



1000 Rim Drive  
Durango, CO 81301-3999

October 21, 2004

Awards Committee, New Faculty Teaching Award

Re: Brian Burke, Psychology

It has been my pleasure to work with Brian since he was initially hired at Fort Lewis College, even prior to his arriving on campus. We exchanged emails regarding how to better deal with substance abuse clients in the counseling center and how to better utilize peer educators in the process. Those early emails generated a profitable relationship for me and for the peer educators I work with.

Brian has helped train the peer educators in model called "Motivational Interviewing" which has been proven highly effective with resistive clients. As an integral part of the 12-hour Certified Peer Educator training, Brian demonstrated his ability to engage students and deliver the material in an engaging fashion. As a result, the students have asked to have him be a part of the training again this year, and we completed the first two hours of that training just this week in preparation for Alcohol Screening Day as an event in National Collegiate Alcohol Awareness Week.

Last year, Brian asked if we could do an alcohol screening and was met with the typically resistant phrase, "Oh, I don't know if our students would participate in such a thing." We decided to move forward anyway, with the help of the Counseling Center, Peer Educators, Psychology Club and Student Wellness. In part due to Brian's work in organizing and supervising the event and training the students, we surpassed our goal of screenings by 150%. Not only were many students screened, but the follow-ups were facilitated by our peer educators instead of professional counselors. His training of the peer educators and other students proved to be the difference in the success of this event.

While many new faculty bring diverse talents to our community and a willingness to share those talents, Brian Burke is one of those tireless educators who seem to go just a little bit farther. His excellence in mentoring student relationships, his initiative in working with Psychology Club and US (peer educators), and the energy and enthusiasm he brings to the classroom all add up to an excellent candidate for the New Faculty Teaching Award.

Sincerely,

  
Marc Goldfarb

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