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Jaggi Named Kemp Teaching Award Winner

April 11, 2012

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Chair and Professor of Physics Narendra Jaggi has been named the 2013 winner of the Kemp Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence at Illinois Wesleyan University. The announcement was made today, April 11 at the annual Honors Convocation in Westbrook Auditorium of Presser Hall.

The Kemp teaching award is the University's highest teaching honor and is awarded annually to a faculty member at the event. Christopher Kemp of the Kemp Foundation and whose family has had a long history of supporting IWU, presented the award to Jaggi.

The Convocation also honors students and faculty of national and international honors societies, and included speakers Stutzman Peace Fellow Megan Thompson '12 and Kathryn Breisch '12, who gave the welcoming remarks. The 2012 Kemp award winner, Professor of Political Science William Munro, gave the keynote address.

Munro's talk, titled "I-74, Humanitarian Science and the Ecological Imagination," addressed genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and the pressing issue of "go modern or starve." The political science professor called for ecological imagination, which he described as not seeing GMOs in black and white terms such as good versus bad, but rather "as part of a larger human ecology." This ecological thinking "requires acts of imagination that go beyond our own journey and take us out of the center of our own narratives and metaphors through which we appropriate the world," said Munro.

Recalling Sister Helen Prejean's speech at the last Founders' Day Convocation in February, Munro paraphrased the social activist who said we do what we can within the bounds of our consciousness. Munro's call to action took Prejean's remarks one step further. While we must do what we can, we cannot be contained by the bounds of our consciousness, Munro explained. "If we are to think empathically and ecologically, we must continually question the categories that constitute those bounds," he said. "This...is extraordinarily difficult; but it is essential. It is sometimes fun. And it is ultimately profoundly fulfilling."

Munro, who is the co-author of *Fighting for the Future of Food: Activists versus Agribusiness in the Struggle over Biotechnology*, has been a political science professor at Illinois Wesleyan since 2000.

Jaggi, this year's honoree, has served as chair of the Department of Physics since he came to Illinois Wesleyan in 1991, and recently announced this will be his final year as chair.



2012 and 2013 Kemp Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence winners, Professor of Political Science William Munro and Chair and Professor of Physics Narendra Jaggi.

The physics professor, who has co-authored 37 research papers in journals in both physics and sociology, conducts research in the areas of possible signatures of extra spatial dimensionality (four and above) by measuring and analyzing electrical properties of hypercubic networks of lumped electronic elements; the use of Mathematica as an integrated and distributed tool in the undergraduate physics curriculum; and the use of Field Programmable Gate Arrays for designing flexible precision timing circuits for physics experiments. Jaggi also is collaborating with Professor of Physics Linda French on the analysis of her group's data on rotational properties of Trojan Asteroids.



William Munro gave the keynote address.

In a letter recommending Jaggi for the Kemp award, Professor of Physics Gabe Spalding wrote, "Narendra is an astoundingly deep thinker, a true scholar, open to a high level of engagement on very many plains, capable of making enormous contributions in many disparate areas, and these attributes have been truly inspirational to our students."

Jaggi was named the 2003 Illinois Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE). He also was named the University's Professor of the Year 2002-2003 by IWU's Student Senate. At the time of this honor, it was noted by Student Senate that "Jaggi's engaging classroom style and his involvement in numerous campus activities led to his selection."

A native of India, Jaggi received degrees in physics from Ranchi University and from the University of Bombay where he earned a Ph.D. After working in the Department of Atomic Energy in Bombay, he pursued a postdoctoral fellowship at Northwestern University, then joined the physics department at Northeastern University in Boston before coming to IWU.

Jaggi is co-founder of the Sports and Scholars Program, a summer academic enrichment experience that has been recognized as a model for exemplifying "university-industry-community cooperation." He also has been a participant in Coalition for Diversity and Reconciliation, Not in Our Town and McLean County India Association, of which he is a former president.

He has been an active participant in faculty governance, serving as the Chair of Chairs in the Natural Science Division, as Chair of the Faculty Development Committee, as Chair of Curriculum Council, as Chair of the Hearing Committee, as a member of CUPP and many other committees. Described as a conscientious "communitarian," he has lead many events dealing with acceptance of difference and diversity, including most recently the "Hoodies or Hijabs: The Hate Has to Stop" demonstration on March 27 on the IWU Quad.

In a statement regarding his teaching philosophy, Jaggi has written: "I believe that genuine affection and enthusiasm for learning can be infectious. I believe that students can learn from each other, and I from them."

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