Sac State professor wins book award

Jana Noel, a professor of teacher education at Sacramento State, has received a 2013 Critics Choice Award from the American Educational Studies Association for a book she edited, Moving Teacher Education into Urban Schools and Communities: Prioritizing Community Strengths (Routledge, 236 pages; $47).

The AESA each year honors “recent scholarship deemed to be outstanding in its field.” Noel’s work explores the value of holding classes for university-level teacher education students in low-income community schools.

“About 80 percent of teachers are white, middle-class, English-speaking females,” she says. “Many of them will become teachers in low-income schools that are highly diverse, but when they come to a university and learn about the kind of place they’ve never been, they don’t quite get it. So teacher education is moving into schools and communities to prepare future teachers for the political, social and economic realities of urban schools.

“Our students who are future teachers in low-income schools generally fall in love with the neighborhood and the families. And many decide to teach and advocate for the children in low-income, highly diverse schools and communities.”

In 2004, Noel founded the Urban Teacher Education Center, and for five years, she taught dozens of Sac State’s teacher candidates in a classroom at what was then Jedediah Smith Elementary School in Sacramento. It’s the neighborhood school for two of the city’s largest low-income government housing projects and later was renamed to honor local activist Leataata Floyd.

The Urban Teacher Education Center received the 2008 Quality Education Partnership Award for Distinguished Service to Children and the Preparation of Teachers, given by the California Council on Teacher Education.

Noel, who came to Sacramento State in 2000, is a professor in the Department of Teacher Education, a former Community Engagement Faculty Scholar and a Provost’s Fellow for Community and Civic Engagement. She recently was appointed by Sacramento State President Alexander Gonzalez as special assistant to the president for Analytics and Institutional Effectiveness.
In 2011, Sacramento State professors Margarita Berta-Ávila and Julie López Figueroa (along with co-author Anita Tijerina Revilla, a professor at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas) received an AESA Critics Choice Award for their book *Marching Students: Chicana and Chicano Activism in Education, 1968 to the Present*, published by the University of Nevada Press.

For media assistance, contact Sacramento State’s Office of Public Affairs at (916) 278-6156. – Dixie Reid

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