



Dear Colleagues,

I am very pleased to announce that Lara Pudwell, Ph.D., professor of mathematics and statistics, has been selected as the recipient of the 2023 Valparaiso University Award for Excellence in Research and Creative Work by the Creative Work and Research Committee (CWRC). This year's competition was exceptionally close.

The Award for Excellence in Research and Creative Work recognizes a tenured faculty member who has made significant scholarly contributions to their discipline and/or to the public discourse over the course of their career. The awardee is engaged in the national or international conversation within their domain of study, demonstrating notable accomplishments and recognition in scholarly, artistic, or other relevant communities. The award comes with a \$1,000 prize. This year there were several outstanding nominees.



Professor Lara Pudwell has been a member of Valparaiso University's Department of Mathematics and Statistics since 2008. Dr. Zsuzsanna Szaniszló, professor and chair of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, nominated her and provided context to Dr. Pudwell's work by noting, "It is often hard to tell how pure mathematics research will contribute to the general advancement of knowledge. Mathematics research is often done for the sake of itself... Dr. Pudwell's work is largely motivated by questions about sorting algorithms in computer science. However, she connects these ideas about sorting to a variety of other fields in ways that generate follow-up research

questions in the mathematics community." The breadth and depth of Dr. Pudwell's publications are impressive. She has co-authored one book and produced 44 articles and essays. Additionally, she is a sought-after writer and speaker. She has given many lectures nationally and internationally.

For those of you who know and work directly with Lara, these two notes from references perfectly describe her passion for working with undergraduate students in addition to her traditional publishing. Dr. Michael Albert, professor of computer science at the University of Otago in New Zealand, writes: "Of course, one of the most inspiring things about Lara is the amount of research she has carried out with undergraduate students in REUs and how frequently this has been published. She has a real commitment to the development of talent in others."

Dr. Jennifer Quinn, president of the Mathematical Association of America wrote: "Dr. Pudwell can communicate her mathematics to professional mathematicians and non-experts alike. Her public talks like the Math Encounters at the Museum of Mathematics, her expository articles, her mentorship of undergraduate math research, and now her summer work teaching and directing MathPath for middle schoolers, have an impact beyond the discipline – spreading an enthusiasm and appreciation for mathematics that is so desperately needed."

We are truly blessed to have Dr. Pudwell on our faculty! Please come to the Scholarship and Creative Works Reception on April 27 to honor and celebrate Lara.

Lissa Yogan, Ph.D.
Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs

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