

CAMWS Award for Special Service - April 9, 2011  
Citation for Frederick J. Antczak

The Classical Association of the Middle West and South's Special Service Award, which is not bestowed every year, honors exceptional promotion of the Classics and/or accomplishments for the profession in CAMWS territory. As I and my fellow committee members read the letter which nominated Frederick J. Antczak, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Grand Valley State University, our reaction was that he indeed exemplifies the support of Latin and Classical Studies which the award is intended to celebrate. We are delighted that he has agreed to accept the 2011 award today.

That Dean Antczak, as one of our hosts, has facilitated this CAMWS meeting is serendipitous. However, this award is presented not for this alone, but for his many years of successful promotion of the Classics. As Dean Antczak's nominator pointed out:

The program in Classics at GVSU was founded in 2000 and has experienced remarkable success and growth in the past decade. It's scarcely an exaggeration to suggest that this success would hardly have been possible without Dean Antczak. He has enthusiastically embraced the Department's vision for a dynamic and innovative face-to-face learning community and has enabled our efforts to promote the Classical world both within the GVSU community and to our partners in the wider region.

One of our committee members, on reviewing the nomination, remarked, "A dean who supervises, cultivates, and patronizes the creation of a brand-new Classics program, now up to SEVEN faculty members, in the space of a decade, provides a ray of light in the darkness and is certainly deserving of a special award from CAMWS!"

Out of all that Dean Antczak has done to promote Classical Studies, let me share with you four specific examples (which I have plagiarized shamelessly from his nominator's letter):

- 1) His endorsement of the two most recent tenure-line hires enabled the GVSU department to grow to seven regular faculty today (from three in 2000).
- 2) He has provided administrative and financial support of non-sabbatical research leaves; budget allocations for equipment, special topics courses and projects, and release time for members of the Department of Classical Studies.
- 3) Both materially and morally, he encourages co-curricular, interdisciplinary, and outreach efforts, including productions of Seneca's *Oedipus* and Sophocles' *Antigone* by the Grand Valley State University Classical Theatre Workshop, a three-day Summer Latin Institute for secondary school teachers in a multi-state region and subsequent Summer Classics Institutes for area teachers, and hosting meetings of the Michigan Junior Classical League and the Michigan Classical Conference.

4) Dean Antczak's advocacy has been instrumental in winning well-deserved recognition for Classics students and faculty, including most notably Grand Valley State University's most prestigious honor, the Glenn A. Niemeyer Award, for Professor Diane Rayor in 2011; the APA's Award for Excellence in Teaching at the College Level for Professor Peter Anderson in 2010; and a Manson A. Stewart Scholarship from CAMWS for student Donna St. Louis in 2009.

Beyond these tangible benefits which Dean Antczak has provided to Classical Studies in the Michigan area, he has demonstrated, in his own life and work, the benefits of training in the Classics. His bachelor's degree from the University of Notre Dame shows a major in Greek. I like to think that this study of Classics informed his M.A. (1976) and his Ph.D. (1979) from the Committee on the Analysis of Ideas and the Study of Methods at the University of Chicago. He taught in the Rhetoric Department at the University of California-Berkeley, the Department of Rhetoric and Communication Studies at the University of Virginia, and for seventeen years in the Rhetoric Department at the University of Iowa, coming at last to Grand Valley State University in 2004. His first book, which won a Phi Beta Kappa Book Award, is entitled *Thought and Character: the Rhetoric of Democratic Education*, and he has served as an expert commentator on political rhetoric for MS-NBC, the *Washington Post*, FOX News, the *Atlanta Constitution*, Reuters International, *Newsday*, *PBS News Hour with Jim Lehrer*, the *Boston Herald*, and NPR's *All Things Considered*. Certainly, the use of rhetoric in the world of today has roots in the Classical past. Similarly, perhaps we may think of Dean Antczak's life work as rooted in his earlier studies of Latin and Greek.

The CAMWS Special Service Award, which we present today, is only one in a long string of accolades accorded to Dean Antczak, from the University of Virginia's Thomas Jefferson teaching award "for best embodying the educational ideals of Thomas Jefferson" to the University of Iowa's Outstanding Teaching Award in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, to the Conference on College Composition and Communication's Citation for Outstanding Classroom Practice, among others. Dean Antczak was the 2002 recipient of the Iowa Communication Association Citation for Lifetime Contributions to the secondary and postsecondary teaching of communication in Iowa. In 2004, he was named as one of the first five Fellows of the Rhetoric Society of America, for outstanding accomplishments in teaching, research and service. The CAMWS Award for Special Service honors the life's work of Dean Antczak, not just for its promotion of programs in Classical Studies but also for its promotion of the use of Classical ideals and ideas in modern life.

Thank you, Dean Antczak, for hosting us, for all that you have done to promote the Classics, for serving as an exemplar of the benefits of a Classical education, and for accepting this award as a token of our appreciation.

--Alice M. Sanford, Hume-Fogg Academic High School, Nashville, Tennessee,  
Chair, CAMWS Steering Committee on Awards and Scholarships