



# Patrick F. Leahy

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June 15, 2016

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Dear Members of the Wilkes Community:

I am writing to you today to announce the inaugural President's Awards for Excellence. The program will recognize outstanding achievements of University faculty and staff who have gone above and beyond to serve our students during the 2015-2016 academic year.

The Gateway to the Future strategic plan focuses on six key themes, the second of which is "Invest in Our People." The University's leadership realizes that our faculty and staff are our most vital asset. That is why we have made a concerted effort to reward members of the community who do exemplary work. FAC has enhanced its annual TREC awards, presented to outstanding faculty members. USAC recently unveiled a new recognition awards program to show appreciation for notable work by our staff.

Following conversations with FAC and USAC, I decided that as President, I would also like a special way to show my deepest gratitude to those who surpass expectations in service of our goal to be one of the best small universities in the country. Each year, I will acknowledge five members of the campus community who exemplify Wilkes' core values—mentorship, scholarship, diversity, innovation and community. At Fall Convocation, we will celebrate these achievements together as we gather to kick off the semester.

This is where I need your help. I'm asking for nominations of full- or part-time faculty or staff members in each of following categories:

- The Award for Exceptional Mentorship – recognizes one member of the community who has exemplified mentorship. Mentorship may include academic advising, mentoring, coaching and all other manner of support for students.
- The Award for Outstanding Scholarship – recognizes one member of the community who contributed significantly to their field. Scholarship may include traditional research, scholarship and contributions to fields and professions outside of academic areas.
- The Award for Exceptional Contributions to Diversity – recognizes one member of the community who has contributed significantly to advancing the inclusivity of the Wilkes community. Diversity is defined broadly and there can be myriad ways in which a member of the community exemplifies this core value.

- The Award for Outstanding Innovation – recognizes one member of the community who has demonstrated creative problem-solving or seized an opportunity resulting in enriched experiences for students, faculty and staff and positive improvements for the future of Wilkes.
- The Award for Community Building – recognizes one member of the community who has made a lasting impact on the campus through team-building, collaboration and/or role-modeling.

For the purposes of the President's Awards for Excellence, all of these terms may be defined broadly. There are many ways in which a colleague may demonstrate these values that are at the heart of Wilkes University's mission.

After you have reflected on the past year, please send an email to my attention (patrick.leahy@wilkes.edu) with the subject line "President's Award." Please include the nominee's name and a very brief explanation of why he or she should be recognized in one of these five categories. If you would like the nomination to be anonymous, please note that in your email.

All nominations must be received by Monday, July 18, 2016, so President's Cabinet can discuss the nominations. Award recipients will be notified in mid-August and they will be honored with a commemorative plaque at Fall Convocation, our University's largest community gathering, on August 24, 2016.

Thank you for taking the time to help me honor those on campus who serve as role models to us all by demonstrating the highest level of commitment to the values that make Wilkes so special.

Sincerely,

Patrick F. Leahy  
President