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CAROL ZANDER NAMED DISTINGUISHED TEACHER OF THE YEAR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, BOTHELL

(Bothell, WA)-- "My approach to education can be summarized as a 'Tough Love' approach," says Carol Zander, senior lecturer in the Computing and Software Systems program at the University of Washington, Bothell. "My teaching efforts center around sharing my joy of computer science and mathematics, and helping students to develop the skills that enable in-depth problem solving and continuous learning. And I don't believe you can acquire these skills without a lot of hard work and effort. So I am demanding, but I also strive to be approachable, supportive, and caring."

For these efforts, Carol Zander has been named the University of Washington, Bothell's Distinguished Teacher of the Year.

Zander will be recognized at the University of Washington, Bothell's Commencement, which will be held at Bank of America Arena at Hec Edmundson

Pavillion on the University of Washington campus on June 16, 2002 at 2 p.m. Zander will also receive a certificate, $5,000, and be invited to lead a workshop or give a talk on her philosophy of teaching in a public forum in the fall of 2002.

Zander says that while she does have high expectations of her students in the classroom, she finds that they not only rise to the challenge, but ultimately excel because of those expectations. "I try to instill in them a sense of pride in their work," she says.

In other words, she demands that students care. In return, she cares more. "They want me to care enough to give them good work so that they can learn," she says. "They want me to care enough to explain things differently until they get it. They want me to care enough to answer email on the weekend and all hours of the night." Ultimately, Zander says, "my students want to know that I think that they can succeed in this difficult field."

Numerous letters of support from students and faculty mentioned Zander's supportive classroom skills for teaching complex material and her significant out-of-class availability. It is this support and industry know-how, along with the confidence that she instills in her students, that makes her so popular.

"With her jovial sense of humor and mastery of the material, she garners respect from her students, holds their interest, and challenges them to learn," says CSS student, William Kallander. "She grades herself constantly by the success of her students. I have darkened her door at ten at night to seek guidance on a project or assignment and have been received with a smile and helpful advice. I am not unusual in this regard."

Bangdien Bailey, (CSS 2000 graduate) agrees. "In addition to her excellent teaching, she provides essential knowledge of the ongoing change in programming techniques to the department, university, and computing community."

Zander says she takes a special interest in helping female students navigate the sometimes difficult waters of a male-dominated field. "Female students especially look to me for help and guidance," she says. "In a male-dominated field, I assure female students that it is okay to communicate and collaborate as they do." She adds, "I am constantly mentoring students. I believe that I influence students in all that I do, and I take that responsibility very seriously."

Camille Scott, one of CSS' female students, has found Zander's mentoring skills and teaching commitment to be invaluable in her journey toward a degree in Computing and Software Systems.

"As a female in a male-dominated field, Dr. Zander is a refreshing and remarkable mentor and advisor," says Scott. "I have often sought her counsel when making academic and career choices. Her voice gave me support, encouragement, and excellent guidance. My experience in the CSS program was infinitely better because of her involvement."

In addition to her teaching duties, Dr. Zander has also been instrumental in helping to develop and, most recently, conduct a five-year evaluation of the CSS program curriculum, a curriculum that has been rated outstanding by many of its graduates and community affiliates. She is also faculty sponsor for the student chapter of the Association of Computing Machinery, an organization that is key to giving CSS students a feeling of ownership and participation in their education.

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