

For Immediate Release

Wagner College Wins TIAA-CREF's Distinguished Hesburgh Award

United States Military Academy, University of Nebraska and University of Wisconsin System Awarded Certificates of Excellence

WASHINGTON (February 14, 2005) TIAA-CREF, the financial services group of companies and leading provider of retirement savings in the academic, research, medical and cultural fields, today announced Wagner College as the winner of the 2005 Theodore M. Hesburgh Award, which recognizes innovative undergraduate faculty development programs. The liberal arts college, located in Staten Island, New York, is being honored today at the American Council on Education's annual meeting in Washington, D.C. for their *First Year Program*, which is designed to enhance the student experience by involving them in the local community.

The award was established in 1993 by TIAA-CREF and is administered by the TIAA-CREF Institute. It recognizes faculty development programs that enhance undergraduate teaching and learning. The Hesburgh Award is named in honor of Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C., president emeritus of the University of Notre Dame.

Wagner College's innovative *First Year Program* is designed to give students a personal reason to learn by involving them in the community thru a combination of experiential, field-based learning and traditional classroom study.

"Wagner College's *First Year Program* is an excellent example of how universities and colleges can help create the next generation of responsible global citizens," said Herbert M. Allison, Jr., chief executive of TIAA-CREF. "For more than 85 years, TIAA-CREF has been committed to helping foster innovation in the academic and research communities, Wagner's success continues that tradition."

"The TIAA-CREF Hesburgh Award is one of the most significant ways we underscore the value of faculty development to enhance student learning," notes Madeleine d'Ambrosio, TIAA-CREF Institute executive director. "We are proud to play a role in supporting and applauding work that demonstrates creativity and effectiveness in this area."

"We are honored to be recognized for the uniqueness and success of our *First Year Program*," said Wagner President Richard Guarasci. "By giving students a personal reason to learn through involvement in community-based experiences we hope to facilitate critical thinking and communication skills that are necessary for responsible citizenry and civic engagement in the local and global community."

First Year Program

First implemented in 1998, the purpose of the First Year Program is to make higher education relevant to students – to give them a personal reason to learn – by involving them in community-based experiences linked to the lecture topics, as well as providing venues for discussion, reflection, connection-making, and critical thinking. The major educational goal stemming from this relevance-based approach is to begin college-level

development of critical thinking and civic thinking skills, together with communication skills and exposure to diversity issues that are necessary for responsible citizenry and civic engagement in the local and global community.

This fall, the First Year Program involves 44 tenure-track faculty members of the 97 tenure-track faculty employed by the college. Each of the program's faculty attends monthly meetings, workshops and an annual First-Year Program faculty retreat.

TIAA-CREF Hesburgh Certificates of Excellence Winners

In addition to the TIAA-CREF Hesburgh Award winner, three institutions were selected to receive TIAA-CREF Theodore M. Hesburgh Certificates of Excellence for meritorious faculty development programs. They are the:

- *Master Teacher Program* at the **United States Military Academy (West Point, NY)** which includes a series of monthly seminar meetings to relate the pedagogical theory and principles under discussion to participants' classroom discussion.
- *Peer Review Teaching Project* at the **University of Nebraska-Lincoln (Lincoln, NE)** that engages faculty in investigating how course structures, teaching techniques and assessment strategies enhance or detract from student learning.
- *Wisconsin Teaching Fellows and Scholars Program* at the **University of Wisconsin System (Madison, WI)** targeting two groups: early career/non-tenured faculty and later career faculty leaders.

About TIAA-CREF

TIAA-CREF is a national financial services group of companies and the leading provider of retirement services in the academic, research, medical and cultural fields. With more than \$345 billion in combined assets under management (12/31/04), TIAA-CREF ranks 68th on Fortune magazine's list of largest companies (April 2004). Further information can be found at www.tiaa-cref.org.

The TIAA-CREF Institute, part of TIAA-CREF, fosters and conducts objective research, builds knowledge, demonstrates and supports thought leadership, and enhances understanding of strategic issues that impact higher education.

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