

Marquette University and UW-Parkside employees receive awards for civic engagement

MILWAUKEE -- Carole Ferrara, director of Marquette University's Trinity Fellows Program, and Penny Lyter, an associate professor of health, exercise, and sports management at UW-Parkside, will receive the Sister Joel Read Civic Engagement Practitioners Award at the annual Campus Compact for Wisconsin (CCWI) Civic Engagement Institute on March 21.

The award recognizes faculty and staff from Wisconsin colleges and universities who go above and beyond to bring the community into the classroom and to make their campuses more engaged in the community. The award celebrates the legacy of Alverno College's Sister Joel Read, president of the college for 25 years.

"I'm so pleased to honor Penny and Carole with the Sister Joel Read Civic Engagement Practitioners award this year. It is inspiring to see the work they have done to advance community-university partnerships and student involvement with local communities," Trina Van Schyndel, Director of CCWI, said. "It is my hope that highlighting their work will inspire our next generation of leaders."

In 2000, Ferrara was invited to serve as coordinator of the inaugural [Trinity Fellows Program](#) team, a graduate fellowship program whose goal is to develop urban leaders with a commitment to social and economic justice. Ferrara oversaw agency placement, where students are matched with a nonprofit to work with during the 21-month fellowship.

The program awards up to 15 fellowships annually in a wide variety of graduate programs at Marquette. Students receive a full-tuition scholarship and a monthly stipend for their work.

"Her encouragement and support for student engagement is felt immediately," Carolyn Swabek, Assistant Director of the Trinity Fellows Program, said. "The process she has developed reveals a deep ability to listen, understand needs, and find common ground." Swabek nominated Ferrara for this award.

The program was launched with the Burke Foundation, whose financial support over the years has allowed for it to expand.

"As the primary leader of the Trinity Fellows since its inception nearly 20 years ago, Carole has elevated the program to become a well-respected pillar within the Greater Milwaukee community," Tina Quealy, Executive Director of the Burke Foundation, said.

Lyter's commitment to civic engagement includes teaching community-based learning (CBL) courses at UW-Parkside since 2000. Lyter was instrumental in adding Sports and Fitness Nutrition as a CBL option that addresses food security and reaches 120 students each semester.

In 2017, Lyter stepped in as Interim Faculty Director for [Community Based Learning and Research](#). Lyter also serves on the Civic Action Team, where she facilitates CBL Faculty Fellows, plans recognition and professional development, mentors CBL faculty, and teaches the Community Engagement Certificate capstone.

"Dr. Lyter has been a champion of civic engagement in her own classroom, department, and across campus," Debra Karp, director of community engagement at UW-Parkside, said. "Her leadership increases our campus' awareness of domestic violence, healthcare access, food security and wellness." Karp nominated Lyter for this award.

Lyter also partnered with the Women's Resource Center, a domestic violence shelter in Racine, to create a Women's Health Issues course. Students learn about domestic violence by spending time at the shelter and creating activities that address clients' health. Students also raise resources for the Center through donation drives and grants.

"I have had the pleasure of sitting in on the classes a few times and the excitement and the drive that they all have is amazing," Lynn Hegeman, Business Office Operations Manager or Women's Resource Center of Racine, said. "The students come up with the ideas themselves, with the encouragement of Penny."

Ferrara and Lyter will be honored with the award at the annual Civic Engagement Institute on March 21 at Alverno College.

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Campus Compact is a national coalition of 1,000+ colleges and universities committed to the public purposes of higher education. We build democracy through civic education and community development. Our national office is in Boston, MA, with state and regional Campus Compacts providing place-based support for member institutions located throughout the country. Campus Compact for Wisconsin (CCWI) was established in 2002 and comprises 27 members including public, private, and technical college campuses. CCWI is currently based at Cardinal Stritch University in Milwaukee, WI.

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