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BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Illinois Wesleyan University Chair and Associate Professor of Chemistry Rebecca Roesner has been named the 2014 winner of the Kemp Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence at the annual Honors Convocation Wednesday. The award, the University's highest teaching honor, is presented annually to a faculty member.

In announcing Roesner as the recipient, Provost and Dean of the Faculty Jonathan Green quoted one of Roesner's nominators, who noted "her dedication and exceptional commitment to each student, plus her mentoring of junior faculty in the department, create a model for other IWU faculty. She integrates scholarship in teaching of undergraduates, stimulating excitement for the acquisition of knowledge and motivating students to utilize their potentials. She is always looking for ways to enhance the college experiences of our students."

An inorganic chemist, many of Roesner's research projects involve polyoxometalates, which are catalytically active inorganic compounds that form between oxygen and early transition metals such as vanadium, molybdenum and tungsten. Roesner's work involves both modifying polyoxometalates and designing molecular receptors for them in efforts to enhance their utility in catalysis. Roesner is also interested in determining the molecular structures of compounds using X-ray crystallography and in developing student laboratory projects concerning biofuels. She has involved more than 50 Illinois Wesleyan students in her research projects.

Roesner's work has been published in *Inorganic Chemistry, Advances in Inorganic Chemistry* and *The Chemical Educator*. She has presented her work at the International Symposium on Macrocyclic Chemistry, the Biennial Conference on Chemical Education, and numerous meetings of the American Chemical Society. She has also mentored or advised many Illinois Wesleyan students in their successful application for additional opportunities including

National Science Foundation Graduate Student Fellowships and the Pfizer Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship.

Roesner joined the Illinois Wesleyan faculty in 1997. She graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University with majors in chemistry and history, and earned a Ph.D. in inorganic chemistry from the University of Kansas.

Active in her service to the University and to her profession, Roesner is currently serving on the University's Curriculum Council and Pre-Medical Advisory Committee, and is vice president of the Illinois Wesleyan chapter of the American Association of University Professors. She is an active member of the American Chemical Society, Phi Beta Kappa and Iota Sigma Pi, a national honor society for women in chemistry.

In addition to the announcement of the Kemp Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence, the Convocation recognizes numerous student scholastic honors and other faculty honorees. Two retiring faculty members – Professor of German Julie Prandi and Professor of History Paul Bushnell – were awarded the status of faculty emeritus.

The 2013 Kemp Teaching award winner, Narendra Jaggi, professor of physics, was the speaker for the Convocation. Nick Kemp of the Kemp Foundation presented Jaggi with the award.

In his speech for the occasion, entitled "Refracting Honor Through a Personal Prism," Jaggi utilized his Facebook page to present an often humorous yet touching reflection of the people he honors and those who have honored him throughout his life and career. He spoke of people ranging from his wife and Nelson Mandela to former professors and students.

Using a prism and light as metaphors, Jaggi admonished the audience to think of the light as people being sent through a prism of honor. "Who you honor, whom you honor, what you honor, how you honor – that refraction tells you about the prism," said Jaggi. "Whom you honor and how you honor tells the rest of the world what you are made of."

Citing a recent *New York Times* article centered on "we are what we quote," Jaggi likened that article's main point to honor -- with an important difference.

"Not that we are who we honor, but we honor those we would *like* to be like," he said.

Speaking directly to the students, Jaggi admonished them to go out into their lives and communities with "eyes open, ears open, make sure the prism of your own community, of your

own organization fairly and inclusively honors all aspects of human richness and human accomplishment."

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