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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PROFESSORS RAMACHANDRAN AND OLSON RECOGNIZED BY THE AFC WITH PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS; ST. PETERSBURG COLLEGE'S COLLEGE OF VETERINARY NURSING RECEIVES AFC'S TEACHING AND LEARNING CENTER AWARD

TALLAHASSEE – Dr. Vasanth Ramachandran at Pensacola State College was presented the Ernest L. Boyer International Award for Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Technology, and Professor Sharon Olson, at St. Petersburg College, was presented the Distinguished Faculty Award. Both awards were presented at the Association of Florida College's Conference on College Teaching and Learning last week in St. Petersburg, Florida.

The Boyer Award, which includes a \$3,000 cash prize, is named in honor of the late Ernest L. Boyer, former Chancellor of the State University of New York and United States Commissioner of Education. Persons nominated for the Boyer Award must have made contributions with broad, significantly positive effects on student learning, motivation, and creativity beyond their own departments and institutions.

The 2019 Boyer Award winner, Dr. Vasanth Ramachandran, is Assistant Professor of Chemistry at Pensacola State College and has been recognized, by induction, into PSC's Academy of Teaching Excellence. He has been instrumental in several initiatives at the College including the Virtual Tutoring Program, which was the catalyst for the College's Live Online courses, Virtual Office Hours, Virtual Advising services, and Virtual Librarian services, allowing PSC to provide live virtual assistance to students unable to visit campus.

The finalists for the Boyer Award included: Sam Ajlani, Associate Professor of Engineering Technology, College of Central Florida, James Howse, Associate Professor of Accounting and Chair of Accounting Technology, Indian River State College, Sherry Klanjac, Business and Technology Instructor, Chipola College, and Dr. John Kurnik, Professor in the College of Business, St. Petersburg College.

The Distinguished Faculty Award, which includes a \$1,500 cash prize, goes to the faculty member who best exhibits a dedication to academic teaching and scholarship. The award is designed to pay tribute to educators who are guiding twenty-first century students into the future with new pedagogical techniques and creative thinking.

The 2019 Distinguished Faculty Award winner, Professor Sharon Olsen, is an Associate Professor for the department of Social/Behavioral Sciences & Human Services at St. Petersburg College (SPC). Her teaching experiences include teaching undergraduate Psychology and Student Life Skills courses. During her tenure at SPC, she has had numerous accomplishments. Additionally, she consistently has high student success rates, a strong degree of rapport with her students, and she is committed to academic excellence and community engagement.

The finalists for the 2019 Distinguished Faculty Award included: Amber Carey, Pensacola State College, Dr. Ann Ellsworth, Montana State University, Dr. Kimberly Milner, Indian River State College, and Amanda (Amie) Myers, Chipola College.

AFC's newest award, the Teaching and Learning Center Award, which includes a \$1,000 cash prize, was presented to St. Petersburg College's College of Veterinary Nursing. This award pays tribute to exemplary teaching and learning centers that inspire and advance teaching and learning. This award highlights the exemplary institutional programs and accomplishments of college centers demonstrated by their impact on student success, retention and graduation.

The other Teaching and Learning Center Award finalists were: Chipola College – Academic Center of Excellence, Daytona State College - Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) & Writing-in-the-Disciplines (WID) Program, Indian River State College - Institute for Academic Excellence, and Valencia College – Centers for Teaching/Learning Innovation.

All three awards were presented at the closing session of AFC's conference by Marjorie McGee, Director of Student Life, College of Central Florida and 2019 AFC President, and Dr. Tonjua Williams, President, St. Petersburg College.

"Once again, the AFC is proud to recognize outstanding college educators and teaching and learning centers at our Conference on College Teaching and Learning" said AFC President Marjorie McGee. "These faculty epitomize the high quality of instruction at our state and community colleges" said AFC CEO Michael Brawer. "It is our honor to recognize the difference they make in the classroom."

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ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION OF FLORIDA COLLEGES

The Association of Florida Colleges is the professional Association for Florida's 28 public community and state colleges, their Boards, employees, retirees, and associates. The mission of the Association is to actively promote, democratically represent, support, and serve the individual members and institutions in their endeavors to provide their students and the citizens of Florida with the best possible comprehensive state and community college educational system. For more information visit: www.myafchome.org.

ABOUT THE AFC'S CONFERENCE ON COLLEGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

The AFC's **Conference on College Teaching and Learning** provides a robust interdisciplinary forum for researchers, practitioners, and educators to present and discuss the most recent innovations, trends, and concerns, practical challenges encountered and the solutions adopted in the field of college teaching and learning that ensure student success.