

Dear Arts and Letters Colleagues,

Many of you will recall that the College Council established an award of appreciation in 2001, to be given annually to a faculty member or staff person outside the College of Arts and Letters who has contributed significantly to the mission of the College. Its purpose is to recognize and encourage work that contributes to the College but is undertaken by persons whose primary responsibilities lie outside of the College. The four previous recipients of the Arts and Letters Award of Appreciation are Matthew V. Storin (2005), former Associate Vice President for News and Information and Adjunct Professor of American Studies; Sr. Kathleen Cannon, O.P. (2004), Associate Dean in the College of Science, Concurrent Associate Professor in the Department of Theology, and former Associate Provost; Alexander J. Hahn (2003), Professor of Mathematics, Co-Director of the Glynn Family Honors Program, and Director of the Kaneb Center for Teaching and Learning; and Lee J. Svete (2002), Director of the Notre Dame Career Center.

I am pleased to announce that the recipient of the fifth annual Arts and Letters Award of Appreciation is **Ani Aprahamian, Professor and former Chairperson of Physics**. The 2006 Arts and Letters Award of Appreciation Committee — Karen L. Buranskas (Music), Ian Kuijt (Anthropology), and Robert P. Schmuhl (American Studies) — selected Ani from an impressive array of highly qualified nominees.

The multiple nominations that outlined Ani's work on behalf of the University of Notre Dame, and in particular on behalf of the members of the College of Arts and Letters, were impressive. Ani is especially appreciated for three reasons. First, Ani, a distinguished scholar-teacher in experimental nuclear physics, embodies the link between teaching, research, and service in an exemplary manner and in such a way as to extend beyond Science and into Arts and Letters. She maintains an unusually high level of scholarship while she contributes substantially to intellectual life and leadership here on campus and in the profession. In addition, she embodies the curiosity across disciplines that animates a great university; she has taken courses in Arts and Letters disciplines, ranging from art history to classics and French. Moreover, her service includes generous outreach, for example, offering to give a guided tour of the Jordan Hall of Science to a scholar-administrator who was the guest of one of our departments. In these ways she serves as a role model for all of us.

Second, Ani actively seeks out, creates, and promotes opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration and integrative thinking, for herself and for others. Ani has developed collaborative relationships with academics in, for example, the departments of Classics, History, and Philosophy and in the Graduate Program in the History and Philosophy of Science. She has also organized, for example, two recent and very popular lecture series on the Notre Dame campus: "World Year of Physics 2005: Einstein in the 21st Century" and "Thoughts of the Unthinkable: Perspectives on Nuclear Weapons and Warfare." As one nominator noted, "both series demonstrated the link between science and culture, by featuring musical concerts, artistic exhibits, and theatrical performances, as well as lectures on these issues vital to the survival of humanity." Ani encourages Arts and Letters faculty members and students to participate fully in these and other important

interdisciplinary events. Ani encourages the Notre Dame community to tackle big questions together and from multiple angles.

Finally, Ani enjoys introducing members of the Notre Dame community to each other and to distinguished visitors. She helps make the University more welcoming to new faculty members and guests and frequently hosts social events that spark interesting cross-disciplinary conversations. Such initiative and generosity are remarkable.

If you do not know Ani, please do not hesitate to introduce yourself to her, via e-mail (aapraham@nd.edu or aapraham@nsf.gov). (Ani is currently working in Washington, D.C. as a program director at the National Science Foundation.) On behalf of the College, I will present Ani with the 2006 Arts and Letters Award of Appreciation at the spring faculty meeting on Wednesday, May 9, 2007 at 3:00 p.m. in the McKenna Hall Auditorium. I hope you will join me in offering Ani the congratulations, thanks, and best wishes that go with the Arts and Letters Award of Appreciation.

Mark W. Roche
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