BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

Teachers College End of the Year Celebration

April 19, 2023

2023 Teachers College Outstanding Research Award Winner

Rachel Geesa
Department of Educational Leadership

In just the past five academic years, Dr. Rachel Geesa has published 36 peer-reviewed articles, 13 peer-reviewed book chapters, and one book. She has also presented 52 research papers at national conferences.

This record of productivity would be noteworthy in quantity alone. When the quality of her work is considered, her accomplishments become even more impressive. When Dr. Geesa recognized a gap in training and leadership development for equitable, integrative STEM programming for PK-12 students, she created a plan to publish a book, Leadership in Integrative STEM Education: Collaborative Strategies for Facilitating an Experiential and Student-Centered Culture, which led to the implementation of a graduate-level course for leadership in integrative STEM education. She served as a lead co-editor of this book with 16 contributors from other departments in Teachers College.

Dr. Geesa has surpassed department expectations for tenure-track faculty in the department. As an Associate Clinical Professor, she receives no release time for research; therefore, these accomplishments have been achieved outside of the many teaching and service duties that she has been asked to perform as a full-time contract faculty member. She has served as an assistant department chairperson, over four years as the Lilly Endowment grant director, over four years as the Director of Teachers College International Programs, and she started an ongoing doctoral mentorship initiative seven years ago. Because of her dedication to adding to the research base in the field of Educational Leadership, Dr. Rachel Geesa has made outstanding contributions to her students, the department, Teachers College, Ball State, and scholars across the nation and world.

2023 Teachers College
Outstanding Inclusive Excellence Award Winner

Kirsten Robbins

Department of Elementary Education

Dr. Kirsten Robbins makes a difference in the areas of equity via education and teacher preparation every day through positively impacting the people of our community and beyond. She models and practices an unwavering dedication to identify, examine, and share equitable methods for teaching and learning in higher education, specifically with our K-6 elementary education teacher candidates. Through the lenses of material feminism, post-qualitative research, and curriculum theory, she examines social conditions and problems that society and schools wrestle with across educative learning environments.

Furthermore, her research interests, teaching, and service contributions share a common thread that draws on a variety of social justice topics. Dr. Robbins' scholarship has been instrumental in advancing her department's understanding of challenges faced by marginalized communities in education and developing strategies to promote inclusivity. She has led several courageous conversations for faculty and staff on topics such as implicit bias and cultural competence, including, but not limited to, mini-
Professional Development talks during monthly faculty meetings. Additionally, she co-facilitates two faculty learning communities on equitable grading practices, which includes participants from every college at Ball State. In her position as Chair of both TCs Inclusive Excellence Committee and Elementary Education's Diversity Committee, Dr. Robbins has shared her expertise and aided in making the workplace and programming better by voluntarily guiding new and seasoned faculty towards socially just and equitable teaching and program design.

2023 Teachers College Outstanding Service Award Winner

Nicole Martin

Department of Elementary Education

Dr. Nicole Martin has been an integral part of Ball State's service-oriented culture for years. Her dedication and commitment to serving have been exemplary, as evidenced by her numerous contributions to various committees, programs, and initiatives, each of which have benefited from her experience, knowledge, and vision.

At the department level, she has proven herself a curricular leader in her roles as Director of Undergraduate Programs, and chair of Undergraduate, Graduate, and Curriculum Committees, as well as numerous others. Additionally, she has devoted much of her time to mentoring faculty and doctoral students.

At the college and university levels, Dr. Martin has made critical contributions that have furthered the Mission and Strategic Plan. She has served on the TC Curriculum and Research Committees. At the university level, she has served on the Global Engagement Council and the Academic Ethics, University Library, Undergraduate Grade Appeals, and Undergraduate Education Committees, as well as the Community-Based Education Taskforce.

Dr. Martin's dedication to service has extended beyond the University. She has served the profession and community in various ways including on committees in (inter)national organizations where she has advocated for high-quality scholarship. She serves on the editorial board and as a reviewer for numerous journals. Further, she has participated in various initiatives that have served the community.

She is a distinguished faculty member who has made significant contributions to the department, college, university, profession, and community. Her leadership, dedication, and commitment to service are exceptional.

2023 Teachers College
Outstanding Teaching Award Winner

Rebecca Brown

Department of Elementary Education

Dr. Rebecca Brown came to the Department of Elementary Education in the fall 2016 and has since demonstrated her ability to connect the content of the Elementary Education course work to our students. This is demonstrated with her student evaluations which range from 4.7-.5.0 and peer evaluations conducted through the years. Within this frame, she creates an inclusive and supportive learning environment where teacher candidates feel empowered to explore their potential and develop their skills. Since her seven years in our program at Ball State, Dr. Brown has had the opportunity to teach across the entire elementary education program, from the introductory-level courses to doctoral-level courses. She leads by example, by putting her students' success first.

Dr. Brown continually takes on new challenges within the department. She was a Professional Development Liaison at North View Elementary for five years and worked with her teacher candidates within that setting; she has led three different immersive learning opportunities two of which were located at North View Elementary, and one was while traveling with a cohort of students to the United Kingdom to participate in a 6-week immersive overseas program.

This last summer she took over the Directorship of the Transition to Teaching Program. She has completed an analysis of the program to better address our non-traditional students' learning needs and stays available with students to respond to questions. As a result, this program is thriving.

2023 Teachers College Outstanding University Schools Teaching Award Winner

Robert Jones

Burris Laboratory School

Mr. Robert Jones has proven again and again his willingness to go above and beyond for the students at Burris Laboratory School. He has a passion for the Burris community, Ball State community, and the broader Muncie community that he brings into his classroom. His pedagogy is one of being a facilitator of investigation, inquiry, and creativity while he challenges his students to solve community problems.

One of the keys to Mr. Jones' success is that before he even introduces content to students, he works first to establish their agency. Under his guidance, students know they have a voice and that their ideas are valued. By trusting students to take the lead, Mr. Jones has created the Burris Broadcast program through which students live-stream school events, create podcasts, manage all social media for the school, and actively engage with the alumni community.

In his quest to continue to create opportunities for students, Mr. Jones is learning about emerging media and designing a course in augmented reality. He is a teacher of excellence, always looking forward to the next idea or concept that can be implemented into his classroom. In commitment to the lab school mission, he actively seeks opportunities to share these innovations at international conferences. There are very few educators who care as much about the success, well-roundedness, and eventual adulthood of students, as Mr. Jones.

2023 Teachers College
Outstanding Professional Staff Award Winner

Taylor Hubble

Indiana Academy for Science,
Mathematics, and Humanities

Ms. Taylor Hubble serves as Student Life Team Leader working residentially to support the students of the Indiana Academy for Science, Mathematics, and Humanities. She offers next-level care to both the students and residential staff of the Academy with her words, actions, and attention to detail. She achieves a balance of active listening, tact, humor, and genuine regard for whoever is in front of her, whether it be student, parent, or co-worker.

Ms. Hubble seeks relentlessly to be the best she can be, engaging with self-sought resources, professional development opportunities on campus, and trainings beyond what is required of her. Departments throughout the school seek her out to serve on committees because of their confidence in her knowledge and her commitment to the betterment of the students and the mission of the Academy and Ball State.

She is respected highly by everyone she encounters—the Ball State desk workers she trains and supervises, the students she mentors and supports, the parents who trust her to safeguard their children, and everyone at the Academy who relies on her expertise. As a leader, Ms. Hubble's humble approach, and dedication sets an example and creates an environment that encourages those around her to work hard, stay accountable, learn from mistakes, serve others, and look for ways to grow.

2023 Teachers College Outstanding Staff Award Winner

Anna Sammelson

Indiana Academy for Science, Mathematics, and Humanities

In her role as the administrative coordinator for Residential and Student Affairs at the Indiana Academy, Ms. Anna Sammelson provides thoughtful and strong customer service while fostering a safe and welcoming environment for students to live and learn. She consistently produces high-quality work and freely lends her expertise to students, parents, faculty, staff, and administrators. She works hard to ensure the front desk is a welcoming, fun, professional, efficient, and resource-driven space that makes a great first impression of our school.

Ms. Sammelson has been invaluable filling in for staffing shortages while ensuring the quality of service did not waver nor impact those the Academy serves. Beyond her daily responsibilities, she often seeks out additional tasks to help improve our area and school. Some examples of this include creating a front desk training module on Canvas, helping to bring online ticket sales and non-residential dining cash options to fruition, serving on multiple improvement committees, and developing ways to be more responsive to parent feedback, student needs, and unique requests.

She lives her commitment to Ball State's Beneficence pledge by building relationships, positively influencing others, and supporting students with respect, compassion, and authentic interest. Ms. Sammelson sets the benchmark of going above and beyond, achieving great things, and putting heart into all her efforts. Her willingness to adjust to situations as needed makes her a critical asset, essential to the daily function of our school, and truly deserving of this honor.

2023 Teachers College Equity and Excellence in Education Dissertation Award Winner

Bobby Steele

Dissertation Chair: Amanda Latz

Dr. Bobby Steele graduated from Ball State with an EdD in Higher Education with a cognate in Public Relations in July 2022.

Through his qualitative inquiry of the experiences of Black first-generation college students that extended beyond their challenges and shortcomings to present more nuanced stories, Dr. Steele challenged dominant narratives that focus solely on negativity and hardships. He used the community cultural wealth framework rooted in critical race theory, to explore how Black first-generation college students navigate predominantly white institutions.

Dr. Steele contributed to the literature on community cultural wealth as well as asset-based approaches to understanding Black and first-generation college students. While he acknowledged many of the existing challenges and barriers faced by Black first-generation students, he notably examined aspects of their cultural capital as strength in acclimating to and thriving in higher education environments.

Recommending Dr. Steele for this award, dissertation chair Dr. Amanda Latz wrote that: “He used critical race theory as a methodological onto-epistemology and thinking space for pushing higher education, particularly PWIs [predominantly White institutions], toward more liberatory and antiracist futures. Dr. Steele’s deployment of a critical race methodology and thematic analysis beautifully highlighted how Black first-generation college students leveraged community cultural wealth to navigate and successfully persist within a PWI.”

Dr. Steele has recently been hired as an Assistant Clinical Professor of Higher Education in the Department of Educational Leadership.

2023 Teachers College
Dean's Citation for Outstanding Service

Stephanie Nagelkirk

Indiana Academy for Science,
Mathematics, and Humanities

Ms. Stephanie Nagelkirk, joined the Indiana Academy for Science, Mathematics, and Humanities in the fall of 2005. She is an Associate Lecturer of English and Inclusive Excellence Coordinator, her service to the Academy and to inclusive excellence initiatives is outstanding.

In her English classes, she works tirelessly to increase students' exposure to, and critical analysis of, themes presented in literature by diverse national and international authors. Each fall, Ms. Nagelkirk dresses in a 1920s-era costume for her annual Harlem Renaissance dinner which features Academy students who represent the great artists of that period. Additionally, she developed an International Exchange Program with Sankt Afra School in Meissen, Germany that enables Academy students to travel to Germany during the spring semester.

Ms. Nagelkirk created and serves as the chair of the Indiana Academy Inclusion Alliance, a committee of faculty and staff that works with students to address inclusive excellence at the school. She created and leads the Academy's Student Equity Council, a council of student leaders with the mission of building a culture that encourages all people to appreciate the value of everyone's uniqueness and fosters a climate that is safe, accessible, and empowering. She also took the lead on creating the Haven, a small lounge available to all that is a safe space for students to meet.

2023 Teachers College
Dean's Citation for Outstanding Service

Heather Abernathy

Burris Laboratory School

Ms. Heather Abernathy is an Instructor of Secondary English at Burris Laboratory School, who has given outstanding service as a Teacher Consultant in the Indiana Writing Project.

The Indiana Writing Project (IWP) is a professional organization that focuses the knowledge, expertise, and leadership of our nation's educators on sustained efforts to improve writing and learning for all learners. Ms. Abernathy is a Teacher Consultant in IWP, which means she has gone through an intensive summer institute where she studied her own teaching practices and learned about becoming a strong teacher of writing.

She is currently serving as the Co-Director of Teacher Consultant Development and Summer Programming for IWP, where she focuses on bringing together IWP Teacher Consultants to further the work of IWP. Ms. Abernathy works to provide spaces through IWP to help teachers connect and reconnect. For example, she organized a monthly meet up for teachers who want to gather and talk about their teaching practice.

Ms. Abernathy is engaged in ongoing collaboration with Dr. Susanna Benko, Associate Professor of English and College of Sciences and Humanities Director of Teacher Education, and Jackie Grutsch McKinney, Director of Immersive Learning and High Impact Practices and Professor of English in service to IWP. Their collaboration exemplifies the efforts of Teachers College to promote collaboration across colleges for high-quality teacher preparation and professional development.

2023 Teachers College
Dean's Citation for Outstanding Leadership

Linda Martin

Department of Elementary Education

Dr. Linda Martin is completing 29 years of service at Ball State University. In reviewing her curriculum vitae, it appears she has served on every department committee in Elementary Education. She also served on the University Undergraduate Committee, the Graduate Education Committee, and the University Research Committee for eight years.

For several years, Dr. Martin served (and chaired) the Department of Elementary Education Promotion and Tenure Committee and has served on the Teachers College Promotion and Tenure Committee. Since 2014, her leadership has included serving as co-editor for *The Teacher Educator.*

Over the last three years, Dr. Martin has served as the Chair of the Department of Elementary Education. As Chair, she was always a dependable resource. Her knowledge and experience from serving on university, college, and department committees prepared her well for serving as department chair. She works closely with faculty when making curriculum changes and works gain consensus among faculty with solving problems.

2023 Teachers College
Dean's Citation for Outstanding Leadership

Richard Seymour

Department of Educational Studies

Dr. Richard Seymour has demonstrated a high level of service and leadership over the past 41 years. One of his most notable accomplishments was his service to the Professional Education Committee (17 years), which he chaired for 14 years.

Dr. Seymour served as an Interim Chair for the Department of Educational Studies for a year (2019-2020), before being elected to serve as Chair for three years (2020-2023). As a leader, he makes sure others are involved when solving problems and works effectively to guide others when making decisions. He is sensitive to the needs of his faculty and staff and demonstrates compassion and tactfulness when solving problems. He always is well organized and often will share charts, figures, and schemas displaying faculty loading, course assignments, and department initiatives. It is obvious that Dr. Seymour uses data to support departmental decisions.

In addition to his work as Department Chair, Dr. Seymour has also provided leadership as Chair on several departmental committees, including the Educational Studies Awards Committee, and Education Preparation Programs Committee, and he was an advisor for the Ball State Technology and Engineering Education club for 35 years.

Teachers College Retiree

Jayne Beilke

Department of Educational Studies

Dr. Jayne Beilke has been teaching courses in social foundations and multicultural education at Ball State since 1993. She has several graduate degrees from Indiana University, the most recent, a doctorate in the History of Education in 1994. Her dissertation focused on graduate and professional educational opportunities for African Americans. She routinely teaches courses related to multicultural education and helped institute the required field experience component now found in EDMU 205, the Introduction to Multicultural Education course.

Today, Dr. Beilke's major research interests continue to be on African American educational opportunities. She is currently finishing a multi-year Fellowship in the Virginia Ball Center, where she is exploring the life of James Baker, a fugitive slave who attended the multiracial Union Literary Institute in Randolph County, Indiana.

Dr. Beilke served as Chair of the Department of Educational Studies from 2007-2016. In 2006 she was the recipient of the Teachers College Outstanding Teacher Award. In the local community, she is on the Board of Directors of the Muncie YMCA and is a member of the Kiwanis Club of Muncie.

Teachers College Retiree

Karen Ford

Department of Educational Studies

Dr. Karen Ford was an Associate Professor of Curriculum and Instruction in Teachers College before retiring in December 2022. Her career at Ball State started in 1993, teaching in the Department of Elementary Education. She joined the Department of Educational Studies in 2011. Her most recent academic focus was content literacy and the skills necessary for educators to excel as teachers and scholars in the future.

Dr. Ford obtained her EdD from the University of Cincinnati in July 1989. Earlier degrees were from the University of Kentucky and Northern Kentucky University. All three degrees are in education, with a focus on literacy and K12-level instruction. She was an active teacher and scholar at the forefront of the emerging era of distance education in the early 2000s. Numerous publications outlined the opportunities for educators when it came to the use of digital technologies in teaching and research.

Dr. Ford was a dedicated mentor for graduate students in educational programs; in just the past five years, she served on 16 doctoral committees while chairing the committee for six students. Her passion was to help build student's knowledge, skills, and instructional experiences, preparing them for today's teaching and learning environment.

In recent years, Dr. Ford was instrumental in developing a foundational reading course for secondary majors at Ball State. She taught that same content reading course in secondary education, a class that addressed a key skill area mandated of Indiana's educators.

Teachers College Retiree

Linda Jones

Department of Educational Psychology

Ms. Linda Jones is retiring after 21 years of service to Ball State University. Ms. Jones joined the Department of Educational Psychology in 2002 as the Graduate Admissions Specialist. She has a wide-ranging portfolio; in essence, her primary role is to support the many Program Directors in an array of activities. This includes recruitment, helping students and faculty work through the admissions process, assisting with interviews, welcoming students to campus, guiding them through the requirements to obtain a degree, advising, assisting with graduation, and then monitoring the progress of our students. She is also a tremendous asset with accreditation.

In these activities Ms. Jones fully devotes her energies, passion, and care and concern for our current and prospective students. She is a wealth of institutional knowledge and a tremendous asset to any incoming program director.

Our potential students, current students, and alumni all know Ms. Jones well, given how involved she is in helping them become and then thrive as Ball State University of students. She is one of the people most responsible for the Department of Educational Psychology maintaining and growing their graduate programs. In addition to taking care of a huge number of tasks, Ms. Jones has been a shining example of what it means to be student focused.

Teachers College Retiree

Linda Martin

Department of Elementary Education

Dr. Linda Martin earned an Ed.D. at Brigham Young University in reading theory, research, and instruction. She joined the Department of Elementary Education at Ball State in 1994 and has spent 29 years of service teaching courses in the undergraduate and graduate programs, locally and while on field placements internationally. She spent several years as a professional development liaison at Wes-Del Elementary and directed students in two international programs. Later, Dr. Martin became the Director of the Graduate Programs (master's and doctoral) while initiating various program revisions to enhance the graduate programs in the department. At present, she is co-editor of The Teacher Educator, a tier-one international journal that supports research in teacher education. Since July 2020, she has chaired the Department of Elementary Education.

Dr. Martin's desire to examine issues in schools that affect students' learning has led her to research primarily students' literacy development, teachers' professional development, and educational policy. Her work has led to twenty-nine publications in a variety of peer reviewed journals, and two book chapters.

Dr. Martin has served Ball State at all levels (department, college, and university) over time. During the school year 2002-2003, Dr. Martin, in collaboration the Assistant President of Research for Ball State, developed a proposal for Ball State to be considered as a site for a new chapter of the prestigious Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi. From this initiation, Chapter 290 was formed.

She plans to continue her work as co-editor of The Teacher Educator, so she will still visit Teachers College from time to time.

Teachers College Retiree

Brenda Rathel

Teachers College Office of the Dean

Ms. Brenda Rathel retired from Teachers College in August 2022 after 32 years at Ball State. She earned an associate degree in May 2006, and a bachelor's degree in 2013, both from Ball State. She originally came to the university in 1989 as a part-time secretary for the Graduate Advisor in the Department of Journalism.

Over the years she worked in the Cooper Advising Center as an office coordinator, the Fisher Institute of Wellness and Gerontology as a secretary, the Graduate School as an office assistant, and the Department of Art, and the Department of Environment, Geology, and Natural Resources as an Administrative Coordinator before moving to Teachers College as a scheduling specialist in 2020.

As a scheduling specialist, Ms. Rathel worked closely with department chairs each semester to compile faculty loading reports and was responsible for monitoring and managing departmental and college course input into Banner.

After retiring in August 2022, Ms. Rathel came back to Teachers College to help fill in as a part-time scheduling specialist. She also stepped in to help part-time when there was a vacancy in the Administrative Assistant to the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and Strategic Initiatives position. Now that she is re-retired, she will be able to enjoy spending time with her family and crafting.

Teachers College Retiree

Richard Seymour

Department of Educational Studies

Dr. Richard Seymour came to Ball State during fall 1981, enrolling in a master's program and serving as a Graduate Assistant in manufacturing technology. That next fall, he joined the faculty in what would become the Department of Technology. Most of his professional career has involved teaching, scholarship, and service in the field of technology teacher education. Dr. Seymour served as president of his state association (the Engineering/Technology Educators of Indiana) in 1995-1996 and served two terms on the Board of Directors of the International Technology & Engineering Educators Association.

Locally, Dr. Seymour was named teacher-of-the-year at the department level three times and received the Teachers College Outstanding Service Award in April 2018. While still a full-time faculty, he helped co-teach a class at Muncie Central High School in Fall 2018, a PLTW class related to engineering principles. He also taught a dual credit class at Burris Labratory School during the spring semester of 2020. Since 2019, he has been the Chairperson of the Department of Educational Studies in Teachers College.

Dr. Seymour worked with Indiana Department of Education staff on curriculum guides and implementation workshops during the 1990s and early 2000s, during a period of great transition in his discipline. Professionally, he has run technology education-related workshops around the globe and enjoys working with fellow STEM educators. For his many contributions to the profession, ITEEA recognized him with its Academy of Fellows distinction in 2017.

Years of Service

10 Years

Amber Spaw
Teachers College Office of the Dean

15 Years

Abigail Comber
Burris Laboratory School

Ruth Jefferson
Department of Special Education

Serena Shim
Department of Educational Psychology

20 Years

Andrew Davis
Department of Educational Psychology

W. Holmes Finch
Department of Educational Psychology

Michelle Glowacki-Dudka
Department of Educational Studies

Years of Service

20 Years (Continued)

Scott Hall
Department of Early Childhood,
Youth, and Family Studies

Kenneth McCoy
Department of Educational Psychology

Eva Zygmunt
Department of Early Childhood,
Youth, and Family Studies

25 Years

Theresa Kruczek
Department of Educational Psychology

Peggy Rice
Department of Elementary Education

30 Years

Jayne Beilke
Department of Educational Studies

Previous Outstanding Award Recipients

Research

2022 Lauren Mims
2021 Gerardo Ramirez
2020 Thalia Mulvihill
Lisa Rubenstein
2019 Renae Mayes
Eva Zygmunt
2018 Serena Shim
2017 Wilfridah Mucherah

Service

2022 Lisa Pufpaff
2021 Evette Simmons-Reed
2020 Janay Sander
Jackie Sydnor
2019 Lori Boyland
2018 Richard Seymour
2017 John Merbler
2016 Sharon Paulson

Staff

2022 Linda Jones
2021 Cary Witter
2020 Elaina Buchmeier
2019 Amber Spaw
2018 Lynn Shipley
2017 Nikki Sherfy

Equity and Excellence in Education Dissertation

2022 Jonique Burton,
Dissertation Chair:
Serena Salloum

Inclusive Excellence

2022 Gilbert Park

Teaching (Teachers College)

2022 Michael Shaffer
2021 Lauren Mims
2020 Nancy Melser
2019 Jocelyn Bolin
2018 Jim Stroud
2017 Kristin Cipollone

Teaching (University Schools)

2022 Bridget Lester
2021 Eli Jones
2019 Christine Ney
2018 Kenneth Stuart
2012 Fumiko Kishi Chiuini
2009 Mark Watson
2002 Martha Kendrick
2000 Sandra Murray
1999 Alex Crespi

Professional Staff

2022 Shannon Dieringer
2021 Katie Miller

Dean's Citation for Outstanding Service

2022 Lisa Rubenstein
2021 Lisa Carmichael

Dean's Citation for Outstanding Leadership

2022 John Anderson
2021 Scott Hall
2020 Jerrell Cassady