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MDC professors receive awards

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From left, The 2012 Endowed Teaching Chairs Maria C. Mari, professor of accounting, economics and entrepreneurship, Marta Magellan, professor of english, Adelaida Quesada, associate professor senior of mathematics, Mayte Insua-Auais, professor of psychology, Sheryl Hartman, professor of psychology, Yamina Alvarez, associate professor senior of nursing, Kathy Thomas, professor of nursing, and Lauren Gach, associate professor senior of education, pose at the Miami Dade College Kendall Campus on Friday, Aug. 24, 2012.

Eight Miami Dade College professors will receive the Endowed Teaching Chairs in the 20th anniversary of the award.

The awarding and reception dinner will take place at the Wolfson campus' Chapman Center at 7 p.m. October 22.

The endowment is given to professors who have done remarkable research projects or demonstrated an innovative teaching style.

For example, Professor Adelaida Quesada will be awarded for the use of interactive technology to teach mathematics. She writes all notes on a tablet PC, uses specialized software and publishes videos online working out difficult examples.

"Technology gives them the confidence because they can do it again 20 times," Quesada said.

A committee composed of peers who have been awarded in previous years selects the winners. They consider performance for the last several years and their impact on student retention rates.

"I'm extremely honored because it is your colleagues who select you," Quesada said.

The number of chairs varies every year, depending on the number of programs donating money for endowment. Each endowed professor receives an annual stipend of \$7,500 for three consecutive years in addition to their regular salary.

"I'm going to use the financial reward to acquire more technology to improve my teaching," Quesada said. Some of the math and geometry software she wants to purchase can cost up to \$900.

This year's endowed chairs and the reasons MDC cites for the awards:

- Yamina Alvarez — Joan K. Stout, R.N. Endowed Teaching Chair in Nursing — Alvarez has 35 years of experience in the field of information technology. At MDC, she is credited with implementing high-fidelity simulation technology.
- Lauren Gach — Jeanne-Marie and Dante Fascell Endowed Teaching Chair — Gach helped develop curriculum and served on numerous committees at MDC's School of Education. Gach participates in workshops and seminars nationwide as peer institutions seek her expertise.
- Sheryl Hartman — Freedom Tower Endowed Teaching Chair — For 30 years, Hartman has helped thousands of MDC students in their educational pursuits, chosen careers and personal lives through her teaching and counseling. She also served as a faculty trainer.
- Mayté Insua-Auais — Espirito Santo Bank Endowed Teaching Chair — Insua-Auais has created numerous opportunities for the North Campus' psychology students to learn practical skills, combining years of clinical experience with instructional excellence.
- Marta Magellan — Manuel Medina Endowed Teaching Chair — Active in the literary arts on and off campus, Magellan goes above and beyond to advance literacy and expose students to culture. She develops literatures classes and is advisor to Kendall Campus' literary magazine Miambianca.
- María Mari — Juan A. Galan Jr. Endowed Teaching Chair in Entrepreneurship — An accounting professor, Mari has been a mentor for young Hispanic women. She has received numerous awards, including Professor of the Year from the American Accounting Association. This is her third Endowed Teaching Chair.
- Adelaida Quesada — Dr. Germán Muñoz Endowed Teaching Chair — Quesada has brought mathematics to life for students at MDC for more than 30 years. Her vibrant classes have resulted in excellent retention rates. She combines her innate talent and passion for math with the latest technology to help students succeed.
- Kathy Thomas — M. Anthony Burns/Ryder System Inc. Endowed Teaching Chair — While imparting decades of experience on nursing students at MDC, Professor Thomas has been instrumental in developing curriculum and advancing accreditation endeavors for MDC programs, including the college's bachelor of science in nursing program.

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