“I am continually amazed at the creativity, energy and dedication to learning demonstrated by our faculty. The wide range of topics and goals in these Endowed Faculty Chair awards is only the beginning. The endowment process provides ongoing support of teaching and learning at Kirkwood. Decades from now, students and faculty will benefit from what these fine faculty members do today.”

~ Dr. Mick Starcevich, President
What are the Endowed Faculty Chair Awards?

The Endowed Faculty Chair awards were initiated by Kirkwood Community College President Dr. Mick Starcevich to honor retiring President Dr. Norm Nielsen in December 2004.

Endowed Faculty Chairs provide an opportunity for selected faculty to undertake professional development projects in their disciplines or in instructional pedagogy through writing, preparing and presenting a special lecture, conducting research, or pursuing other opportunities. The emphasis is on personal and professional growth and is separate from assigned duties, routine work or service to the department.

The goals for the Endowed Faculty Chair program are to:

- Encourage faculty to pursue educational challenges with creativity and innovation.
- Promote academic quality by supporting faculty commitment to educational and pedagogical excellence.
- Promote the college’s name in connection with educational excellence.
- Bring community leaders and faculty together in a commitment to excellence in education.

The Endowed Faculty Chair program is a major effort by the Kirkwood Board of Trustees and the Kirkwood Foundation Board to demonstrate their commitment to quality instruction by recognizing and fostering instructional excellence and lifelong learning.
2017-2018

HENRY B. AND PATRICIA B. TIPPIE ENDOWED CHAIR
Bill Stephens
Can Money Buy Happiness?

In her book “The Overspent American,” the economist Juliet Schor demonstrates that, if we chose to do so, Americans could live at our 1945 standard of living, adjusted for inflation, and work only half the year. So why don’t we? Isn’t it leisure that we all claim to crave? More to the point, is all the extra consumption that these additional work hours buy making us happier?

In this project I will explore this problem by examining the relationship between wants, needs, and happiness in contemporary America. This includes an analysis of economic data on spending, savings, debt and consumption, as well as a reflection on well-being and happiness indexes from the polling services of Gallup and Pew Research. Selected sources from the fields of behavioral economics and positive psychology will provide some context on how we may define happiness.

KIRKWOOD ENDOWED FACULTY CHAIR
Mike Sells
Utilizing YouTube as a Surgical Technology Skills Resource

Surgical Technology is a field that is highly kinesthetic in nature. On a daily basis we incorporate dozens of highly specialized tasks to deliver high standards of surgical patient care. Unfortunately, every hospital and every surgical tech program teaches and performs these tasks in a slightly different manner due to overall lack of communication and resources available.

My proposal is to investigate different methods of performing surgical skills, generate verbal scripts, and then demonstrate and video record each skill. I will create a YouTube channel entitled “SurgTech Academy,” post my videos, and then promote my videos through the local and national surgical technology networks. These videos will be utilized by Kirkwood Surgical Technology students to prepare for classroom instruction and assessment, and could become a resource for surgical tech programs and hospitals around the nation.
Kirkwood Endowed Faculty Chair
Laura Yost

Aspettando la Pace (Waiting for the Peace): Italian Soldier Newspapers in the Great War

What was it like to be an Italian soldier along the front lines in the Great War? It may be possible to piece that existence together by examining giornali delle trincee. Such sources have been researched for the primary combatants along the Western Front, but not for the Kingdom of Italy. This project seeks to develop a greater understanding of Italian troops via what they wrote and illustrated in the columns of more than fifty distinct journals. What aspects of the war did the soldiers focus on? How did they discuss their enemy? How did the Italians perceive their war effort in the bigger picture? What about artistic expression? How much propaganda can be found in the articles? A successful analysis can be compared and contrasted to existing scholarship on Britain, France, and Germany to learn how similar, or unique, the Italian experience was.

Kirkwood Endowed Faculty Chair
Ryan Dehner

From Policy to Final Grade: Implementing Competency-Based Language Teaching in Institutions of Higher Learning

Language students may pass a class, having demonstrated conceptual knowledge or course content, but may still lack the underlying language proficiency needed for subsequent coursework, possibly derailing students, devastatingly, from their path to success. This project will support our English Language Acquisition (ELA) learners at Kirkwood by developing an alternative proficiency- or competency-based model to address student readiness. Other models emphasize, for example, traditional grading structures or testing of concepts and isolated skills. The CBLT model will center on developing students’ overall language ability, a shift to knowing and doing. It will steer current policy, instruction, assessment, and grading so that learners are more competent and capable, maximizing their success within ELA and their major coursework. Once the new model is designed, documents to assist instructors will be created and published, guiding language instructors at Kirkwood and other institutions of higher learning.
This project is intended to elucidate the dynamics of race, class and gender in Trump’s ascendency. While many scholars have sought to offer insight into the Trump base there is very little research that explores the female constituency. While in graduate school I focused on a lacuna in comparative fascist studies. Many scholars noted the centrality of gender and the omnipresent feature of hyper masculinity but failed to meaningfully address the question of gender. In what ways did women in fascist states capitulate, embrace and or resist has been a largely under examined question. With the rise of Trump and the corollary of the Tea Party the question of gender again seems to be overlooked by prominent sociologists. Much of what we know about the Trump base and the Tea Party does not meaningfully explore women’s perspectives and motives. This project will address the meanings and motives that compelled women in the state of Iowa to support an openly misogynistic presidential candidate. Given the president’s brazen comments about women and our first viable female presidential candidate I am committed to understanding the perspectives of women who voted for Trump.

The objective of this Endowed Chair project is to create a viable screenplay based on autobiographical material relating to the concept of family and personal experiences. Besides family-based research including interviews, the process includes the study of the art of screenplay development and writing, and the completion of Aaron Sorkin’s online Master Class on Screenwriting. “Deep Freeze,” the working title of the project, centers on the significance of a necessary appliance for working class families to store communally not only food, but contraband—sometimes unbeknownst to the owners. Also, in the frigid winters of North Dakota, the “deep freeze” extends to the storage area at cemeteries for bodies when the ground cannot be broken for burial. Lastly, the “deep freeze” echoes the inability for or denial of human emotion in response to abuse and death in these families. “Deep Freeze” attempts resolution and redemption to these conflicts.
2018-2019
Endowed Faculty Chair Recipients

Lori Merlak
The Impact of Global Education on Student Learning – Comparing Methods of Instruction
Assistant Professor, Management | Business and Information Technology
Supported by the Henry B. and Patricia B. Tippie Endowed Chair

Lydia Hartunian
“Pop Up” Seminars for Critical Thinking Skills
Professor, Humanities | Arts and Humanities

Dr. Shell Feijo
More Than Anything: A Memoir of Survival
Assistant Professor, English | English

Dr. Peter D. Jauhiainen
The Christian Right’s Assault on Public Education
Professor, Religion | Arts and Humanities

Nicole Alsaker
Development of Teamwork and Communication Skills in a Healthcare IPE Simulation Setting
Assistant Professor, Nursing Simulation Coordinator | Nursing

Supported by the following Endowed Faculty Chair Donors
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We are grateful to the Endowed Faculty Chair donors and their dedication to supporting excellence in the classroom.

For more information about creating an Endowed Faculty Chair in honor or memory of someone special, contact Kathy Hall at 319-398-7650 or khall@kirkwood.edu.