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Jeanne Narum: A Lifetime of Achievement

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Hats. Colorful hats. Stylish hats. Playful hats. A wardrobe often reveals a lot about a person's place in the world. In Jeanne Narum's case, her exquisite taste in hats symbolizes the energy and vitality that she radiates. Indeed, her energy is infectious and is widely known for being the source of an academic pandemic leading to the transformation of undergraduate education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics across the United States. Two things happen when Jeanne walks into a room: First, the conversation in the room becomes electric with ideas; and second, before they know it, folks in the room have committed to helping Jeanne launch new initiatives, plan new meetings, advise new faculty, and much, much more. To her credit, folks take on these responsibilities with a smile. Indeed, folks that Jeanne has recruited to contribute their time and energy to Project Kaleidoscope (PKAL) walk away from their conversations with her grateful for the opportunity to help her and PKAL in some way. Of course, more than one or two have also walked away scratching their heads trying to figure out what possessed them to run the next PKAL workshop, write an article, or serve on a task force for PKAL. Jeanne has the rare ability to engage, inspire, and transform individuals and communities. She has most certainly done that for the neuroscience education community.

In 1994, shortly after the founding of Faculty for Undergraduate Neuroscience (FUN), Jeanne and FUN struck up what was to become an enduring partnership to transform undergraduate education in neuroscience. With Jeanne's help, FUN was able to deliver on a major promise made to its fledgling membership, the creation of workshops designed to promote undergraduate neuroscience education by exploring "what works" in a variety of institutions from across the country. The first meeting, held at Davidson College in 1995, entitled "Interdisciplinary Education: Undergraduate Education in Neuroscience," was attended by about 80 participants from across the country invested in establishing neuroscience as a crucial interdisciplinary element of the undergraduate science curriculum. In addition to numerous workshops on innovations in laboratory teaching, grant writing, recruitment and retention of minority students in neuroscience, and introductory "flavors" of neuroscience, a major outcome of the meeting was the creation of four blueprints for undergraduate neuroscience. Subsequent meetings at Oberlin College in 1998 ("Blueprints for Reform"), at Trinity College in 2001 ("From the Enchanted Loom to the World Wide Web"), at Macalester College in 2005 ("Leadership, Laboratories, and a Curriculum for the 21st Century"), and again at Macalester College in 2008



("The Undergraduate Neuroscience Education: Interactions, Interdisciplines, and Curricular Best Practices") were also the product of this partnership between FUN and PKAL, and continued the process of innovating, critically assessing, and solidifying the pedagogical foundation of undergraduate science education.

FUN's success in transforming undergraduate education in neuroscience is in large measure due to Jeanne's extraordinary generosity in supporting our community's education initiatives, on her insistence that the participants in our meetings publicly commit themselves to using the lessons learned at the FUN/PKAL meetings to transform their home institutions, and her requirement that administrators be included as part of the teams that attend PKAL workshops. Her PKAL model for workshops created buy-in from faculty as well as from administration. Slowly, but with inexorable sureness, the undergraduate neuroscience experience is now being established at institutions across the country and internationally. FUN membership with 67 faculty in 1991 has now grown to over 400 faculty in 2008 and these faculty have launched neuroscience programs and departments at undergraduate colleges and universities using lessons learned and shared at FUN/PKAL workshops.

With heartfelt gratitude, FUN's members and leadership present the Lifetime Achievement Award to Jeanne Narum for her tireless efforts to transform and invigorate the undergraduate science education establishment in the United States, for her generosity in helping FUN offer professional development opportunities to its membership, and for providing the financial support and organizational infrastructure by which FUN could begin formulating curricula and educational initiatives to enhance the undergraduate experience in neuroscience.

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