

VU math professor earns Alder Award for teaching

TIMES STAFF

VALPARAISO | Lara Pudwell has been named a 2014 winner of the Henry L. Alder Award for Distinguished Teaching by a Beginning College or University Mathematics Faculty Member. Pudwell is an assistant professor of mathematics and computer science and University Research Professor at Valparaiso University.

The award, presented to only two or three professors annually, honors instructors whose teaching has been extraordinarily successful and whose effectiveness in teaching undergraduate mathematics is shown to have influence beyond their own classrooms.

"I am both surprised and humbled to be named an Alder award winner," said Pudwell in written statement. "I feel thankful to have a career I love as much as I do, and I am grateful to be able to share my work with colleagues, students, collaborators, and a whole national mathematics community."

Pudwell joined VU's faculty in 2008. In 2013, she was honored with the Math Faculty Mentor Award from the Council

on Undergraduate Research. In addition, she and Professor Zsuzsanna Szaniszlo were awarded a \$291,284 grant from the National Science Foundation for a three-year mathematics research project with female, minority, and first-generation college students.

"Professor Pudwell is absolutely the most influential professor I have ever had," said VU student Ruyue Yuan. "She loves to help her students and is always happy when we come to ask questions. No matter how busy her schedule is, she always puts off her work to answer questions for others first."

Pudwell said she strives to develop a sense of collaboration in her classroom and to create opportunities for students to experience the joy of discovery.

"My favorite part of working at Valpo is the students," she said. "I've been fortunate to work with inquisitive, hardworking, and courteous students every semester. They, along with fantastic colleagues, are what make me proud to be part of the Valparaiso University community."

Pudwell will receive her award at the 2014 MathFest prize session on Aug. 7 in Portland, Ore.