Committee) and the old Faculty Advisory Council, which you also chaired. In the early 2000s, at the request of then Provost Hornbach, you assumed the chair of the Task Force on Academic Quality & Structure, a committee charged with some especially challenging tasks. All your committee and task force work probably helps explain why so much of your research focuses on pain.



Lin Aanonsen

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You have also impressed us with your vigor. While most (probably all) past Jefferson awardees make other plans in response to the all-faculty invitation to participate in the Founders' Day unique and potentially injury producing pushball competition, you have thrown caution to the wind and enthusiastically jumped into the fray. While most Jefferson awardees seek recreation in benign and age-appropriate activities such as tennis and golf, you have taken up weight lifting. While most Jefferson awardees spend a lot of time sitting on chairs and couches, you spend a lot of time sitting on horses, as well as hefting hay and other stuff around the barn where your beloved horse Loegan is boarded.

Lin, in 2003 you received the Macalester College Teaching Award. Several years ago you were named the O. T. Walter Professor of Biology. It is time for you to be recognized once again. In acknowledgement of your commitment to excellence in teaching and advising, your character and leadership, and your dedication and loyalty to the College, we are delighted and honored to name you the recipient of the 2014 Macalester College Thomas Jefferson Award.

Macalester College, founded in 1874, is a national liberal arts college with a full-time enrollment of 2,011 students. Macalester is nationally recognized for its long-standing commitment to academic excellence, internationalism, multiculturalism, and civic engagement. Learn more at [macalester.edu](http://www.macalester.edu) (<http://www.macalester.edu/>).

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