



Dear Campus Community,

The Harry E. Brakebill Award annually acknowledges a professor who demonstrates excellence in teaching, research, creative scholarship and service to our campus and community. This year, upon the recommendation of the Faculty Award Selection Committee, I am pleased to announce that the recipient of the 2020-21 Harry E. Brakebill Distinguished Professor Award is Dr. Betsy Read, professor of biological sciences in the College of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

Dr. Read exemplifies the true spirit of the Brakebill Award; she is an extraordinary faculty member who has made outstanding contributions to her students, to her academic discipline and to our campus community. In every aspect of her 27-year career at CSUSM, she has shown tremendous dedication in academic excellence, and has been an inspiration to her students and colleagues alike.

On program and curriculum development, Dr. Read's contributions have included founding our biotechnology undergraduate degree program and our professional science master's program in biotechnology – two programs tailored to prepare students for careers in our region's growing life science industry. She has also developed the curriculum for numerous courses in molecular and cellular biology.

Dr. Read has an impeccable publication record and has been an exceptionally active scholar having co-authored 33 papers, delivered 24 invited presentations, and been awarded external funding totaling more than \$5 million. She led a research initiative with a team of international scientists to document the first algal pan-genome. This 10-year project was a collaborative effort between her lab and the Department of Energy's Joint Genome Institute and required leading a team of ~75 research scientists from around the world. This work was published in the journal *Nature* (impact factor of 24).

She is an extremely dedicated and enthusiastic teacher with a unique ability to connect with students. Dr. Read developed and administers the Summer Scholars program, which provides undergraduate students with a 10-week research and educational experience that opens their eyes to scientific discovery and a world of STEM careers.

I was particularly moved by a quote from Dr. Read in her dossier statement: "My goal in the courses I teach is to cultivate curiosity and creative thinking by helping students pose questions and seek answers to the 'whys' and 'hows' of biology. At the same time, I hope to nurture the sense of 'wow' and the thrill of discovery that makes me excited about science." Clearly, Dr. Read cares deeply for her students and works hard to ensure they succeed in class and later in their careers.

In terms of service to our campus, she has championed key diversity initiatives, including the development of the first-of-its-kind Transgender and Gender Non-conforming Task Force. Dr. Read was also a lead organizer of the 2019 Southern California Conference on Undergraduate Research (SCCUR) – the first time the conference was held in San Diego County, bringing a conference-record 1,363 participants from 150 different institutions to our campus.

Our students are fortunate to have such a dedicated, passionate advocate and mentor in Dr. Read. Her student-centered teaching, thoughtful research and leadership through service embody the values of the Harry E. Brakebill Distinguished Professor Award. It is with great pleasure that I announce her selection and I hope you will join me in congratulating her on this well-deserved honor.

Sincerely,

Ellen Neufeldt  
President

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