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Teodora Amoloza
Sociologist to Receive
IWU's Top Teaching Honor in Y2K

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.—The 2000 DuPont Award for Teaching Excellence, Illinois Wesleyan University's top teaching honor, will go to Teodora Amoloza, associate professor of sociology and director of the International Studies Program.

Amoloza's award was announced April 14 at IWU's Honors Day Convocation. She will receive the DuPont Award next April as part of Honors Day 2000 festivities.

"It feels very good," Amoloza said, "to be recognized by my colleagues for doing things I love to do anyway."

Amoloza was perched in the balcony of Westbrook Auditorium in Presser Hall, sitting with faculty colleagues, when she heard the announcement by IWU's Provost and Dean of Faculty Janet McNew.

"It was completely unbelievable," Amoloza said. "It was a total, total surprise."

It was a well-kept secret, too, since Amoloza's husband and daughter were on hand, secretly driving to Bloomington from DeKalb, Ill., and St. Louis, Mo., respectively. Amoloza's husband, Jerry, is working on a doctorate in economics at Northern Illinois University. Her daughter, Jaydee, 20, is a junior at Washington University, where she is working on a bachelor of science degree in computer science and a bachelor of arts degree in psychology, with a minor in French.

Amoloza's enthusiasm for teaching is reflected in her attitude toward students. She feels an "intrinsic reward" when she sees the reaction of students—the proverbial light bulb going off in their head—when they first master a subject. Those moments in teaching, Amoloza says, "are very satisfying."

Good teachers at the college level have three characteristics, according to Amoloza: they know their material, they're able to communicate, and they're sensitive to students.

While she concedes that some students and colleagues consider her a "task master," she firmly believes that "you don't compromise on standards" in the classroom.

"My strategy," she explains, "is to begin each semester telling the students what my rules are, what hoops they have to jump through in this class."

However, as the semester unfolds, Amoloza admits, she can "back down a bit," explaining, "If six books are too many to read for the class, I'll cut it down. Students appreciate that more than getting an extra book to read at the end of the semester."

Amoloza comes from a family where a premium was placed on education. Her father, Pedro Oliveros, is a retired semi-skilled worker, age 80, and her mother, Rufina, age 75, cared for the family's 10 youngsters. All of Amoloza's nine surviving siblings have earned college degrees, including two brothers and a sister who Amoloza put through college.

"Higher education is the only ticket out of poverty," Amoloza said. "Without [my parents] sacrifice, this wouldn't be possible," she added, referring to her IWU teaching award. "This honor is as much theirs, as it is mine."

The \$1,000 teacher-scholar award is sponsored by DuPont Agricultural Products, Inc., of El Paso, Ill., a subsidiary of the Delaware-based chemical industry leader, E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Co.

Before joining the IWU faculty in January, 1990, Amoloza was at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, where she taught for seven years and was affiliated with the Bureau of Sociological Research.

Amoloza, who was born in the Philippines, earned bachelor's and master's degrees in agriculture and statistics, respectively, from the University of the Philippines, Los Banos, and a doctorate in sociology from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln.

IWU, founded in 1850, enrolls about 2,000 students in a College of Liberal Arts, and individual schools of Music, Theatre Arts, Art, and Nursing. Since 1994, these facilities have been added to the IWU campus: a \$15 million athletics and recreation center, a \$25 million science center, a \$6.8 million residence hall, a \$5.1 million Center for Liberal Arts, and a \$1.65 million baseball stadium.