Alumni Awards & Recognition Ceremony

Iowa State University Alumni Association award
   Beate Schmittmann, dean

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences awards
   Beate Schmittmann, dean

Department of Chemistry
   William Jenks, chair

Department of Computer Science
   Johnny Wong, interim chair

Department of English
   Barbara Ching, chair

Department of Geological and Atmospheric Sciences
   Neal Iverson, chair

Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication
   Michael Bugeja, chair

Department of History
   Pamela Riney-Kehrberg, chair

Department of Music & Theatre
   Michael Golemo, chair

Department of Political Science
   James McCormick, chair
Chad Harris has served as the executive director of FarmHouse International Fraternity since 2007, when he was entrusted with oversight of the organization’s strategic initiatives, international and regional educational conferences, alumni outreach initiatives, membership and marketing efforts, risk management, program assessment, and budgetary planning at the young age of 28. He has already earned the respect and admiration of his peers, as evidenced by his election to chair the Interfraternity Board Institute and presidency of the Consortium of Collegiate Agricultural Organizations.

Harris joined FarmHouse from the University of Wisconsin Alumni Association, where he served as a campus relations specialist from 2003-2005 and as director of campus relations from 2005-2007. He is a rising star in his career, but it is perhaps his contributions outside of the professional arena that make him truly outstanding.

Shortly after moving to the Kansas City area, Harris was selected to participate in the prestigious leadership program Centurions, which is administered by the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce. Through that program, Harris found numerous ways to get involved in his community, including as the leader of the Nelson Atkins Museum Young Friends of Art organization, through which he organizes the annual fundraiser “Party Arty,” and as a board member for Hillcrest Transitional Housing of Kansas, which helps homeless families transition to sustainable housing.

Harris has received the Kansas City Society of Association Executives Advance Kansas City Service Award, the Centurions Kansas City Society of Association Executives Outstanding Service Award, and the FarmHouse Fraternity Snyder Alumni Service Award.

A former member of the ISU Young Alumni Council and a current member of ISU’s Department of Political Science Advisory Board, Harris is an ISU Alumni Association lifetime member.

Christine Romans is the host of Your Money, CNN's Saturday and Sunday business program. In addition, Romans reports on the economy, politics, and international business for CNN's morning shows. Her reporting is also regularly featured on CNN International. She is the author of two books: How to Speak Money (Wiley, 2011) and Smart is the New Rich (Wiley, 2010).

Romans' CNN coverage focuses on the latest-breaking developments in the current economic crisis and what they mean to Americans and their money. She is known for her “Romans’ Numeral” segment in which she deconstructs complex stories and explains what they mean for the viewer.

Romans' other contributions at CNN have included leading coverage of the first democratic elections in Iraq's history, supporting award-winning coverage of Hurricane Rita in 2005, and reporting from President Gerald Ford's funeral. Romans has also served as a correspondent for Moneyline and Lou Dobbs Tonight. She has extensively covered such topics as immigration reform, substance abuse, homeland security, American foreign policy, and education.

Romans received an Emmy in 2004 for her work on "Exporting America," a Lou Dobbs Tonight investigation into the impact of globalization on U.S. workers. Romans was also part of the coverage teams that earned CNN a George Foster Peabody award for its Hurricane Katrina coverage and an Alfred I. duPont Award for its coverage of the tsunami disaster in southeast Asia. The National Foundation for Women Legislators honored her with its media excellence award for business reporting, and the Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication named her the 2009 James W. Schwartz Award recipient.

She received the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences' Young Alumni Award in 2006. Romans is an ISU Alumni Association annual member.
Zora Devrnja Zimmerman is the retiring associate dean for academic programs and professor of English in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. For the last 23 years, Zimmerman has played an integral role in developing and planning the College's curricula. Alongside her responsibilities as associate dean, she supervised 15 cross-disciplinary studies programs, student academic advising, career services, and teacher education. She coordinated external reviews for all departments, prepared the North Central and Higher Learning Commission accreditation self-studies, coordinated catalog reviews, designed learning communities and distance education courses, managed student outcomes assessment, and reviewed countless student academic petitions and appeals. She was involved in the Representative Assembly, Honors Program, Orientation, Veishea, disability resources, continuous program improvement, retention, and residency appeals. She helped develop the Center for Excellence in the Arts and Humanities and the Kellogg Vision 2020 Project, and she served almost 20 years on the Board of Regents Committee on Educational Relations. Zimmerman came to ISU in 1974 with a Ph.D. in comparative literature from the State University of New York at Buffalo. She has taught thousands of students in more than 25 different undergraduate and graduate courses. Her published research focuses on traditional oral narrative in the Balkans, the preservation and transmission of customs and beliefs, and the impact of folklore on ethnic identity and history. Fluent in several languages, she is also a translator. In 2012, Zimmerman was selected for the Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women and Politics’ Women Impacting Iowa State calendar, and she has received awards for her service from the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Provost’s Office, and Lampos Honor Society. Zimmerman is an ISU Alumni Association annual member.

During his 53 years at Iowa State University, John G. Verkade's research with his 25 bachelor's students, 18 master's students, 37 Ph.D. students, and 60 post-doctoral students has produced five books, 21 patents, and 428 journal articles. Verkade is celebrated for publishing the first synthesis of a compound that the fire retardant industry widely adopted as a precursor for fire retardant formulations still in use today. Powerful organophosphorus catalysts, which his group synthesized to accelerate a wide variety of important organic reactions, continue to be commercially available. He also invented a method for teaching chemistry students how to construct molecular orbitals in a simple pictorial way for a wide variety of molecules.

Verkade has served as a member of several key committees of the American Chemical Society (ACS) and on the editorial board of the ACS Chemical and Engineering News. He was also a member of the ACS board of directors. In 2010 he was elected Fellow of the ACS and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

He has received a number of awards and honors for his research and teaching, including the BFGoodrich Foundation Collegiate Inventors Program Award (1998), the ISU Award for Outstanding Achievement in Research (2000), the ACS-Midwest Regional Award (2010), and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Award for Achievement in Intellectual Property (2013).

Verkade, who was named University Professor in 1997, earned both a bachelor's degree and Ph.D. from the University of Illinois and holds a master's degree from Harvard University. In 1999 he married Charlene Joy Nunnikhoven. He has three children and four grandchildren. He is an Order of the Knoll member and an ISU Alumni Association annual member.

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Awards

Distinguished Service Award
Established in 1976 to honor alumni, staff, and friends for outstanding service or academic contributions that further the educational mission of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Zora Devrnja Zimmerman
Ames, Iowa

John G. Verkade
Ames, Iowa
Keith Yamamoto is vice chancellor for research, executive vice dean of the school of medicine, and professor of cellular and molecular pharmacology at the University of California, San Francisco. Yamamoto's research is focused on signaling and transcriptional regulation by nuclear receptors, which mediate the actions of several classes of essential hormones and cellular signals. He uses mechanistic and systems approaches to pursue these problems in pure molecules, cells, and whole organisms. Yamamoto has led or served on numerous national committees focused on public and scientific policy, public understanding and support of biological research, and science education. He chairs the Coalition for the Life Sciences and recently joined the National Academy of Sciences Division of Earth and Life Sciences Advisory Committee after completing six years as chair of that body's Board on Life Sciences.

Yamamoto has been deeply involved in the process of peer review and the policies that govern it at the National Institutes of Health, and he presently serves on the Center for Scientific Review Advisory Council. He is a member of the advisory board for the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and is on the Research!America board of directors. He also serves as an advisor to Burrill & Company. Yamamoto is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Medicine, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the American Academy of Microbiology, and is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Yamamoto, who received a Ph.D. in biochemical sciences from Princeton University in 1973, is an ISU Alumni Association life member.

Major General Allen W. Batschelet assumed command of the U.S. Army Recruiting Command June 13, 2013. Commissioned a lieutenant of Artillery, Batschelet was designated a Distinguished Military Graduate upon his graduation from Iowa State University in 1983. He is the highest-ranking active duty ISU alumnus currently in the force. Batschelet has held a range of command and operations staff positions in the Army and on the Joint Staff. His service includes deployments during Operation Desert Shield, Operation Desert Storm, and Operation Iraqi Freedom, as well as Operations Joint Endeavor and Joint Guard in Bosnia. Most recently, Batschelet served as Acting Commanding General, V Corps, and the Deputy Chief of Staff, G3, U.S. Army Europe and Seventh Army from August 2009 to September 2011. Before coming to Recruiting Command, he served as the Director of Operations, Plans, Training and Exercises, J3, European Command, in Stuttgart, Germany.

Batschelet holds two master's degrees in military arts and sciences from the Command and General Staff College and a master of strategic art from the U.S. Army War College. His military education includes Field Artillery Officer Basic Course, Infantry and Armor Officer Advanced Courses, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and the School for Advanced Military Studies and the U.S. Army War College. His awards and decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, and foreign awards including the German Cross of Honor in Gold. His badges include the Combat Action Badge, the Airborne and Air Assault Badges, the Joint Staff and U.S. European Command Identification Badges, and the Army Recruiter Badge.

Batschelet and his wife, Terri, have two children, Adam and Kelsey. He is an ISU Alumni Association life member.
Following a postdoctoral appointment at Northwestern University, Christine Aikens began her academic career in 2007 as an assistant professor at Kansas State University. She was promoted to associate professor of chemistry with tenure in 2012.

Among her many accomplishments are a Camille Dreyfus Teacher-Scholar Award (2011), an American Chemical Society Outstanding Junior Faculty Award from the division of Computers in Chemistry (2011), selection as one of the Top 150 Scientists in Kansas (2011), an Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Fellowship (2011-2013), and a National Science Foundation CAREER Award (2010). She was inducted into the Kansas State University Academy of Fellows in 2013.

Aikens' research is currently funded by the National Science Foundation, as well as the Sloan and Dreyfus Foundations. She has previously received funding from the Air Force Office of Scientific Research. She has organized several national and international symposia. She already has 50 publications in refereed journals to her name.

She received her BS degree in chemistry from the University of Oklahoma. While a Ph.D. student at ISU, she served as secretary/treasurer, acting president, vice president, and chair of the professional development committee for Iota Sigma Pi (Honor Society for Women in Chemistry). Aikens is already very well known in the fields of theoretical and computational chemistry and is a valued collaborator and colleague to many.

Matthew Renze is an independent software consultant with over 13 years of professional experience in building data-driven desktop, server, and web applications. His interests include data analytics, data visualization, and machine learning.

At his company, Renze Consulting, he develops data-driven software applications using Agile methods, performs data analysis using Agile methods, and provides coaching and mentoring on Lean, Agile, Scrum, and XP methods. He is currently creating an open-source software application that will allow users to explore arbitrary sets of data in highly visual and interactive ways. His aim is to help increase data literacy in the general public.

While a student, Renze was a member of the ISU Computer Science and Software Engineering Club and ISU Philosophy Club. He graduated from ISU with distinction (cum laude) and also received a minor in Economics. He was accepted into the Upsilon Pi Epsilon Honor Society for the Computing Sciences in 2009.

Renze is a member of Iowa .NET User Group and Agile Iowa. He frequently speaks at conferences on technology and software development topics.
George Strawn has been involved with computers since he was introduced to them the summer before his senior year in college; first during that summer at Argonne Laboratory, then working for IBM, then studying and working at Iowa State. He then became a faculty member in the newly established computer science department.

He served a term as department chair (1983-86) and became director of the ISU computation center (1986-95). In the early 1990s he took a temporary position at the National Science Foundation in Washington, D.C., to join the group that was creating what would later be called the Internet.

This temporary position turned into an unexpected mid-career change and he has spent the last 22 years at NSF where he has been involved with computer networking research and all of NSF's IT research programs. He also served for seven years as the NSF chief information officer. For the last four years he has directed an interagency program that coordinates the IT research programs of 20 federal agencies and reports to the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy.

A track and cross country runner in college, he continued to run until turning 70, including a decade of competing in road races along with fellow Iowa Staters in the 1980s. He also appeared in little theatre productions, first in Cedar Rapids and then in Ames community theater, where he met his wife, Candace (BS, MS and Ph.D. from Iowa State). Their family includes four children (one daughter is an Iowa State graduate), nine grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Adrienne Lamberti is an associate professor of Languages and Literatures, an Administrative Fellow with the Office of the Provost, and Coordinator of the Professional Writing Program at the University of Northern Iowa. She teaches topics in rhetoric, professional communication, digital media, communication across the curriculum, and organizational culture, and co-founded UNI's new Interactive Digital Studies Program, now one of the fastest-growing academic programs on campus.

Lamberti also has worked as a communications specialist for public organizations such as the Iowa Department of Transportation, and for private industries such as Thomson Publishing. While at Iowa State, she further worked with Extension programs such as the Beginning Farmer Center, and with outreach programs such as the Center for Transportation Engineering and Education.

Her research interests include narrative and anecdote as forms of professional communication, and technology-mediated communication genres. Having grown up on an Iowa Century Farm, Lamberti especially is interested in the communications surrounding the food production end of agricultural science, which were the focus of her first book, Talking the Talk: Revolution in Agricultural Communication, as well as the focus of an in-progress collection titled At the Round Table.

Raymond Lindsay Ethington was born on August 28, 1929, in State Center, Iowa. His parents moved soon to a farm in eastern Story County. His elementary education was at a one-room school. Ethington was valedictorian of his high school class in Colo. He then left home for Iowa State in September 1946.

Chemistry was less absorbing than expected, and he changed to geology as a sophomore after assignment to a class to fulfill a requirement (students were regimented then). The Korean War put him in the Army upon receiving his BS degree in 1951. Following active duty, he returned to ISU to prepare for employment, receiving a MS degree in 1955. His experience as a TA and the influence of Chairman Chalmer Roy caused another change: to become a university professor.

Graduate work at the University of Iowa introduced him to conodonts, fossils he studied intensively for the past 60 years. Receipt of his Ph.D. in 1958 led to positions at Arizona State University and in 1962 at the University of Missouri.

His research has been recognized by the Moore Medal of SEPM (Society for Sedimentary Geology) and by the Pander Medal of the Pander Society. He edited the Journal of Paleontology as well as nine hard-bound books for SEPM. He is the author of approximately 100 articles dealing with conodonts.

Ethington became Professor Emeritus upon retirement in 2000. He still is found daily at his microscope pursuing conodonts.

Captain Raymond R. Delgado III enlisted in the Navy in 1986 and reported to basic training in San Diego, Calif. He was selected and completed the Broadened Opportunity for Officer Selection and Training (BOOST) program in San Diego in 1987, earning a Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps scholarship. He attended Iowa State where he was commissioned in 1991.

He is currently in command of Fleet Weather Center, Norfolk, since February 2013. Previously, he was assigned as Staff Oceanographer and Current Operations Director for Commander, Third Fleet, in San Diego, until 2012. In 2007, he was assigned to the Commander, Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command staff at Stennis Space Center, Miss., where he served as Plans, Exercises and Theater Security Cooperation officer.

While at the Naval Oceanographic Office, Stennis Space Center, he earned a Master's of Science degree in hydrographic science from the University of Southern Mississippi in 2002. He also holds dual Master of Science degrees in meteorology and physical oceanography from the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif.

Delgado has been awarded the Meritorious Service Medal with four gold stars, Navy Commendation Medal with three gold stars, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with one gold star and various campaign and service awards.

Delgado is from Hollandale, Minn. He is married to LaDonna Pillsbury of Farmington, Maine, and has two daughters, Cora and Faith.
Barbara Mack was general counsel of the Des Moines Register and Tribune Company and an award-winning media law professor at Iowa State. She was a trusted mentor, teacher, and friend to ISU journalists for more than two decades.

Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication faculty members selected their colleague for the 2013 Schwartz Award in recognition for all she has done to educate citizens and students about law and social justice. Mack passed away unexpectedly in August 2012.

Her passion for truth and transparency led to an iconic career as a media law professor in the Greenlee School. She also helped found the Iowa Freedom of Information Council. Her numerous honors include the Master Teacher Award in 2000 and the Alumni Association’s Superior Service Award in 2011. She was posthumously inducted into the Iowa Women’s Hall of Fame in August 2013.

Mack met Jim Schwartz in 1972 when she was a student at Iowa State. Schwartz told her that he had “high expectations” of her as a journalist. Mack told faculty, staff and alumni that Schwartz was one of the few people who inspired her throughout her career.

Mack earned her J.D. from Drake University in 1977. Throughout her professional and professorial career, she was a beloved friend to colleagues and substitute parent to thousands of students.

Leo E. Landis was born in Des Moines and grew up in Clive, Iowa. He attended Dowling High School in West Des Moines. Today, he serves as museum curator for the State Historical Museum of Iowa. Prior to that he worked as curator and director of education at Salisbury House in Des Moines.

He is a member of the Iowa Museum Association, Iowa Conservation and Preservation Consortium, and the Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums.

His previous work experience includes time at Living History Farms in Urbandale, Conner Prairie in Fishers, Ind., and eight years as a curator at Henry Ford Museum & Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Mich. He received his Masters of Arts in Historical Administration from Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, Ill. He has completed all but his dissertation toward a Ph.D. in History from Iowa State.

While an undergraduate at ISU, Landis was a steward, associate member chairman and social chairman of Phi Kappa Theta Fraternity, a member of Phi Alpha Theta History Honorary Fraternity, security committee chairman of ISU MDA Dance Marathon, and college bowl co-chair for Greek Week. As a graduate student, he created and launched the web site for the graduate program in Agricultural History & Rural Studies and a separate site for the academic journal Agricultural History.

He lives in Des Moines with his wife, Nancy, (ISU, 1989) and son, Forrest. He and Nancy are ISU Alumni Association life members.
Jeffrey Prater, Professor Emeritus of Music at Iowa State University, was among the very first graduates of the music department, and later taught for 33 years at Iowa State as Professor and Chair of the Theory-Composition division where he was named a “Master Teacher” and “Distinguished Scholar in the Arts and Humanities.”

In 2005, Prater received a Fulbright Senior Lecturer Award and was in residence at Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University in Kaliningrad, Russia. This international lecturing relationship continues to this day, with Prater having returned to the Russian Federation 12 times (twice for the U.S. State Department’s “Speakers and Specialists” program), and having presented over 90 lectures on musical culture in the United States.

As a composer, he has written over 90 original musical compositions and has received numerous commissions and awards for his work, including the American Society of Composers Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) award every year since 1996. In 2007, Prater was invited to attend an international choral festival at the Saratov (Russia) Conservatory of Music, where his hour-long oratorio Veni Creator Spiritus was performed by the Saratov Governor’s Theatre Chorus, soloists from the United States, and the Saratov Symphony Orchestra.

Prater holds degrees from the University of Iowa, Michigan State University, and Iowa State University. The Department of Music & Theatre is enormously proud of his accomplishments, achievements, and dedication to teaching.

Jeffrey Prater
BS Music '69
Ames, Iowa

Heather Hobson began her career in public service at an early age, having served as a Page in the Iowa House of Representatives while still in high school. She became well-known on the Iowa State campus during her time as Government of the Student Body Vice President. Following graduation, she studied the European Union and international law in The Netherlands.

Hobson began her career in federal service when she was selected for an internship in Senator Charles Grassley’s Washington, D.C. office. She was offered a full-time position and worked as a Legislative Aide to Senator Grassley.

Hobson was then selected to join the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in 1996. She worked primarily on national security matters out of the Washington, D.C. Field Office. During this time, she also earned a Master of Science Degree in Strategic Intelligence from the Joint Military Intelligence College in Washington, D.C.

Hobson was extensively involved in the 9/11 investigation out of the FBI Washington, D.C. Field Office. She went on to be selected for a Special Agent position in 2002 and was reassigned to the Denver Field Office. Hobson has completed several overseas assignments and was selected for a Supervisory Special Agent position at FBI Headquarters for two years. Given her love of the mountains, she returned to Colorado where she continues to work for the Department of Justice. In her limited spare time, Hobson enjoys photography, skiing, and bicycling.

Heather M. Hobson
BA Political Science '94
Evergreen, Colorado
When Iowa State Agricultural College first opened its doors in 1869, the liberal arts were an important part of the institution. Iowa State has taught courses in physics, chemistry, English, history, and philosophy since the very beginning, and throughout the years added more humanities offerings.

In 1898, studies in the liberal arts and sciences were given a home in the Division of Science and Philosophy, and the Division underwent several other name changes until 1959, when the service division became a college, the College of Sciences and Humanities, which offered students full-fledged majors in liberal arts and scientific curricula.

Today the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, its current name since 1990, is the most academically diverse college at the university and offers a wide and rich range of program options.