



5 February,
2018

SWOSU Bestows Annual Emeriti Honors



The late Dr. Henry Kirkland was recently honored by the Southwestern Oklahoma State University Alumni Association with its Emeritus Award. Accepting for Kirkland was his family (second from left)—daughter Melissa, wife Viola and son Steven. Making the presentation were (left) SWOSU President Randy Beutler and (right) SWOSU Alumni Association President-Elect Melani Mouse.



Dr. Jill Jones (middle) was recently honored by the Southwestern Oklahoma State University Alumni Association with its Emeritus Award. Making the presentation were (left) SWOSU President Randy Beutler and (right) SWOSU Alumni Association President-Elect Melani Mouse.



John Loftin was recently honored by the Southwestern Oklahoma State University Alumni Association with its Emeritus Award. Accepting the award on behalf of Loftin was long-time Bulldog sports radio announcer Chuck Edwards. Making the presentation were (left) SWOSU President Randy Beutler and (right) SWOSU Alumni Association President-Elect Melani Mouse.

Four former Southwestern Oklahoma State University employees were honored recently by the SWOSU Alumni Association during a reception held in the Pioneer Cellular Events Center on the Weatherford campus.

The Alumni Association Board of Directors voted in 2015 to begin recognizing former SWOSU employees annually and celebrating their contributions to the university.

The 2017 SWOSU Alumni Association Emeritus Award honorees include:

Randall Russell – Russell graduated from Central State University, now the University of Central Oklahoma. He earned his doctorate from Oklahoma State University. Russell began teaching at SWOSU in 1973 in what became the Everett Dobson School of Business & Technology. He retired from SWOSU in 2002 after serving 29 years and is currently teaching at Yavapai College in Prescott (AZ). Accepting the award on Russell's behalf was SWOSU President Randy L. Beutler.

John Loftin – Loftin completed his undergraduate studies at West Texas State University, now West Texas A&M. He earned a Master's degree from SWOSU and began coaching at Murray State College in Tishomingo. In the fall of 1981, Loftin returned to SWOSU in hopes of turning around a women's basketball program that was 7-17 the year before. He had a great recruiting season, including freshman standout Kelli Litsch. In 1982, Loftin's first SWOSU team went 34-0 and won the NAIA national championship. His SWOSU teams ended up winning four more national championships in 1983, 1985, 1987 and 1990. Loftin retired from SWOSU in 2000 after teaching and coaching for 19 years. Accepting the award on Loftin's behalf was Chuck Edwards, the longtime "Voice Of The Bulldogs."

Jill Jones – Jones graduated cum laude with a B.A. from Mississippi University for Women in Columbus in 1969. She completed her M.A. in English in 1973 at Auburn University with the help of an NDEA Fellowship. In 1984, Jones completed her doctoral work at the University of Mississippi. In 1990, she began teaching in the SWOSU Department of Language Arts. She chaired the department from 2003-2011. In 1999, Jones became the first woman to receive the prestigious Bernhardt Academic Excellence Award. Jones retired from SWOSU in 2011 after teaching 21 years in the Department of Language and Literature. She is still teaching SWOSU students as an adjunct in that same department.

Henry Kirkland, Jr. (posthumous) – Kirkland graduated from Langston University in 1958 with a Bachelor of Science degree and earned a Master's degree in 1968 from SWOSU. In the late 1970's, Kirkland completed his doctorate at Oklahoma State University. Kirkland began his career at SWOSU in 1971 in the Department of Biological Sciences, where he not only taught students but also inspired them for 25 years, retiring in 1996. Kirkland passed away August 19, 2016. Accepting the award on behalf of Kirkland was his wife, Viola; his daughter, Melissa; and his son, Steven.

Previous SWOSU Alumni Association Emeritus Award honorees include:

2016: Dan Dill, Joe Anna Hibler, Bill Seibert and Mark Mouse (posthumous).

2015: Roger Egerton, Mona Jean Suter and Lamar Crall.

The SWOSU Alumni Association is a dynamic group of volunteers from all walks of life who are passionate about giving back to SWOSU. The association offers members a variety of benefits and event opportunities. For more information, contact SWOSU's Office of Institutional Advancement at 580-774-3289 or visit www.SWOSUAlumni.com.

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