C. BRICE RATCHFORD MEMORIAL FELLOWSHIP AWARD

Jerry W. Valentine, Ed.D.
Professor Emeritus, Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis
University of Missouri-Columbia

Dr. Jerry Valentine served at MU for 33 years, establishing himself as a premier scholar in the study of middle-level leadership, a term he coined in an effort to serve the needs of educational leaders in grades five through nine.

Prior to his tenure at MU, Valentine served in the public schools of Louisiana and Colorado as a teacher, assistant principal and principal. He chaired three national “decade” studies of middle-level leaders and schools through the National Association of Secondary School Principals and received the association’s highest honor, the Distinguished Service Award. Valentine has authored or co-authored seven books, scores of professional articles and several instruments for school improvement and leader development.

At MU, Valentine established the Missouri Principal Assessment Center, the Missouri Center for School Improvement, and the Middle Level Leadership Center, all of which have had national and international impacts.

Throughout his career, Valentine has worked closely with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. He developed the state’s first comprehensive, performance-based teacher evaluation system and worked closely with Missouri’s principals and assistant principals in facilitating evaluation workshops.

Valentine believes attracting experienced school leaders who have the capacity to be research professors is the initial step toward preparing high-quality professors of school leadership. He helped facilitate the establishment of the Missouri Statewide Ed.D. program and his most recent contributions to the study of student engagement are providing essential, new knowledge about this critical learning factor.

One nominator wrote, “Jerry Valentine has affected comprehensive, systemic school improvement in some way in every county in Missouri and almost every state of the nation…hundreds of schools, thousands of teachers and millions of students.”

PRESIDENT’S AWARD FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Wouter T. Montfrooij, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Physics
University of Missouri-Columbia

Dr. Wouter Montfrooij is the founder of the Saturday Morning Science (SMS) lecture series, a weekly series of informal talks on a broad range of science topics targeted to the general community. Since its inception in 2003, this volunteer-run program has grown to be one of the most visible and respected outreach programs in the Columbia community, offering over 320 talks and engaging more than 30,000 people from Columbia and surrounding areas.

Montfrooij based SMS on a physics outreach program he attended at the University of Michigan. His vision was to create a culture in which engagement between scientists and the public is the norm. He brought together researchers from diverse fields across the university, sometimes schooling them on effectively presenting to a general audience. The hand-picked speakers demystify hard science through presentations that are relevant and thought-provoking.

On top of his regular faculty responsibilities, Montfrooij put in more than 1,500 volunteer hours and sacrificed his Saturday mornings to serve coffee and donuts, with a side of science, to the on average 150 attendees each week – a mix of middle and high school students, faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, retirees and members of the community. After 13 seasons, Montfrooij stepped back from the day-to-day operations of SMS, which has allowed more time for his research.

One nominator wrote, “If not for Prof. Montfrooij’s vision and tireless volunteer efforts in starting and sustaining the SMS program, the landscape of Missourians’ perceptions, acceptance and understanding of science would be vastly different and stiflingly limited.”

Through his efforts and volunteerism, Montfrooij has brought a new awareness of MU’s world-class scientific research to the community, as well as excited people to get up on Saturday mornings to attend a science lecture.