Nesser-Chu Receives Underwood Award

April 20, 2017

Janice Nesser-Chu, right, is the 42nd recipient of the David L. Underwood Memorial Lecture Award. Also pictured are, from left, Elizabeth Gassel Perkins, Florissant Valley provost, Cathy Underwood and Annabelle Underwood.

Janice Nesser-Chu, interim dean of Liberal Arts at St. Louis Community College-Florissant Valley, has been selected as the 42nd recipient of the David L. Underwood Memorial Lecture Award.

Underwood was known for his love of education. He was deeply concerned with the welfare of students and staff alike. His dedication went beyond office hours—and he tirelessly gave of his time and talents to further the educational mission at Florissant Valley.

Recipients of the Underwood Award demonstrate that same dedication and commitment. Chosen by a committee of peers, recipients exhibit excellence in instruction and a genuine, humanistic concern for students, faculty, staff—and all of education.

“I am humbled and honored to be the recipient of the David L Underwood lecture Award,” Nesser-Chu said. “I have received other honors and awards over my career, but this one, because it comes from my colleagues, is especially meaningful. It is an honor I never expected and one that will have a profound effect on me for the rest of my life.”

Nesser-Chu is an educator, artist, curator and social activist. In addition to serving as interim dean, she also serves as chair of the Art and Humanities department at Florissant Valley. She is an associate professor of art and the former Photography program coordinator and gallery director.
Nesser-Chu has received numerous awards for her teaching, her art and her activism. They include the Adria for Trailblazing Women, the Emerson Award for Excellence in Teaching, the Faculty of the Year Award and Freedom of Human Spirit Award. In 2014, she received the President’s Award for Art and Activism at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Ill.

Nesser-Chu serves on local and national art boards, including the Women’s Caucus for Art and ArtTable. Nesser-Chu has spearheaded several conferences, including Art & Social Justice in St Louis, Drawing Ferguson Together: A Vision of Peace, and LIVE SPACE: Women-Art-Activism in New York, N.Y. She served on the advisory board for “Cross-Cultural Engagement in the Arts: Building a Diverse and Dynamic Community” Conference at Webster University.

Nesser-Chu has exhibited her own work both locally, nationally and internationally for the last 25 years. Her most recent exhibitions include “On the Margin: Gender and Politics Identified,” at Brown University’s Sarah Doyle Gallery, and “Water: A Universal Right,” at the Robert Morris Gallery in Chicago Ill. Her work is included in many collections and has been featured and reviewed in various publications.

Nesser-Chu received her bachelor’s degree in journalism and political science from St. Mary of the Woods College, and her master’s degree (with distinction) in art history/studio from Webster University. She also holds a certificate of completion in academic leadership from the Leadership Academy in Wisconsin.
Congratulations to Janice Nesser-Chu, the 42\textsuperscript{nd} David L. Underwood Award recipient. The announcement of this annual honor is made each spring during National Library Week, and the recipient gives a lecture at the beginning of the fall semester during Service Week. Nesser-Chu is the Interim Dean, Liberal Arts and Chair, Arts and Humanities Department.

Chosen by a committee of peers, recipients of this honor exhibit excellence in instruction and a genuine, humanistic concern for students, faculty, staff – and all of education. The recipient is a STLCC-Florissant Valley faculty member or staff person who emulates the values of David Underwood who served the campus as Dean of Instruction from 1967 to 1975. Dean Underwood was known for his love of education, and the campus library is dedicated in his name. He was deeply concerned with the welfare of students and staff alike. His dedication went beyond office hours, and he tirelessly gave of his time and talents to further the educational mission at Florissant Valley. Recipients of the David L. Underwood Memorial Lecture Award demonstrate that same dedication and commitment.

Dean Underwood’s daughter, Cathy Underwood Herman and wife, Annabelle Underwood attend the announcement of the recipient each spring and the David L. Memorial Lecture each August.

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