

Patsy Parker Wins Bernhardt Award at SWOSU

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Dr. Patsy Parker (second from left) won the Bernhardt Academic Excellence Award for 2014 at Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford. The award for exceptional achievement in teaching, scholarship and service is made possible by Dr. William and Theta Juan Bernhardt (right of Parker) of Midwest City. Also pictured is SWOSU President Randy Beutler. Parker won a \$5,000 cash award made possible by the Bernhardts.

Dr. Patsy Parker is the winner of the Bernhardt Academic Excellence Award for 2014 at Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford.

Parker—chair of the Department of Accounting, Computer Science and Entrepreneurship—was surprised with the prestigious award at the annual Bernhardt banquet held March 13 in the Memorial Student Center on the SWOSU campus. For winning the award, Parker received a \$5,000 cash award, clock, pen and medallion.

SWOSU alumni Dr. William and Theta Juan Bernhardt of Midwest City are sponsors of the annual award that goes to an outstanding faculty member who exhibits exceptional achievement in teaching, scholarship and service. Guest speaker for the evening was Bob Blackburn, executive director of the Oklahoma Historical Society and a Distinguished Alum of SWOSU.

Patsy Dillahunty Parker grew up in the Lake Creek community, near Granite, in southwestern Oklahoma. She is the youngest of four children born to Raymond and Opal Dillahunty.

Parker entered SWOSU after graduating from high school in 1974. Her original goal was to complete a 40-hour business program and earn a secretarial science certificate.

However, after completion of the course, she decided to continue her education and obtained a Bachelor of Science in business education in 1978.

For the next four years, she worked for the United States Department of Agriculture in a county office that certified crop acreages, offered crop loans, and provided assistance programs to farmers. Although Parker's farm background made the job enjoyable, she felt the drive to teach. She began working on a master's degree in education and landed her first teaching position in 1982 at Sayre Public Schools teaching junior high math. She finished a Master of Education degree in 1983 while completing her first year of teaching.

During the next 14 years, Parker taught math and business classes at levels ranging from third grade through high school. During this time, she also embarked on one of life's greatest adventures—parenthood. She has two sons, Cole and Caleb.

In 1999, Parker had the opportunity to join the faculty at SWOSU's College of Associate and Applied Studies in Sayre. She was open to a new adventure and readily accepted the opportunity. The teaching duties at the Sayre campus were diverse and demanding. In addition to accepting the position at the Sayre campus, she

also accepted the challenge of increasing the number of graduates for the business program. With the help of the good people at the Sayre campus, the number of graduates increased substantially over the next eight years. Watching the business program at the Sayre campus grow remains one of her most rewarding career experiences.

After teaching in secondary schools for many years, she found teaching in a college classroom a great experience. In 2001, she began commuting to the University of Oklahoma, graduating with a doctor of philosophy degree in 2006. Her dissertation focused on female leadership and she has subsequently published and presented at national conferences.

Since she is first and foremost a teacher, the teaching awards Parker has received mean a great deal to her, along with the accomplishments of her students. She has received the Outstanding Accounting Educator Award by the Oklahoma Society of Certified Public Accountants and was named Phi Beta Lambda Outstanding Advisor for Oklahoma.

In 2007, Parker accepted a teaching position at SWOSU's College of Professional and Graduate Studies on the Weatherford campus. She joined the faculty at the Everett Dobson School of Business and Technology. In 2009, she became chair of the Department of Accounting, Computer Science, and Entrepreneurship. She serves on various campus committees and is an active member of Weatherford Rotary.

Parker is a proud granny to four grandchildren: Jagger, Lola, Jebb and Suzy. Her husband, Mike, works for the Tulsa-based drilling company Helmerich and Payne.

Previous winners of the Bernhardt Award are (in order by year): Dr. Vilas Prabhu, Dr. Stuart Burchett, Dr. Gary Wolgamott, Dr. Terry Segress, Dr. James Hunsicker, Dr. Jill Jones, Dr. James Breckenridge, Dr. John Ludrick, Dr. W. Steven Pray, Dr. Les Crall, Dr. Peter Grant, Dr. John Hayden, Dr. Virgil Van Dusen, Steve Strickler, Dr. Mary Aspedon, Dr. John Woods, Dr. Scott Long, Dr. Charles Rogers, Dr. Tim Hubin and Dr. Brian Campbell.