FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: Nov. 21, 2008
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Texas Tech Chancellor’s Council Announces
Distinguished Teaching, Research Awards

Texas Tech faculty members today (Nov. 21) received Texas Tech University System Chancellor’s Council Distinguished Teaching and Research Awards.

The annual awards go to two faculty members from the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center and Texas Tech University. Winners from Angelo State University will be selected and announced in the spring at an event in San Angelo.

The Distinguished Teaching Awards go to William Westney, Horn Professor of Music in Texas Tech’s College of Visual and Performing Arts and Renee Bogschutz, in the School of Allied Health Sciences at the Health Sciences Center.

The Distinguished Research Awards go to L. William ‘Bill’ Poirier, associate professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at Texas Tech and M. Christina R. Esperat in the Health Sciences Center Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing.

“These four individuals epitomize the high standards we set for academic instruction and research at our universities,” said Kent Hance, chancellor of the Texas Tech University System. “The impact they’ve had on their students and colleagues in their respective fields of study helps explain why Texas Tech’s reputation is growing, not only in Texas, but all over the nation.”

This is the eighth year for the Chancellor’s Council to present the awards. The winners will receive a plaque and a $10,000 cash award. The Chancellor’s Council raises funds for student scholarships, faculty recruitment and support, and other programs.

Bogschutz came to the Health Sciences Center in 2001. She is an assistant professor and the clinical coordinator for the Master’s of Speech–Language Pathology program in the Department of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences. She received the Outstanding Teacher of the Year award by the Health Sciences Center Student Senate in 2005, 2006 and 2008. Student evaluations indicate that she is articulate, intellectually rigorous, organized and respectful of students’ diverse learning needs. She has presented widely. Bogschutz received her bachelor and master’s degrees from Eastern New Mexico University and her doctorate from the University of Iowa.

Westney joined Texas Tech in 1978 and is the Browning Artist-in-Residence and professor of piano. In 2001, he received the highest faculty honor the university can award, that of Horn professor. Westney’s student evaluations are consistently among the highest in the School of Music. His unique performance workshops have been presented
world-wide and profiled twice in the New York Times and his book, “The Perfect Wrong Note: Learning to Trust Your Musical Self” has been reviewed internationally. He has won the Spencer A. Wells Award for Innovative Teaching at Texas Tech and the university’s Faculty Book Award. He earned his bachelor’s degree from Queens College, City University of New York and his master’s degree and doctorate from Yale University.

Esperat joined the Health Sciences Center in 2000 and serves as associate dean for research and clinical service for the School of Nursing. She has generated more than $9 million in federal, state and research grants during her eight years at the Health Sciences Center. Her research focuses on the prevention and control of obesity in children in West Texas and Type 2 Diabetes. She was inducted as a fellow of the American Academy of Nursing in 2004 and in 2005 she was named a Primary Care Fellow by the Bureau of Primary Health Care, Health Resources and Services Administration, United States Department of Health and Human Services. She was named into the prestigious Robert Wood Johnson Executive Nurse Fellowship in 2005. Esperat earned her bachelor’s degree from Silliman University in the Philippines and her doctorate from the University of Texas.

Poirier joined Texas Tech in 2001. His research focuses on the emerging field of quantum mechanics applied to large systems. His work uses the correct laws of nature at the molecular scale in computer simulations. He has published extensively in top journals in his field. Poirier has twice received an Outstanding Faculty Award from Texas Tech’s graduating seniors, received the College of Arts and Sciences Tribute to Teachers Award and an Early Career Award from the U.S. Department of Energy. He earned his bachelor’s degree from Brown University and his doctorate from the University of California Berkeley.