

Citation of

SUZANNE L. WEEKES

for the

**2015 DENISE NICOLETTI TRUSTEES' AWARD
FOR SERVICE TO COMMUNITY**

The Trustees' Award for Service to Community is presented in memory of Denise Nicoletti, a professor in the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department from 1991 to 2002, whose passion for life and outreach to under-represented groups touched many lives. Among her activities, Denise co-founded Camp Reach, a widely-acclaimed summer program that introduces seventh grade girls to the excitement of engineering and science.

We are proud to announce that this year's recipient is Professor Suzanne Weekes, whose genuine caring and commitment truly embodies the spirit of the Nicoletti Award. Suzy's straightforward, honest approach is brought to service activities at a variety of levels, ranging from service within the Department of Mathematical Sciences, to WPI more broadly, to organizations in Worcester and Central Massachusetts, and through nationwide initiatives in mathematics education.

At WPI, Suzy is an exemplar of the engaged faculty professional. She has brought her positive energy, grace, and good humor to committees and task forces that are too numerous to mention. As faculty advisor of the student chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers for six years, and as the founder and advisor of the student chapter of the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM) for the past 12 years, Suzy has been promoting diversity, networking, and applied research at WPI. In the process she has become an active mentor to many students and regularly attends the Women's Support Network, an initiative of the Multicultural Affairs Office. She is regarded as a strong advocate and role model, holding students to a high standard and supporting them to grow into their strengths and potential.

Suzy's outreach has had nationwide impact through her efforts to promote diversity and novel approaches to mathematics education. She has been appointed as a member of the Education Committee of the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics, a group that provides recommendations on education policy and curricula. She also serves on the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute (MSRI) Human Resources Advisory Committee, whose charge is to promote diversity in participation in the Institute's programs and in the mathematics profession at large. She is co-PI of a MSRI summer program that provides research opportunities for underrepresented groups, with the goal of increasing the number of graduate degrees in the mathematical sciences by cultivating untapped talent.

At the local level, Suzy has been a huge proponent of efforts to support children and families in Worcester. Beginning in 1998, Suzy served on the founding committee of First Friends Early Care and Education Center during its crucial formative years, advancing to Vice President of its Board of Directors. Located at the First Baptist Church next door, First Friends has served dozens of WPI families. Currently, Suzy serves on the Board and Executive and Strategic Planning Committees of

Children's Friend, a non-profit in Central Massachusetts that provides services to meet the needs of children and families from disadvantaged backgrounds. In addition, she serves on the Board of Directors of the YMCA of Central Massachusetts and teaches Sunday school at the First Unitarian Church.

And that's just the tip of the iceberg; there is so much that we've left out. Suzy is a strong, genuine, outspoken leader and supporter of students and of underrepresented and underserved populations. Her commitment to giving back, as a priority, is something to be recognized and celebrated. For her years of dedication to WPI and to multiple local and national communities, we are proud to honor Suzanne Weekes with the 2015 Denise Nicoletti Trustees' Award for Service to Community.

Joseph Beck
Associate Professor, Computer Science

Christina DeVries
Associate Budget Director, Finance and Operations

Barbara Broad
Mother of Denise Nicoletti

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