

Michelle Younker

2018 Mathematics Excellence Award



Michelle Younker, Chair and Associate Professor of Mathematics at Owens State CC, received the 2018 Mathematics Excellence Award at the AMATYC conference in Orlando.

The Mathematics Excellence Award (ME Award) is intended for educators who have made outstanding contributions to mathematics or mathematics education at the two-year college. ME Award recipients are recognized in even-numbered years.

Michelle's leadership and contributions to mathematics education began in 2002, with her participation on a faculty review panel for the Ohio Transfer Module (OTM).

Later Michelle served on the Steering Committee for the Ohio Mathematics Initiative (OMI), a state level task force charged by the Ohio Board of Regents with developing a framework for improving key gateway mathematics courses. Once completed, she assumed co-leadership of the Communications, Outreach and Engagement Committee, a working group of the task force.

Jim Fowler, Assistant Professor of Mathematics at The Ohio State University, credits Michelle's leadership of this working group's activities as "a key to achieving the effective coordination for which the OMI is now well-known."

The time and attention she gives to younger colleagues is reflected in Fowler's praise for her mentorship of him as a member of the OMI working group. Fowler explains "I've learned much from Ms. Younker on how to effectively organize a small group of faculty to do great things"... "her mentorship has been critical to my being able to contribute to the group, and I think I'm not alone in being deeply appreciative of her leadership."

Her outstanding contributions to Ohio Mathematics education led Uri Treisman and his colleagues at the Dana Center to ask Michelle to join their national efforts to modernize two-year mathematics curricula. Her performance in these efforts so impressed Treisman and his colleagues at TPSE (Transforming Post Secondary Education), they selected her to be a founding member of TPSE's Mathematics Advisory Group (MAG).

Of her contributions, Treisman states "Michelle is an exceptionally able leader and advocate for her students and her profession, and a person I go to for advice on matters that require deep practitioner wisdom and political tact."

Michelle White, Michelle's award nominator, summarizes best why Michelle has earned the 2018 AMATYC Mathematics Excellence Award: "Ms. Younker is a solid leader who cares about the people she is working with. Through her guidance, she has helped students, faculty, administrators, and state leaders to follow a path that everyone believes is going in the right direction. We know that she has done her research and has given thoughtful analysis before she speaks. This combination of trust, leadership, and expertise is what makes Ms. Younker an ideal choice for the Mathematics Excellence Award."

Congratulations, Michelle.