

WESTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY

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Music professor receives teaching excellence award

MONMOUTH – Western Oregon University will honor music professor Diane Baxter, DMA, with the 2004-05 Mario and Alma Pastega Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Baxter, a pianist, joined WOU's music department in 1988. Her courses include ethnomusicology, women in music, accompanying and studio piano lessons.

"I'm overwhelmed that I was chosen for this award and it means a lot to me that my teaching is recognized," said Baxter. "I know I teach with great people all over campus and I feel like I should be sharing this with many of my colleagues."

One of the many reasons Baxter received this award includes her learning to speak Japanese so she could better communicate with her Japanese students. She now uses both Japanese and English in her lessons, when necessary, so that no student is left out from her guidance and suggestions.

She also involves her students in community service through performing in concerts to benefit the Makindu Children's Program, a non-profit organization she helped create that operates a day resource facility called the Makindu Children's Center in eastern Kenya. The organization's headquarters is based in Brownsville, Ore.

Baxter has been teaching for 23 years with 17 of those at WOU. She has a Doctorate of Musical Arts, Piano Performance and Music History from the University of Oregon. She also has a Master of Music in Piano Performance from Boston University and a Bachelor of Arts in Music from Fort Wright College, Wash.

She has given numerous addresses on topics ranging from ethnomusicology, the importance of music education and performance anxiety. Baxter has also been given WOU's Honors Award for Outstanding Creativity.

The Mario and Alma Pastega Award for Excellence in Teaching honors a full-time faculty member who demonstrates excellence in teaching and relationships with students, both in and out of the classroom.

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Dr. Diane Baxter



Professor of Music (1988) Piano Performance
D.M.A. University of Oregon, 1985

Diane Baxter is a very active pianist. She plays regularly as a soloist and a chamber musician and has performed extensively in the United States, Canada and Japan. Diane is Principal Keyboard Artist for the Yaquina Orchestra and the Bloch Music Festival. She served as Principal Keyboard Artist for twelve years for the Cascade Festival of Music, and is a founding member of SoundMoves. Diane is dedicated to erasing boundaries between audience and performer. Her musical approach in both solo and shared performance is influenced by poetry, literature and world folk music. She has given many recitals of solo piano and poetry. Her research among the Ainu of Hokkaido, Japan, has contributed to Diane's commitment to the process in which listener and player become active co-creators in musical performance.

Her Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Piano Performance and Music History is from the University of Oregon, and her Master of Music in Piano Performance is from Boston University. She is Professor of Music at Western Oregon University, where she received the Faculty Honors Award for Outstanding Creativity. Diane regularly teaches Women in Music, Ethnomusicology, Accompanying and Studio Piano.

Diane's life is enriched tremendously by her husband Paul, her daughter, Caitlin, and her son, Quinn. The family shares their life with three cats, a parakeet, an enthusiastic Border Collie named Maddie, some tropical fish, a quarter horse named Peanut, and various types of chickens - who shall not be eaten.