

**Western Oregon University – College of Education**  
**May 2009**

Both 2009 Pastega faculty award winners this year are from the College of Education:  
Pastega Award for Excellence in Scholarship—Dr. Hank Bersani  
Pastega Award for Excellence in Teaching—Dr. Jessica Henderson

**Annual Pastega award ceremony:**  
**Wednesday, June 3, 4:30 to 6 p.m., Pacific Room of Werner University Center**  
**On the WOU campus**

Presentations expected at the ceremony, around the theme of “voices” are:

- *De-constructing “Voice” in the Field of “Mental Retardation”*
  - Dr. Hank Bersani: [bersanh@wou.edu](mailto:bersanh@wou.edu) or 503-838-8687
- *Public Health Advocacy: WOU Student Voices*
  - Dr. Jessica Henderson: [hendersj@wou.edu](mailto:hendersj@wou.edu) or 503-838-8486

Nominations for the awards are solicited each year from WOU faculty and selections are made by committee. Here are excerpts and additional information on their areas of research and teaching:

**Dr. Hank Bersani** has collaborated with colleagues from AAIDD to develop a new measure of adaptive behavior, the DABS, that will be released in 2010 and used by professionals to determine eligibility for education and community services, treatment within the justice system as well as benefits afforded by Social Security. Dr. Bersani has sustained a strong publication history, authoring five refereed journal articles published within the past two years alone. Three of his most recent works address issues of growth attenuation for young people on the basis of disability. Another article, which may well be viewed as a classic in the history of special education, was his address as president of AAMR entitled, “The Past is Prologue: “MR” go gentle into that good night.”

In addition to being an exceptional teacher in the classroom, **Dr. Jessica Henderson** has introduced dozens of her students to the ways in which advocacy and lobbying influence federal policy. Students who have traveled with her to Washington, D.C. share the power that this experience has had in their lives. Her students consistently present at the WOU Academic Showcase and their presentations that I have witnessed show the presence of a capable mentor who coaches them on how to present their work. Lastly, Dr. Henderson is a dedicated student advisor who supports and encourages students to pursue post-graduation accomplishments including graduate school.