

Section's Distinguished Teaching Award Winner

This year's winner of the John Smith Award for distinguished College or University Teaching is Prof. Lyn Stallings, of American University. Virginia (Lyn) Stallings earned her Ph.D. in 1989 at the University of Southern Mississippi. She is the Chair of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at American University, and has been a member of the faculty there since 1991. Her effectiveness in the classroom is well known at American University. She receives uniformly high ratings on students teaching evaluation forms, and was the recipient of the 1994 American University Faculty Award for Outstanding Teaching. In 1987 she received a National Science Foundation Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics Teaching. Dr. Stallings has also been extremely effective in graduate education, playing a central role in American's doctoral program in Mathematics Education, and serving as the major professor for six successful PhD candidates since 1992. All of these students have gone on to professional positions in mathematics education, primarily as college teachers.

Dr. Stallings has made numerous contributions to the broader goals of mathematics education, both on and off campus. On campus, she was one of the developers of a tutoring laboratory that currently serves the needs of hundreds of undergraduate mathematics students, while providing valuable experience for advanced undergraduate students in mathematics and related fields, as well as graduate students in mathematics education and statistics. She originated American University's annual Sonya Kowalevsky day, a celebration of mathematics for girls in local secondary schools. The program has been very successful and popular with the students and their teachers, as well as receiving a very positive review in the newsletter of the AWM. Dr. Stallings has initiated links with the DC public schools, and has been successful in developing opportunities for in-service teachers to advance their studies, as well as for mathematics education graduate students to work with the school system. She has worked actively with professional organizations, especially the NCTM, and has served as a peer reviewer for both journal articles and grant proposals. She has also been successful in developing grants for educational innovations, including two grants at American University promoting new uses of technology in the classroom.

An active current interest for Dr. Stallings is the development of alternative approaches to evaluation, including rubric grading and portfolio assessment. She has given many workshops at professional meetings on these topics. Dr. Stallings has also worked with graduate students performing research in this area. This joint work has resulted in an approach to examinations that motivates students to assess their own errors, gives them credit for learning that occurs in the process, and still remains a manageable system for the instructor. Interested faculty can find out about this system at a workshop Dr. Stallings is presenting at the Fall section meeting.