

HAMPDEN-SYDNEY COLLEGE PROFESSOR SELECTED TO RECEIVE VFIC'S H. HITER HARRIS, JR. AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING



RICHMOND, VIRGINIA— The Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges (VFIC) has selected Alexander Werth, Elliott Professor of Biology at Hampden-Sydney College, as the 2011 recipient of *The Hiter H. Harris, Jr. Memorial Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching*. The award recognizes Werth for his clear and abiding commitment to the craft of classroom teaching, the teaching-learning process, and the development of each student as an individual.

The Harris Award was created through an endowment gift from the family of the late Hiter Harris Jr., a leading Virginia banker and a member of VFIC's board from 1973-98 and includes a stipend to support the recipient's scholarly research and professional development activities. The Harris family endowed the award to highlight the special features of VFIC colleges and universities by recognizing faculty members "whose professional history reflects a strong, clear and abiding commitment to excellence in classroom teaching within the undergraduate liberal arts and sciences."

In announcing the 2011 Harris Award recipient, Robert Woltz, chairman of VFIC, noted that "the selection committee focused on four criteria in the review process – the nominee's impact on and involvement with undergraduate students; scholarly approach to teaching and learning; contributions to undergraduate education in the institution, community and profession; and, endorsements from colleagues and current or former students. We are pleased to recognize Dr. Werth for his 19-year commitment to the students at Hampden-Sydney College and around the country."

A graduate of Duke University with a Ph.D. from Harvard, "Dr. Werth is an accomplished scholar who publishes extensively within his scientific discipline; he publishes articles at a rate that is laudable for a scholar at a small liberal arts college with an especially heavy teaching load," notes Robert Herdegen, dean of the faculty at Hampden-Sydney College. "He is an extraordinary teacher, who teaches by example. Students see that he puts into practice the lessons that he gives them, demonstrating that one can gain full appreciation of the world in which we live only with a

knowledge and understanding of sciences, the humanities, and the social sciences. Students learn these lessons in his classroom, but they also learn by emulating the example he sets for them.”

In receiving the prestigious award, Werth joins the three prior Harris Award recipients, Arthur H. Goldsmith, professor of economics at Washington and Lee University, Lawrence D. Hultgren, professor of philosophy at Virginia Wesleyan College and KimMarie McGoldrick, professor of economics at the University of Richmond.

VFIC, founded in 1952, is a non-profit organization which raises funds and coordinates collaborative programs to strengthen 15 leading independent colleges and universities in Virginia:

Bridgewater College	Randolph-Macon College
Emory & Henry College	Roanoke College
Hampden-Sydney College	Shenandoah University
Hollins University	Sweet Briar College
Lynchburg College	University of Richmond
Mary Baldwin College	Virginia Wesleyan College
Marymount University	Washington and Lee University
Randolph College	

VFIC has generated over \$139 million to strengthen Virginia’s independent college sector and is nationally recognized for the innovative projects and programs it has developed for these institutions.

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