



(Photo: Saint Xavier University President Judith A. Dwyer, Ph.D., presents Jan Bickel, D.M.A., Director of Vocal Studies and Professor of Music, with the 2006 Saint Xavier University Award.)

Photo by Gillian O'Brien courtesy of Saint Xavier University

Saint Xavier University News

2006 Saint Xavier University Award presented to Professor Jan Bickel

Music professor cited for her teaching, service to the community

Chicago (Dec. 4, 2006) – In recognition of her outstanding service and contributions to Saint Xavier University, Jan Bickel, D.M.A., director of vocal studies and professor of music, received the 2006 Saint Xavier University Award at the University's Founders' Day celebration on Dec. 1.

A faculty member for 24 years, Bickel's "record of service to her students, the University and the local community deserves to be honored by Saint Xavier University," said one of her nominators, Martha Morris, director of music education at Saint Xavier University.

Along with Bickel, Sue DeMatteo, executive secretary to the president, won the Staff Excellence Award, and student Adeb Odeh won the Mother Mary Paulita Morris, R.S.M., Service Award as part of Saint Xavier's annual Founders' Day celebration on Friday.

"Today, we celebrate the outstanding contributions of these individuals in our community," said Saint Xavier University President Judith A. Dwyer, Ph.D. "We honor the dedication, academic achievements and strength of spirit shown by our awardees."

Each year, the Saint Xavier University Award is given to a faculty member who makes a significant contribution to teaching or a substantial advancement in scholarship and research; helps improve or restore the natural and cultural environment; improves the health, welfare and comfort for the young, poor, aged and disabled; meets an urgent civic need or establishes a closer bond between the academic world and the community at large.

Bickel, of Chicago's Beverly neighborhood, received the Teaching Excellence/Teacher of the Year Award at SXU in 1995 and was named "Who's Who Among American Teachers" five times from 1997 to 2004. She has received recognition and awards for her singing, including the Musicians Club of Women's Emma Roe Award and the National Federation of Music Club's Hazel Post Gillette Award for operatic performance.

Responding to the needs of her music students, Bickel created a course titled "Writing and Speaking about Music" to teach students how to become articulate communicators about the world of music and all that it encompasses. A mezzo-soprano, Bickel wrote a textbook used at Saint Xavier for vocal technique courses, and many of her music alumni use the book in their private studios and schools.

She has researched the application of vocal pedagogy to the tone production of woodwind and brass players, and has presented her findings at major vocal and music education conferences. She is in the process of analyzing sound wave files in order to complete the substantiation of her findings in this research, and she hopes to publish the findings in music educators' journals. She has also researched important women in music in Chicago and has given presentations to several chapters of the Lyric Opera of Chicago as well as the Palos Heights Fine Arts Association.

For almost 15 years, Bickel has organized Xavier Classics at Noon, a daytime concert series geared toward senior citizens. For those unable to make it to Saint Xavier for the concerts, Bickel has taken her Chamber Singers to skilled-care facilities for mini-concerts during the holiday season. She provides workshops for church choirs, adjudicates high school music competitions, and was a clinician for many years for the St. Mary of the Woods Choral Festival. For 23 years, she was also the director/conductor of the University Chorale, University Women's and University Men's Ensembles, and the University Chamber Singers.

Founded in 1846 by the Sisters of Mercy, Saint Xavier University is a comprehensive Catholic university serving approximately 5,700 students at its campuses in Chicago and Orland Park. The University offers 35 undergraduate majors and more than 40 graduate program options in arts and sciences, business, education and nursing with day, evening and weekend courses to fit busy schedules.

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Saint Xavier University - There's Virtue in Hard Work

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