



KILLAM AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN MENTORING

Citations of award winners, most recent first:

2019

Molly Babel

An Associate Professor in Linguistics, Dr. Babel has been enthusiastically described by her students as an incredible scholar, and inspirational mentor and role model, who demonstrates immense dedication, care, and integrity in all her interactions with students. She has high growth expectations for her students, and helps to ensure they reflect on the broader context and value of their areas of research. It is noteworthy that she encourages and supports her students to follow their own interests and passions in their research questions and career development, and instills a significant sense of self-confidence and resilience as they navigate their program and ongoing careers.

Leonard Foster

Dr. Foster's Biochemistry and Molecular Biology students describe him as an outstanding scientist and mentor who cares deeply about his students' learning, creativity, growing independence, career development and wellbeing. He engages each individual on their own terms, drawing out their interests and goals, and actively seeks out ways or opportunities to help them fulfil them. He is consistently described as a role model, not only for his scientific achievements and mentorship, but also for championing gender equity, work-life balance, and the destigmatization and support of those with mental health challenges. He has had, and continues to have, a profound impact on innumerable students, postdocs, staff and colleagues.

2018

Matei Ripeanu

A Professor in Electrical and Computer Engineering, Dr. Matei Ripeanu is an extraordinary mentor and role model who prioritizes the holistic development of students in critical thinking, breadth and creativity, and thoughtful citizenship in the workplace and world. His approach is remarkably student-centric, and he purposely works to ensure students are able to build on their strengths and follow their passions, both in their research questions and career aspirations. He encourages and proactively seeks ways for students to develop relevant skills and experience, and is a lifelong mentor, sponsor, and advocate for them as they go on to their chosen careers in industry and the academy.

Thomas Kemple

Professor Thomas Kemple's Sociology students and colleagues have singled him out as an exceptional mentor who devotes enormous time and effort into every mentoring relationship. He actively encourages students to carry out creative and independent research that aligns with their interests, while ensuring that the work meets the highest standards of scholarly rigour. His students consistently extol his compassionate mentoring style, and are indebted to the personal support he provides to help them carve out their own paths. As Dr. Kemple's colleague states, he brings a 'fundamental humanity to his mentoring which helps his students navigate the choppy waters of graduate school.

2017

Eric Jan

An Associate Professor in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, Dr. Eric Jan is passionate about mentoring students to reach their full potential as researchers. His students appreciate his active engagement with them, but also highly value the freedom he provides to develop and explore their own ideas. His own curiosity and excitement



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about research are contagious, and his students recount the many ways he has helped them develop the practical skills needed for effective research and communication. Dr. Jan encourages his students to follow their own passions, and actively supports them to achieve their career goals, both within and outside the academy.

Anne Martin-Matthews

A sociology professor in the field of aging, Dr. Anne Martin-Matthews embodies all that it means to be an outstanding mentor. Her students describe her as an incredible role model, with the highest level of integrity, kindness, generosity, and commitment to excellence in all her scholarly and professional activities. She is a constant guide, critic, supporter, listener, and inspirer for all those who have worked with her. Her mentorship has extended well beyond her own students, and through her national initiatives, she has ignited the desire of a generation of researchers to improve the quality of life of elders and caregivers, and to achieve the highest standards of academic scholarship.

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.



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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.

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



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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.

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.”