

Awards recognize housing staff

Jessica Cantarelli/ Campus Editor Issue date: 12/6/05

Several members of Eastern's housing staff received prestigious awards at this year's Great Lakes Association of College and University Housing Offices.

Bill Kolacek, complex director of Carman Hall, won the GLASS award, which is the top award at the conference, for his presentation titled "My Super-Sized Life."

The conference, known as GLACUHO, began in the winter of 1973 "to contribute to the improvement of dining services, residential life, residential services and residential facilities provided by housing officers."

GLACUHO is a regional conference involving the states of Ohio, Michigan, Illinois and Indiana.

Kolacek was not the only person from Eastern to win an award. Tracy Cunningham, resident director of Taylor, Lawson and Pemberton halls, won a Top 10 Program Award for her presentation "Tunnel of Oppression."

"Basically what we did through committee work for our regional association was put together a two-hour program where we acted out several kinds of mini plays," Cunningham said. "We had one that dealt with homosexuality, with a lot of stuff with the coming out process, a racial skit and a skit on trans-gendered issues."

Cunningham and her committee members from all over the state worked for the whole semester developing the presentation via telephone calls and e-mail.

"The 'Tunnel of Oppression' is something a lot of schools do, they do a wheel of oppression," she said. "We incorporated acting into the tunnel. This was a way we took acting the part out and did skits while we discussed the kind of impact of oppression."

This presentation was important to Cunningham because she said it incorporates a lot of issues students are dealing with these days.

"I think it reflects very well (on Eastern) that we won," Cunningham said. "Eastern was very much represented and is now looked at as a premier institution, especially in the student life aspect."

"'Tunnel of Oppression' was very powerful and opens your eyes," said Mark Hudson, director of Housing and Dining Services. "It's a very cool presentation and has had a significant impact."

Hudson said he also thinks the recognition Eastern received at the conference will help the organizations hold themselves to higher standards.

Jody Stone, assistant director of housing, won the Outstanding Service Award, which goes to someone within the GLACUHO area who has provided significant contributions at their institution.

Stone was nominated by Kolacek in late September, and was honored to receive the award.

"I said 'wow' when I heard," Stone said. "There are so many people involved in the organization, and outstanding people involved and just to be nominated for the award, it puts you in a group of people you look up to."

Stone felt "humbled" by having his peers recognize him for his efforts. He said he would always appreciate the award.

Stone serves as the exhibitor liaison on the board of directors for GLACUHO.

"Other things they look at besides what you've done for GLACUHO and what you've done on your own campus is for promotion of inclusiveness and appreciation of differences," Stone said. "And the housing staff is focused on diversity and it provides leadership in that area."

Stone has worked at Eastern since 1995, and was a student here from 1989 to 1995, earning both his bachelor's and master's degrees.

"I love the challenge of trying to take care of day-to-day challenges and build a resident life program, and we have one of the premier resident life programs in the nation," he said. "If you're going to do something you have to be the best you can be at it, and I would love for our program, which is a team of a lot of people, to be known as one of the best in the nation."

Amy Price, area director; and Doug Howell, resident director of Thomas Hall, were also elected to the board of directors for GLACUHO.