

June 14, 2021

TO: The ACCT William H. Meardy Faculty Member Award selection team

FROM: Dr. Turina R. Bakken, Provost, Madison College

RE: Nomination for Dr. Kenneth Walz

It is my pleasure, on behalf of our District Board of Trustees and President Dr. Jack E. Daniels, to submit a nomination for Dr. Kenneth (Ken) Walz for the 2021 ACCT William H. Meardy Award. As we reflected on which of our outstanding faculty to nominate, and there are over 500 full-time faculty at Madison College, Ken's name and contributions immediately rose to the top as reflective of the heart of this prestigious award. "*Faculty excellence as the foundation of success of the community college movement*" is the pillar of Ken's career and we feel, worthy of this nomination.

In addition to the resume summary and letter from our Board Chair, here are the responses to the award criteria questions. Suffice to say, it was a daunting task to summarize Ken's career and contributions into a short format—a "problem" we should all be so fortunate to have. Thank you for your consideration and for recognizing faculty excellence.

In what ways has the educator demonstrated excellence in teaching?

In his early years as a High School Science teacher, Ken was a pioneer in getting high school students connected to and excited about science, and on an honors path to college. His topics included a water chemistry unit that monitored physio-chemical parameters of the Menomonee River, a precursor to his future legacy in renewable energy and conservation. Part of his early teaching excellence also involved teaching biology and chemistry to students of diverse ethnic backgrounds at the Walton Comprehensive School in England. From there, his journey continued into higher education including leading training for over 200 teachers at the Colorado School of the Mines on renewable energy and then on to the University of Wisconsin System, both at Stevens Point and Madison. At both these institutions, Ken's teaching involved curriculum design in renewable energy and bioenergy, but also innovative delivery of content via online and in person, but as has been the case throughout his journey, he focused on teaching teachers. To date he has shared his content and approach with over 400 K-12 STEM teachers in Wisconsin, and serves as a faculty mentor for graduate students.

At Madison College for over 15 years, Ken is well known for his expertise in chemistry, renewable energy and engineering. His pioneering work in Engineering Design has opened new transfer pathways for our students seeking a B.S. in engineering. His pioneering work in Renewable Energy for International Development in Central America earned him the prestigious Andrew Heiskell Award for International Education. With funding from the National Science Foundation, also developed Survey of Renewable Energy, Solar Photovoltaic Technology, and Solar PV Installation classes, and have taught them since 2010. Here is a summary of his many awards that offer further evidence to excellence in teaching:

- American Society for Engineering Education Best Paper Award – First and Second Place, 2020
- Phi Theta Kappa Faculty Mentor Award, 2017
- Madison College Excellence in Teaching Award nominee, 2016
- American Society for Engineering Education Best Paper Award – First Place, 2016
- Phi Theta Kappa Distinguished Teacher of the Year nominee, 2016
- Wisconsin Higher Education Energy Educator of the Year Award, 2015
- Phi Theta Kappa Golden Apple Faculty Award, 2013
- Wall of Fame Distinguished Alumni, Menomonee Falls High School, 2011

- 40 Under 40 Innovators to Watch, In Business, 2011
- Professor of the Year, Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching, 2010
- Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society, 2003
- Outstanding Faculty Member, Menomonee Falls High School, 2002
- Golden Key National Honor Society, 1992
- Outstanding Tutor Award, 1992

What has this educator initiated and helped to develop in the area of innovative programs used in two-year postsecondary institutions?

Ken's personal leadership and expertise in securing local, national and global grants and external funding initiatives has resulted in nearly \$10,000,000 (yes, \$10 million!) to date in support of innovative programs and educational offerings in the field of renewable energy, clean lakes, biodiesel research, the CREATE Energy Resource Center and multiple Solar PV (Photovoltaic) installations across Wisconsin, including several high schools and at multiple Madison College campuses. In fact, the PV installation at our Truax campus is the largest rooftop solar field in Wisconsin, serves as a student learning lab, and saves the college thousands of dollars each year in energy savings. His pioneering work routinely brings guests and leaders from across the nation to visit our campus.

Further, he led development of, wrote curriculum and taught classes in the Engineering transfer program at Madison College and launched the Renewable Energy Certificate, which has been an amazing student opportunity but also trains teachers from around the nation. He has created undergraduate research opportunities for students in engineering through partnerships with external companies/organizations in the Introduction to Engineering course he developed and team taught for many years. Further, Ken developed a Renewable Energy for International Development study abroad course in Central America that formed the basis for a State Department initiative to fund the Community Colleges for Sustainable Development Network, resulting in the award mentioned above. With funding from the National Science Foundation, he also developed Survey of Renewable Energy, Solar Photovoltaic Technology, and Solar PV Installation classes, and has taught them since 2010.

How has this educator served on technical or special committees that affect the college program in the community, state or nation?

Ken not only serves and is well connected around the country to the field of Renewable Energy, he is a sought after expert in the field and routinely presents his extensive published papers at RENEW Energy Summit, ASEE, and National Energy Summit in Washington, DC. Here is a summary of some of his service that has advanced community and technical college education locally and nationally:

- Scientific consultancy with several companies and community-based organizations such as Sustain Dane, Clean Lakes Alliance and several areas high schools. In his service to our communities, he routinely serves as principal investigator on grants related to local renewable energy efforts.
- Wisconsin K-12 Energy Education Program, Advisory Board
- Wisconsin Distributed Resources Collaborative, Secretary and Steering Committee
- University of Wisconsin-Madison Delta Program and Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning, Faculty Teaching Mentor
- Wisconsin Biodiesel Association, Board Member and Education Chair
- MATC Environmental Sustainability Alliance, Treasurer and Steering Committee
- PI on grants to help local communities with RE initiatives (Madison, Monona, Reedsburg, Fort Atkinson, Watertown)

How has this educator provided leadership in helping to solve challenges to two-year postsecondary education?

Ken's leadership in advancing renewable energy and related topics in the two-year higher landscape is wide reaching. In addition to serving as principal investigator on multiple grants to bring Renewable Energy curriculum and innovative learning lab projects to benefit students, his work is directed at energy conservation and making our world better at every turn. His grant and external funding leadership to date has secured nearly \$10,000,000 to create educational opportunities centered on renewable energy, energy storage, PV installations, biodiesel research and more. Further, his work in the sustainability field is sustaining our educational system as he has trained and shared his expertise with hundreds of other teachers and grad students, thus ensuring this pioneering work is widespread and has the highest impact possible.

How has this educator been active in developing, organizing, or supporting state and/or national two-year postsecondary associations?

In addition to the information provided to this point which overlaps with this answer, Ken is incredibly active in and a generous contributor to associations. A few additional examples include the Solar Photovoltaic System Design for Educational Facilities; Sustainable Energy Workforce Education; and Wisconsin's K-12 Energy Education Program. His presentations and contributions to state and national organizations. Since 2001, Ken has presented at 65 different organizations, conferences and association meetings.

What awards or honors has this educator received in recognition of leadership in the college or community?

In addition to the awards mentioned above, Ken has received the Professor of the Year, Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching, 2010 and was a nominee for this ACCT Faculty award in 2007. His work and contributions to the 2-year system were impressive even then, but since then, his contributions have accelerated and had wide reaching positive impact on students, teachers, communities, and countries. Again, his pioneering work in study abroad in Central America resulted in the prestigious Andrew Heiskell Award for International Education.