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White Receives Exemplary Faculty Award

The late James White, former professor in agricultural education, was recognized as a College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Exemplary Faculty during the agricultural education scholarship banquet. A formal ceremony during the Homecoming Ag Alumni Association Barbecue Oct. 16, recognized the recipients before the alumni who nominated them.

This was the first year for the award, and CASNR alumni chose recipients based on an alumni questionnaire. They were asked to name a faculty member who stood out among all others as having had extraordinary impact on their personal, professional and academic growth. CASNR alumni named more than 70 faculty members for this honor. The 10 most frequently listed were given the honor of being named a CASNR Exemplary Faculty.

“James would have been sincerely honored and genuinely humbled for receiving this award from the OSU Ag Alumni and being recognized with the other nine recipients: a former student, a classmate, and respected, career-long teaching friends and associates,” said White’s wife, Carol. “What could be greater for a teacher than being recognized by former student for having been a positive influence in their lives?”

White touched many students’ lives throughout his 32 years of service to Oklahoma State University. Former student, Kendra Stanek, said he went well above the typical expectation of an instructor.

“He had a strategy of connecting with each student in small ways that helped the student feel recognized and appreciated,” Stanek said. “He was a cheerleader for each of his students, and I believe one of his greatest strengths as a teacher and adviser was the way he encouraged and motivated.”

Carol White said he was dedicated to each of his students and teaching was his passion.

“James’s work with and dedication to his students was his life,” Carol White said. “He realized the difference that certain teachers had made in his life and likewise worked to help his students recognize their potential, to motivate them to set goals for success and to work diligently to meet them.”

Throughout White’s career within the department of agricultural education, communications and 4-H youth development, he was known for developing the agricultural education leadership and service option. Even though he was ill during his last years at OSU, he never lost his love of teaching and optimism toward his students.

“Even through his own trials, he was such a positive influence and witness to others,” Stanek said. “He will always be a hero to me.”

Other recipients of this award were David Buchanan, animal science; Jeff Hattey, plant and soil sciences; Mark Johnson, animal science; Bob Kropp, animal science; Tom Kuzmic, forestry; Bob Oehrtman, agricultural economics; Joe Schatzer, agricultural economics; Shelly Sitton, agricultural communications; and Joe Williams, agricultural economics.

For more information about the department of agricultural education, communications and 4-H youth development, contact James Leising, department head, at (405) 744-8036.

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James White was recognized as a CASNR Exemplary Faculty Award during the agricultural education scholarship banquet. Linda Martin, CASNR assistant dean for academic programs, presented the award to White's wife, Carol.