



News & Events - Home
 News & Events
 News
 Events

Convocation

Media Room

Faculty Experts

Forum Online

News & Events

Printable Version | E-mail This Page | Change Text Size

Inspiring Ryerson University faculty earn Ontario honours

By Antoinette Mercurio

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Ryerson's UpLIFTing Professors (from left) Frankie Stewart, Malgorzata Zywno, Arne Kisenko and Filippo A. Salustri are winners of the inaugural Province of Ontario Leadership in Faculty Teaching Award.

Four Ryerson University faculty members are being recognized with the Province of Ontario's inaugural [Leadership in Faculty Teaching \(LIFT\) Award](#) for their inspiring and motivating way of teaching.

The Ryerson recipients are:

- Arne Kisenko, [Department of History](#), Faculty of Arts
- [Filippo A. Salustri](#), Department of [Mechanical and Industrial Engineering](#), Faculty of Engineering, Architecture and Science (FEAS)
- Frankie Stewart, Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering, FEAS
- [Malgorzata Zywno](#), [Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering](#), FEAS

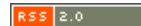
"Ryerson University is well known for its faculty who go the extra mile to provide our students with an outstanding learning experience," said Alan Shepard, Provost and Vice-President, Academic. "Ryerson's commitment to experiential learning is a foundation of our students' success. It's a particular honour that four of our professors have received this prestigious award, which is being given this year for the first time."

The LIFT Award was developed to recognize and encourage teaching excellence at Ontario's universities and colleges. One hundred awards were given to faculty members who influence, motivate and inspire students and demonstrate leadership in teaching methods for the diverse student body across the province. Winners will receive \$20,000 over two years to encourage continued excellence in the classroom setting.

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"We're moving Ontario forward by recognizing those college and university teachers who make a real difference in the lives of their students," said Chris Bentley, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. "Our goal is to recognize the importance of teaching in Ontario universities and colleges as part of our drive for improving quality. By presenting the LIFT Award to these deserving faculty members we are underlying the value we place on teaching excellence in our post-secondary institutions."

Described as a passionate professor, a student nominator wrote that "Dr. Arne Kisenko is one of Ryerson's most valuable assets, opening students' eyes to the world around them and getting us to care about the world we live in." An intellectual icon, Dr. Kisenko was the first winner of the Best Lecturer in Ontario contest sponsored by TVOntario.

"I have the luxury of teaching a discipline that is so abundantly packed with humanness and I try to connect students' lives to history to make it personal and relevant to them," said Dr. Kisenko, who is also co-founder of the backACS project, where students can exchange experiences about their travels abroad. "To be given an award of this magnitude from the Ontario government is fantastic."

Dr. Filippo A. Salustri's students value his knowledge and guidance when shifting from calculus and theory lectures to the creative world of design. Dr. Salustri, who has taught for 20 years, brings real-life design problems into the classroom and encourages students to take part in design challenges, activities and events.

"I try to use humour as much as possible to make points and I encourage wacky ideas. I put a lot of energy into my lectures, making jokes and talking about different things but always relating them together at the end," he said. "I expect a lot from my students but I never get upset or flustered if they catch an error of mine. Indeed, I thank them."

Prof. Frankie Stewart's participatory teaching style and engaging lectures were praised by a colleague who cited her creative use of instructional technology and interactive multimedia. Also a winner of this year's Ryerson Teaching Excellence Award, Prof. Stewart actively promotes engineering as a career choice through the Women in Engineering office and the [Go Eng Girl](#) program.

"It's lovely to get the recognition for something you love doing. I've been very pro-active in finding other teaching methodologies such as collaborative learning, active learning and active engagement to draw students into the material," she said. "Technology has reinvigorated my teaching."

A 3M Teaching Fellow, Dr. Zywno is a pioneer in introducing teaching and learning technology in the classroom. A former student found Dr. Zywno to be an inspiring role model who helped her gain the confidence to complete her degree and pursue an Engineering career.

"For me, teaching is not just a job, it's a vocation. I do pour my heart and soul into it and I think students recognize that," said Dr. Zywno, a faculty associate in the [Learning and Teaching office](#). "The recognition you get from students and support from peers is wonderful."

The LIFT Awards will be formally presented to winners later this fall at a special event to celebrate teaching excellence at Ryerson.