FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Alliant Energy Foundation and UW System recognize outstanding teachers and students

MADISON – The Alliant Energy Foundation and the University of Wisconsin System recognized the outstanding achievements of three UW System students and three UW System teachers at a Sept. 26 awards presentation in Madison.

“Congratulations to this year’s award winners, who make their campus communities better places to live and learn,” said Ray Cross, UW System president. “These awards are a wonderful way to recognize ‘out-of-the-park’ work by students and faculty. Through their efforts, they are putting themselves and others on a talent path to success.”

The Alliant Energy Foundation and the UW System presented three students with the 2014 Alliant Energy/Erroll B. Davis, Jr. Academic Achievement Award. This 8th annual award recognizes the outstanding scholarship and community-service efforts of students from traditionally underrepresented minority groups who are pursuing a degree in business or engineering at UW-Madison and UW-Platteville, institutions within Alliant Energy’s service area.

The 2014 recipients of Alliant Energy/Erroll B. Davis, Jr. Academic Achievement Awards are:

- **Markesha D. Parker**, senior, UW-Platteville. She expects to receive her Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial Engineering in December 2014.
- **Gustavo Zach Vargas**, senior, UW-Madison. He expects to receive his Bachelor of Science degree in Biomedical Engineering and a Certificate in Computer Sciences in May 2015.
- **Julio César Zelaya**, senior, UW-Madison. He expects to receive his Bachelor of Science degree in Materials Science and Engineering in May 2015. He earned his Associate’s Degree in Chemical Engineering at Miami Dade College.
Erroll B. Davis, Jr., the first Black leader of a “Business Week 1000” company, is a former chief executive of Alliant Energy and a former member of UW System’s Board of Regents. He was interim Superintendent of Atlanta Public Schools from 2012 to 2014. The Alliant Energy Foundation established an endowment in 2006 to honor Davis’s distinguished record of public service. The award program is administered by the UW System Office of Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, and Student Success.

Three members of the UW System’s teaching faculty earned the 2014 Alliant Energy Underkofler Excellence in Teaching Awards, in recognition of their outstanding commitment to student success. The awards are presented annually to teachers from UW System campuses located within the Alliant Energy service area.

This year’s recipients of the Alliant Energy Underkofler Excellence in Teaching Awards are:

- Sherri Byrand, Senior Lecturer, Department of English, UW-Sheboygan
- Timothy M. Deis, Professor, Department of Mathematics, UW-Platteville
- Jeffrey B. Henriques, Senior Lecturer, Department of Psychology, UW-Madison

This year marks the 22nd anniversary of the partnership between the UW System and the Alliant Energy Foundation. The awards are given as a tribute to the energy company’s long-time senior executive, James R. Underkofler, a staunch proponent of excellence in undergraduate teaching.

“It is a privilege to honor the exceptional accomplishments of these students and professors,” said David J. Ward, UW System’s interim senior vice president for Academic and Student Affairs. “Through their drive, leadership, and commitment to excellence, they are enhancing our institutions and transforming lives.”

The award program is administered by the UW System Office of Academic, Faculty, and Global Programs. A committee of faculty and staff members selects the finalists from candidates who are nominated by eligible institutions.

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