

MEDIA RELEASE

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CAFA DISTINGUISHED ACADEMIC AWARDS, 2023

****(EDMONTON)**** – The Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations (CAFA), the provincial organization representing academic staff associations at the University of Lethbridge, Mount Royal University, Grant MacEwan University and Athabasca University, is pleased to announce the recipients of the CAFA Distinguished Academic Awards for 2023.

The CAFA Distinguished Academic Awards recognize academic staff members at Alberta's research and undergraduate universities, who through their research and/or other scholarly, creative or professional activities have made an outstanding contribution to the wider community beyond the university.

The recipient of the **2023 CAFA Distinguished Academic Award** is **Dr. Trevor Harrison**, Professor of Sociology, University of Lethbridge. Dr. Harrison's prolific scholarly activity extends through authored books, research reports, journals, and conferences. His insights reach beyond academia, shaping public discourse and research institutes like the Parkland Institute, Prentice Institute, and Kule Institute.

Dr. Veronica Fynn Bruey, Assistant Professor at Athabasca University, has been chosen to receive the **2023 CAFA Distinguished Academic Early Career Award** for her interdisciplinary academic focus on legal studies, forced migration, and Indigenous displacements, and women's rights. Her international recognition is mirrored in affiliations with the Displaced Peoples Network, Disrupting Patriarchy and Masculinity in Africa, the Voice of West African Refugees, and the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration.

CAFA is pleased to award the **2023 CAFA Distinguished Teaching Award** to **Mr. Housseem Ben Lazreg**, Lecturer (Modern Languages and Cultural Studies) at the University of Alberta. Mr. Lazreg's innovative pedagogical approach and multilingual proficiency have earned him recognition, including awards for teaching and leadership. Beyond the classroom, Mr. Lazreg's commitment to language learning is evident through community engagement, introducing languages to elementary students, and contributing to diverse communities.

This year CAFA has added a fourth award, the **2023 Distinguished Precarious Teaching Award**. The inaugural recipient of this award is **Dr. Christopher Churchill**, Adjunct Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Lethbridge. Dr. Churchill's exceptional contributions as an educator and his commitment to innovative teaching methods as well as community engagement make him an obvious choice for this award. His dedication to equity and inclusivity inspires peers and students alike.

"For over seventeen years, the annual CAFA Distinguished Academic Awards have celebrated the contributions of Alberta's best university researchers and teachers to their home institutions, local communities, our province, and beyond" notes Dr. Dan O'Donnell, President of CAFA. "On behalf of CAFA, I extend warmest congratulations to Dr. Trevor Harrison, Dr. Veronica Fynn Bruey, Mr. Housseem Ben Lazreg and Dr. Christopher Churchill, deserving recipients of our awards for 2023."

For further information on the work of this year's Award recipients, please see the attached backgrounder.

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***Dr. Trevor Harrison, CAFA's 2023 Distinguished Academic Award
Professor (Sociology) at The University of Lethbridge***

In the realm of academic excellence, Dr. Trevor Harrison shines as a distinguished scholar worthy of the 2023 CAFA Distinguished Academic Award. An illustrious figure within the academic community, Dr. Harrison's impact resonates both locally and internationally. He is a prominent sociologist known for his groundbreaking work in sociology, particularly in Canadian society, political economy, and nationalism. This nomination resonates deeply with his accomplishments and contributions. Notably, Dr. Harrison was awarded the University of Lethbridge Ingrid Speaker Medal for outstanding research in 2022, further highlighting his exceptional achievements.

A cornerstone of the University of Lethbridge, Dr. Harrison is recognized for his prolific scholarly activity. Over the past five years, he has authored and co-authored numerous impactful publications. These include authored and edited books, research reports, and contributions to journals and conferences. Dr. Harrison's work has extended far beyond academia, with his insights reaching the broader community through newspaper columns, magazine articles, television interviews and public talks. His leadership is also evident in his pivotal roles in research institutes like the Parkland Institute, the Prentice Institute for Global Population & Economy, and the Kule Institute for Advanced Study. Under his guidance, these institutes have thrived and become vehicles for pioneering research that bridges academic and societal realms.

Dr. Harrison's influence is not confined to scholarly outputs alone. As an advocate for post-secondary education and faculty labor rights, his impact resonates in the policies and decisions shaping higher education. His mentorship of students and colleagues, as well as his leadership roles within faculty associations, showcases his commitment to nurturing the next generation of scholars and contributing to the academic community's betterment. The breadth and depth of Dr. Harrison's contributions encompass the academic, policy, and public spheres, positioning him as an exceptional winner of this year's CAFA Distinguished Academic Award.

***Dr. Veronica Fynn Bruey - CAFA's 2023 Distinguished Academic Early Career Award
Assistant Professor (Legal Studies) at Athabasca University***

Dr. Veronica Fynn Bruey stands as a transformative figure at the nexus of legal studies, forced migration, Indigenous displacement, and women's rights. As an Assistant Professor of Legal Studies at Athabasca University and part-time lecturer at Seattle University and the University of Alberta she has garnered international recognition for her ground breaking research. Her affiliations include the Displaced Peoples Network, Disrupting Patriarchy and Masculinity in Africa, the Voice of West African Refugees, the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration, the American Society of International Law, Refugee Law Initiative at the University of London, the Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law at the University of New South Wales, Flowers School of Global Public Health, and other global engagement networks on the rule of law, systemic violence, and displacement, reflecting her global reach and multidisciplinary approach.

At the heart of Dr. Fynn Bruey's work lies a deep commitment to addressing complex issues in global migration and displacement. Her research examines Indigenous Law within transsystemic legal frameworks and compares the experiences of forced migration in post-war Liberia with those in white settler colonial states like Canada, Australia, and the United States. Through her co-edited volume "Deadly Voyages: Migrant Journeys Across the Globe" (2020), she illuminates the intricate dynamics of migration, underlining the necessity of diverse perspectives in understanding these challenges.

Beyond academia, Dr. Fynn Bruey's influence resonates through her mentorship, local community engagement, and teaching. Her dedication shines at Athabasca University, where she not only imparts her expertise in law, displacement, and women studies but also mentors young scholars, fostering post-graduate educational opportunities and elevating Black/African scholars' academic profiles. Moreover, her collaborations extend to delivering masterclasses that disseminate knowledge about legal regimes affecting displaced Indigenous Peoples in Liberia, Australia, United

States, and Canada, emphasizing inclusive collaboration, ethical relationship, and decentering Whiteness. In recognition of her transformative scholarship, mentorship, and community engagement, Dr. Veronica Fynn Bruey is a deserving nominee for the CAFA Early Career Research Academic Award.

***Mr. Housseem Ben Lazreg - CAFA's 2023 Distinguished Teaching Award
Lecturer (Modern Languages and Cultural Studies) at the University of Alberta***

Mr. Housseem Ben Lazreg is an accomplished language educator and scholar, who embodies excellence in teaching, innovation, and community engagement. With extensive experience spanning over a decade, Housseem's proficiency in Arabic, French, and English language pedagogy has been instrumental in his role as a foreign language instructor. His remarkable contributions to teaching, community involvement, and academic pursuits mark him as a notable nominee for the CAFA Distinguished Teaching Award.

Housseem's teaching approach goes beyond the ordinary, incorporating self-directed learning, project-based instruction, and experiential learning. This innovative methodology has earned him recognition, including the UASU Award for Leadership in Undergraduate Teaching and the MLCS Graduate Student Teaching Award. Pursuing a Ph.D. in Translation Studies at the University of Alberta, Housseem's academic accomplishments extend to research and publications, showcasing his multi-faceted engagement with various disciplines.

Beyond the classroom, Housseem's commitment to language learning is evident in his community engagement. He introduced Arabic and French to elementary students through the U-School Program, emphasizing cross-cultural understanding. His translation expertise also contributes to accessibility and communication within diverse communities. Overall, Housseem Ben Lazreg's exceptional teaching, scholarly endeavors, and community involvement make him a standout candidate for the CAFA Distinguished Teaching Award, epitomizing dedication to education and intercultural enrichment.

***Dr. Christopher Churchill - inaugural recipient of CAFA's 2023 Distinguished Precarious Teaching Award
Adjunct Associate Professor (Department of History), University of Lethbridge***

Dr. Christopher Churchill's nomination for the CAFA Distinguished Academic Teaching Award exemplifies his outstanding contributions to academia. As a dedicated educator and researcher, Dr. Churchill's impact is profound. Despite the challenges of precariously employed academic positions, he has developed and taught a diverse range of undergraduate courses across four departments and two colleges. His commitment to accessibility and inclusivity is evident in his innovative teaching methods and work-integrated learning courses, which connect students with community organizations for practical development.

Dr. Churchill's influence extends beyond the classroom. Teaching as a disabled scholar with refractory epilepsy, he has actively engaged in mentoring and community initiatives, such as assisting newly diagnosed epileptics and serving on the Board of Directors of Career Transitions. Colleagues and students commend his dedication to equity, respect, and inclusivity, which has inspired a profound impact on the academic community. His nomination package includes a nomination letter, two reference letters, and his recent CV, encapsulating his remarkable contributions.

Recognizing Dr. Churchill's achievements through the CAFA Distinguished Academic Teaching Award celebrates an educator who embodies excellence and innovation. His commitment to student success, equity, and community engagement reflects the values that the award aims to acknowledge and celebrate.