Ridgewater’s Massage Therapy and Legal Assistant Faculty named 2020 Outstanding Educators

HUTCHINSON and WILLMAR, MN – Ridgewater College’s Colleen Norgren and Dr. Katy Lundell-Stuhr were recently honored for their teaching excellence by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System Board of Trustees.

Minnesota State traditionally recognizes Outstanding Educators at a spring celebration banquet in St. Paul. Due to the global coronavirus pandemic, however, the celebration was cancelled. Ridgewater’s Norgren and Lundell-Stuhr instead received virtual recognition on both the Minnesota State website and during a Ridgewater all-faculty virtual meeting in mid-April.

“Colleen and Katy are very deserving of being included in the group of faculty nominated for Minnesota State’s highest honor of Outstanding Educators for 2020,” said Ridgewater College President Dr. Craig Johnson. “They are dedicated teachers who are passionate about their programs and students, consistently demonstrating our commitment to strong academic standards and high expectations for students while also developing caring relationships to help our students succeed. Ridgewater is very fortunate to have Colleen and Katy on our faculty team.”

Colleen Norgren
Norgren teaches in the Administrative Support Careers program, specializing in the Legal Assistant online program, but also including Business Law. In addition to teaching for 15 years, with six of those at Ridgewater, Norgren has 27 years of experience in legal professions. Highlights from a student nomination were included on the Minnesota State online recognition: “Students in Colleen Norgren’s classes appreciate her clear and consistent expectations, accessible instructional methods, and her diligent commitment to help them meet their educational goals.”

Ridgewater Dean of Instruction Matt Feuerborn couldn’t agree more. “Colleen is a talented and dedicated instructor who prides herself in adding value to her students’ learning experiences,” he said. “Colleen works daily with a diverse student population and plans intentional learning activities that help draw students together and celebrate the diversity of their backgrounds and experiences.”
Norgren expressed appreciation for the award. “I am honored to be recognized for hard work and dedication to Ridgewater students,” she said. “I am thankful for the support I receive from my department team, staff, leadership, and my students. I couldn’t be a successful instructor without their support and feedback as motivation to strive for student success.”

Norgren is an active leader within the Legal Assisting profession, where she is currently employed as a paralegal and law library manager for the Wright County Law Library. She also serves on the 18th District Lawyers Professional Responsibility Board as a District Ethics Committee Investigator.

Katy Lundell-Stuhr

Lundell-Stuhr teaches Massage Therapy at Ridgewater on the Willmar campus. The Minnesota State online recognition noted Lundell-Stuhr’s determination, sense of commitment and persistence allow her to both challenge and support students to reach their full potential in their classes and life.

“Dr. Katy Lundell-Stuhr has a long history focused on wellness, which she passes along to her students in class and in application,” said Jeff Miller, Ridgewater dean of instruction. “As a chiropractor and massage therapist, Katy shares her passion for wholistic wellness with her students, inspiring them to be outstanding preventive care practitioners, while also being mindful of taking care of themselves in the process. Dr. Katy Lundell-Stuhr continues to provide her students with the highest-quality instruction to prepare them for a strong entrance into the massage therapy field. Ridgewater College and the students are fortunate to have Dr. Lundell-Stuhr as a faculty member.”

In addition to practicing part-time chiropractic and acupuncture medicine and massage therapy, Lundell-Stuhr is also a certified yoga instructor. She most recently began pursuing a specialization in oncology massage and is working with a state-wide network to help draft legislation to require massage therapy licensing in Minnesota.

Lundell-Stuhr is thankful for the Outstanding Educator honor and appreciative for the chance to teach wellness.

“I try to build a community so all students feel a part of something bigger than themselves that will support them through this journey,” she explained. “We are in this together.”

In addition, her number one goal is to encourage lifelong learning. “We never know enough. Ever. Keep filling your tool box with skills,” she encouraged. With so much available online, it’s simply a matter of seeking what you desire.

For more information about the Minnesota State awards, go to https://www.minnstate.edu/stories/botawards.

For more information about Ridgewater College, go to www.ridgewater.edu.

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Ridgewater College is a community and technical college with campuses in the central Minnesota communities of Willmar and Hutchinson. The college serves more than 5,000 students through its nearly 100 academic programs and more than 68,000 training hours for individuals and businesses through customized training and continuing education. The college is a member of Minnesota State and accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

*Minnesota State includes 30 community and technical colleges and 7 state universities serving approximately 400,000 students. It is the fourth-largest system of two-year colleges and four-year universities in the United States.*