



KILLAM AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN MENTORING

Citations of award winners, most recent first:

2016

Kevin Bennewith

Dr. Kevin Bennewith, an Assistant Professor in Pathology and Laboratory Medicine who carries out research on tumour cells with the BC Cancer Agency, is an exemplary mentor, recognized for consistently putting the interests of his students first, even ahead of his own. He enables his students to take ownership of their work, fostering a collaborative environment among his trainees that creates opportunities for them to contribute and learn. His students describe Dr. Bennewith as a role model through and through, embodying scholarly integrity and expecting it from all those he mentors.

Sally Thorne

Dr. Sally Thorne, a Professor in the School of Nursing, is internationally recognized in the fields of cancer and chronic illness, generating practice-based knowledge that enhances the health of individuals, populations, and health care systems, while advancing the nursing discipline. Dr. Thorne is an inspirational mentor who models authenticity, integrity, respect, and compassion, consistently displaying empathy and accommodation for the challenging circumstances that can arise in a student's tenure. She has well-developed coaching qualities which pervade all her interactions, strategically tailoring her approach to bring out the strengths of each individual and encourage her students to develop as independent researchers.

2015

Jennifer Shapka

Dr. Jennifer Shapka's research focuses on how technology influences the developmental well-being of children and adolescents. Sought out by students with diverse backgrounds in psychology, technology, and education, Dr. Shapka is always open to innovative research ideas. She creates opportunities for her students to excel by approaching supervision from an individual perspective; the results can be seen in her students' success in obtaining scholarships, going on to successful academic or professional careers, and making important contributions to their fields. On a more systemic level, Dr. Shapka has been instrumental in developing and implementing departmental policy focused on supporting graduate students.

Nicolas Jaeger

Dr. Nicolas Jaeger provides an outstanding example of someone who combines excellence in research and innovation with generous graduate mentoring. Unstinting with his time, Dr. Jaeger devotes his considerable energies to helping each student develop the confidence they need to become successful research engineers. Dr. Jaeger also devotes additional hours to students whose first language is not English, taking the opportunity to train them not only in English grammar but also in critical thinking. He works to provide all his students with the tools necessary to produce work that they, and UBC, can be proud of.



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2014

Purang Abolmaesumi

Both at UBC and previously at Queen's University, Dr. Purang Abolmaesumi has fostered a richly interdisciplinary and collegial environment in support of his students. Possessing the rare gift of seeing the true potential of his students, Dr. Abolmaesumi has been a transformative influence for many students – not only those whom he has directly supervised, but also the entire Biomedical Engineering Graduate Program, for which he has served as Graduate Advisor for more than four years. The fruit of his personal commitment to his students can be clearly seen in their educational and career successes, as well as in the enduring affection his students have for him.

Wan Lam

Known for fostering an immensely welcoming and supportive family atmosphere, Dr. Lam is an engaged and caring mentor to his students and the wider research community. The exceptional success of his students speaks to Dr. Lam's generosity and commitment to excellence; that his students have been successful in a variety of fields (academia, medicine and even law) speaks to his steadfast determination to give his students both the freedom and responsibility to thrive. Pairing an infectious love of science with genuine care for his students, Dr. Lam has had a profound impact on the future of his discipline.

Jo-ann Archibald

Dr. Jo-ann Archibald has an international reputation as an outstanding scholar, and through her mentorship and leadership of numerous initiatives, has helped transform Indigenous education in Canada. The many graduate students she has mentored consistently praise her for her holistic approach to mentorship, engaging their physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual needs in ways that transcend their often isolating programmatic experiences. Her high standards, wise and caring counsel, and commitment to instilling in her students a sense of responsibility for others have contributed to her students' success in making a positive impact as leaders in their fields and communities after graduation.

2013

Rabab Ward

Dr. Rabab Ward has been widely admired as an exemplary researcher, teacher and mentor throughout her highly distinguished career of over 30 years in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. Students from her very first PhD graduate in 1985 to current lab members expressed deep appreciation for her profound generosity of time and spirit, unwavering commitment to research excellence, tireless dedication to students' professional skill development, and facilitation of outstanding career opportunities within and beyond the academy. Dr. Ward has nurtured a generation of confident, ambitious researchers who carry forward her passion for mentoring and social contribution.

Laurel Schafer

Since joining the Department of Chemistry in 2001, Dr. Laurel Schafer has had an extraordinary record of attracting and mentoring award-winning students and postdoctoral fellows, guiding them to reach their full potential in a wide range of successful careers. Her trainees extol her ability to recognize and build on the unique interests and attributes of each individual, fostering their curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking skills by example and through persistent encouragement and constructive criticism. Her laboratory is renowned for its respectful, ethical, and supportive dynamics, and students cherish her active and caring engagement in their lifelong academic, professional and personal development.



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2012

Carl Leggo

Dr. Carl Leggo is considered by colleagues and graduate students, “simply superior at graduate mentoring”. He joined the Department of Language and Literacy Education in 1990 and has supervised a remarkable cohort of doctoral and masters students [236 total supervised and co-supervised]. He is lauded for his “critical compassion”, “wisdom” and unstinting dedication to his mentees’ intellectual development and personal well-being. A distinguished scholar and poet, Dr. Leggo encourages his students to develop innovative approaches to research and publication because he “engages, listens closely and deeply, and enters into a dialogue at the end of which new pathways and possibilities most often emerge.”

Mark MacLachlan

Since joining the Department of Chemistry in 2001, Dr. Mark MacLachlan has established a dynamic research program that has nurtured and a remarkable cadre of graduate and postgraduate scholars. Those he has supervised – many of whom now hold significant academic and professional posts – praise Dr. MacLachlan’s “enthusiasm and vigor,” his effective guidance of their research, encouragement of “learning through self-direction and self-discovery,” and “faith in their ability to generate ideas.” Alongside scientific and scholarly inspiration, stands his availability, timely communication, “caring” mentorship and strategic advocacy for each student’s professional advancement well beyond graduation.

Joanna McGrenere

Dedicated to the intellectual growth and personal well-being of her many graduate students, Dr. Joanna McGrenere joined the Department of Computer Science in 2002. She is highly respected as a graduate mentor by students and colleagues alike, particularly for the way in which she prioritizes graduate supervision. One complimented “Joanna’s outstanding ability to create positive relationships and constructive interactions in which she enables research excellence.” Another recalled how “all feedback, even criticism, is provided in a respectful, non-confrontational manner, giving students the scaffolding necessary for them to take ownership of their progress.”