

# UNH Manchester Announces 2019 Faculty Excellence Awards

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Each year, UNH Manchester recognizes faculty who motivate, challenge and inspire students to succeed both in and out of the classroom. In addition to Excellence in Teaching, UNH Manchester has added new awards for Excellence in Service and Excellence in Research and Scholarship to celebrate the scope of work our faculty pursue—and the impact it has on our community.

## **Excellence in Teaching**

**DR. KAREN JIN, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF COMPUTER SCIENCE**

Dr. Karen Jin's passion for [computer science](#) has been a beacon of inspiration for students since she joined the UNH Manchester faculty in 2016. Students echo that her patience and energy empowers them while tackling complex subjects like machine learning, web design and programming languages. Her hands-on teaching philosophy allows students to put concepts into action, better preparing them with practical skills for the workforce.

Jin is also the founder and director of UNH's EPIC (Elementary Program Introducing Computing) program, which partners with local schools to introduce computational concepts to young students. In addition to teaching, Jin is an active researcher in curriculum design and classroom organization for teaching computing courses, as well as in promoting elementary computational literacy and improving computing education across the entire educational pipeline.

Jin earned her Ph.D. and M.S. in Computer Science from the University of Windsor and a Bachelor of Engineering in Telecommunications and Electrical Engineering from Shanghai University.

## **Adjunct Excellence in Teaching**

**AL LARSON, ADJUNCT PROFESSOR OF EARTH SCIENCE**

In his nearly two decades at UNH Manchester, Al Larson's knowledge and enthusiasm have made him a standout teacher and an integral part of the faculty. Larson brings more than 30 years of experience as New Hampshire-licensed professional geologist, sparking an interest in earth science in students from all majors. By sharing his experiences working in the geologic sciences, he seeks to broaden his students' understanding of geology and how it affects their lives, the environment and our planet.

Prior to teaching, Larson worked as a consultant in the environmental services industry in the western and northeastern regions of the United States. He worked on a broad range of environmental projects during his professional career, ranging from the permitting of a platinum/palladium mine in Montana to the investigation of a SUPERFUND site in New Hampshire.

Larson earned his M.S. in Earth Sciences from UNH, a B.S. in Geology from Cortland State College and an A.S. in Biology from Orange County Community College.

## **Excellence in Service**

## **DR. BARBARA JAGO, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF COMMUNICATION ARTS**

The Excellence in Service award recognizes a residential faculty member who has shown exceptional, consistent achievements in the areas of service to the college, the university, the local/regional community, and/or the candidate's profession.

Creating an inclusive learning environment has always been central to Dr. Barbara Jago's teaching philosophy. Since joining the [communication arts](#) faculty in 1998, Jago's impact on our campus and community have been continuously highlighted by her passion, outreach and thoughtful discussion surrounding inclusivity.

Jago received the 2016 UNH Women's Commission Faculty Award for her efforts in making the University a safe, welcoming environment for women. UNH also presented Jago with the 2013 Kidder Award for her commitment to educating students and colleagues about gender identity and sexual orientation—and for creating a safe and respectful forum for discussion.

Jago earned a Ph.D. in Communication and M.A. in Secondary Social Science Education from the University of South Florida, an M.A. in Cinema Studies from New York University, and a B.A. from Smith College.

## **Excellence in Research and Scholarship**

This award recognizes a residential faculty member who has demonstrated success in research and scholarship, including activities that result in the discovery of important new facts or the generation of new ideas, works of art or creative solutions to problems of interest in a particular field.

## **DR. KYLE MACLEA, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF BIOLOGY**

Since joining the UNH Manchester faculty in 2014, Dr. Kyle MacLea has maintained a vigorous program of original research that has resulted in 13 journal publications and 23 presentations at regional and national conferences. MacLea has made it his mission to give students research experience in areas that interest them, and many of these papers are coauthored by the active group of undergraduate researchers working in his laboratory.

A member of the Council on Undergraduate Research and the Genome Consortium for Active Teaching, MacLea focuses on allowing students to pursue experiments that reflect their individual career goals and scientific curiosity, inside and outside the classroom. Beyond UNH Manchester, he has also engaged community colleges and area high schools in opportunities for genomic research.

MacLea, assistant professor of [biological sciences](#) and [biotechnology](#), is also an active researcher of prions and amyloids in yeast and human disease, microbial genetics and the biology of molting and limb regeneration in decapod crustaceans such as crabs, lobsters

and crayfish. He earned his Ph.D. from Dartmouth College.

**DR. MIHAELA SABIN, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF COMPUTER SCIENCE**

In her 12 years at UNH Manchester, Dr. Mihaela Sabin has obtained extensive funding to support her research in computing that she has integrated into teaching and service on local, national and international levels. Sabin's efforts to broaden participation of students underrepresented in computing and expand professional learning of computational practices for K-12 teachers have earned funding awards from the National Science Foundation, New Hampshire Innovation Research Center, Google for Education and other private and corporate foundations. A tireless advocate of youth STEM education, she was selected as 2017 TechEducator of the Year by the New Hampshire High Tech Council.

Sabin is a founding member of the Computer Science Teacher Association New Hampshire Chapter and CS4NH, a coalition working to increase access to and participation in computer science education throughout the state. She is also vice-chair for education on the ACM Special Interest Group for Information Technology Education and co-chair of the Workforce Development Committee of the New Hampshire Tech Alliance.

Sabin earned her Ph.D. in Computer Science and M.S. for Teachers in College Teaching from the University of New Hampshire and an M.S. in Computer Science from Politehnica University in Bucharest, Romania.