



NEWS

The S.C. Commission on Higher Education
Ms. Julie Carullo, Acting Executive Director
1122 Lady Street, Suite 300
Columbia, SC 29201

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Contact: Rita Allison
Director of Communications
803-767-8352 ©
rallison@che.sc.gov

The distinguished winners of the 2013 S.C. Governor's Professor of the Year award were announced today at a press conference held in the Rotunda of the Capitol. Selected from a total of 30 candidates nominated by their respective institutions, the recipients of this prestigious award exemplify excellence in teaching and student advising. This year marks the 25th Anniversary of the award.

Dr. Robert Jesselson, D.M.A., is a Carolina Distinguished Professor at the University of South Carolina Columbia, where he teaches cello and plays in the American Arts Trio. He is named as the S.C. Governor's 2013 Professor of the Year for senior colleges and universities.

In 2010, Dr. Jesselson was also named the Mungo Distinguished Professor of the Year, the highest teaching award given by USC. He was the national President of the American String Teachers Association (ASTA), from 2000-2002. During his tenure as president, he initiated the National Studio Teachers Forums (2000 and 2002), started the National String Project Consortium (with sites now at 40 universities and grants of \$3.1 million), and began planning for the association's first stand-alone ASTA national convention in 2003. He is now the Executive Director of the National String Project Consortium.

Dr. Jesselson has performed in recitals and with orchestras in Europe, Asia, South America, and the United States. He has participated in the Music Festivals at Nice (France), Granada (Spain), Santiago (Spain), Aspen (CO), Spoleto (SC), the Grand Tetons (WY), and the Festival Inverno (Brazil). His performance degrees are from the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik in Freiburg, West Germany, from the Eastman School of Music, where he studied with Paul Katz. He received the DMA from Rutgers where he studied with cellist Bernard Greenhouse. Dr. Jesselson has been principal cello of the South Carolina Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Orquesta-Sinfónica de Las Palmas, Spain.

In 1983, Dr. Jesselson lived in China for a six-month residency and was one of the first Western cellists to visit that country. During that time, he performed as soloist, provided master classes, and taught at several conservatories (including Beijing, Shanghai, and Canton). Dr. Jesselson is

a former conductor of the USC University Orchestra and the Columbia Youth Orchestra. For 15 years, he was the director of the USC String Project, building the program into one of the largest and most prominent string education programs in the country. His pioneering work on this program was recognized in an article in the *New York Times* in December 2003. The ASTA awarded him the “Marvin Rabin Community Service” Award in 2009 for his work with the National String Project Consortium and teacher training.

He is also the recipient of the 2002 Cantey Award for Outstanding Faculty, the 1992 Verner Award, the 1989 S.C. Arts Commission Artist Fellowship, the 1995 Mungo Teaching Award, and the first SC ASTA Studio Teacher Award in 2005. Dr. Jesselson was the cello teacher at the S.C. Governor’s School for the Arts for 17 years. In December 2001, he led a delegation of string players and teachers to Cuba to begin professional contact with Cuban musicians. He also taught at Sookmyung University in Korea, Sun Yat Sen University in Taiwan, University of Auckland in New Zealand, at the Royal College of Music in London, and recently in St. Lucia in the Caribbean. In the summer 2013, Dr. Jesselson will be teaching cello at the Green Mountain Music Festival in Vermont and at the Cellospeak festival in Pennsylvania. He plays a 1716 Jacques Boquay cello.

Graduating with a Master of Arts degree in Earth and Environmental Resources Management (MEERM), Mr. Joshua Castleberry is an Instructor and Academic Program Manager with Central Carolina Technical College in Sumter, South Carolina. Mr. Castleberry has been selected as the 2013 S.C. Governor’s Professor of the Year for two-year colleges.

Mr. Castleberry’s love of the environment started at a very young age as he spent every possible minute outside catching “critters”. His love of the outdoors continued through high school and undergraduate school where he earned his Bachelor’s in Biology. His original intent was to take a job with the Department of Natural Resources as a wildlife biologist. In one of life’s unexpected twists, a hiring freeze was in effect when he graduated. The only job he could find was a high school teaching position. Needless to say he was disappointed...at first. After a very intense adjustment period, he found that sharing his love of the environment and conservationist ethic in an educational setting was far more enjoyable than any job he could have ever hoped for.

While teaching at the high school, Mr. Castleberry decided to further his education. He became aware of an opportunity for to earn a master’s degree in his preferred field, Environmental Science. Even better, he was able to secure one of his childhood heroes, Rudy Mancke, as his major advisor. He started by augmenting his education and experience with certifications (including those in HAZWOPER, OSHA General Industry Outreach Trainer, Certified Erosion Prevention & Sediment Control Inspector, and D-level licensed Biological Wastewater Operator). After just two years at Central Carolina Technical College, Mr. Castleberry was promoted to program manager for the Environmental Engineering Technology Department. Under his leadership, the department’s program was moved to a distance education format and three supporting workforce development certificates were created. This change allowed for more than doubling the number of students in the department without sacrificing the quality of education.

Mr. Castleberry is active in the community. Within his college community, he is the recycling coordinator, an active member of the Health and Wellness committee, and the go-to-guy for questions about sustainability and environment. In his local community he serves on the Sumter Earthday committee and the Sumter Stormwater Solutions committee. He has served as the merit badge coordinator for Troop 339's Hornaday Weekend (a weekend dedicated to the Hornaday Award, given in scouting for scouts who focus on conservation). At the state level, he is active with the North American Amphibian Monitoring Program, the Environmental Education Association of South Carolina (whose board on which he has served) and he is the Chair for the Swamp Fox district of the Water Environment Association of South Carolina. He also serves annually as the special topics coordinator for the Envirothon.

Mr. Castleberry is a dedicated family man. He enjoys spending time with his wife, Cassie, and their two children, Samara and Wesley. Together, they care for their little slice of heaven in South Carolina. With horses, snakes, turtles, dogs, cats, bees, chickens, and gardens to care for, there is never a dull moment. With a love of the natural world and a profession protecting and teaching about the natural world, it is difficult to draw a hard line between work and pleasure.

Finalists for 2013 S.C. Governor's Professor of the Year are:

Dr. Joseph K. Hammond – Greenville Technical College
Dr. Robin Kowalski – Clemson University
Dr. Wei-Kai Lai – University of Carolina-Salkehatchie
Dr. Nan Li – Claflin University
Dr. Kelly R. Ragucci – Medical University of South Carolina
Ms. Donna Shannon – Tri-County Technical College
Mr. Samuel H. Tolbert – Lander University
Ms. Elizabeth L. Wyatt – York Technical College

For additional information on the S.C. Governor's Professor of the Year Award, please visit: www.che.sc.gov and click on "Professor of the Year" for a picture and biography of each winner.