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Alum Deeter a Distinguished Teacher



ATI Assistant Professor Laura Deeter.

Dr. Laura M. Deeter, an Assistant Professor in Horticulture Technologies at Ohio State Agricultural Technical Institute (ATI), was honored for her superior teaching with the 2006 Ohio State University Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching. Dr. Deeter is a role model and friend to students, who consider her to be an amazing teacher who makes learning fun. "She finds unique ways of making students want to learn and feel a kinship with her," one student commented. Students consistently praise Deeter's excellence in teaching, her command of the subject matter, and her genuine concern for her students.

"I'm proud to be recognized this early in my career. I had no idea this was even coming; it was a complete surprise when everyone showed up in the classroom!" exclaims Deeter, who was informed about the award during a surprise classroom visit on March 3rd. **Michael Sherman**, vice provost for academic administration, **Linda Crossley**, vice president of the Ohio State Alumni Association, and **Stephen Nameth**, director of Ohio State ATI, joined Deeter's parents at the announcement. "The students are the reason I love teaching, and to be recognized not only by faculty and alumni but by students as well is really fantastic."



HCS alum and Horticulture Technologies Assistant Professor at ATI, Dr. Laura Deeter earned the 2006 Ohio State University Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching.

An Ohio State trained horticulturist, Deeter (BS 1995, PhD 2002) credits her mentor, Horticulture & Crop Science professor **Dr. Steven Still**, with influencing her career path. "Dr. Still had the most impact on my career. His obvious passion for plants, plant identification and perennials in particular, and his down-to-earth approach to teaching helped me develop as a teacher. He encouraged me to go to grad school, kept encouraging me throughout my

time there and let me make mistakes as a TA, so that I would become a better teacher."

Students rave about Deeter's unique approach to the final in her herbaceous plants course, for which she invented CSI/ATI. Students solve the "Garden Murders" through clues from seeds and foliage found on the "victims" bodies. To make class more interesting, she converted her presentations to Power Point and made her course materials easily available through WebCT. One of only ten recipients in the entire university, Deeter will be inducted into the The Academy of Teaching along with receiving a medallion at the annual Faculty Awards Ceremony.



OSU/ATI educator Laura Deeter celebrates her Distinguished Teaching Award with parents Gail and Stephen Summerhill.

In addition to the satisfaction of preparing students for horticulture careers, Deeter is also receptive to learning from her students. "I love when any student tells me a story about going out and using the knowledge I helped them acquire in their jobs. The students I run into teach me something every quarter; I just have to stop to listen to what they are saying. I always learn from them, and that has a great influence."

Being both an educator and a Buckeye apparently runs in the family. Deeter's father, **Dr. Stephen Summerhill**, an associate professor in the OSU Spanish and Portuguese Department, was recognized for his teaching excellence two years ago when he earned the 2004 Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching. Ohio State believes this to be the first case of "parent-child" winners of this university award.

Watch a narrated slideshow of this story with additional photos here: [Alum Deeter a Distinguished Teacher Slideshow](#). Quicktime software is required to view the slideshow.

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