

Pioneering AU history professor receives Abigail Allen Award

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Dr. Vicki Eaklor, professor of history, chair of the Division of Human Studies and a campus activist for the rights of women and homosexuals, is this year's recipient of the Abigail Allen Award for Alfred University faculty or staff. The Abigail Allen Awards are presented annually to a faculty or staff member, a senior student and an alumna or alumnus. The faculty/staff award and the student award are announced at Honors Convocation; alumni are recognized during Reunion. "Musician, historian, scholar-teacher, lesbian activist, advisor, friend and colleague" was how Eaklor was described by Pamela Lakin, librarian and last year's Abigail Allen Award winner, who presented this year's award. Eaklor, who has been a member of the AU faculty for 20 years, was the third director of the Women's Studies Program and the first advisor to the Women's Issues Coalition. She has also been an advisor, both formally and informally, to gay and lesbian students. Through her efforts, Alfred University became a leader in offering benefits to same-sex partners. In addition to teaching history and women's studies courses, Eaklor also teaches percussion for the Division of Performing Arts. She won an Excellence in Teaching award from the University in 1998, and that same year was honored by Omicron Delta Kappa, the national leadership honor society, as the recipient of its Outstanding Faculty Leader Award. The student recipient was Fenna Mandolang, a senior who is majoring in fine arts in the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences with a minor in women's studies. Mandolang, who is also a member of Alfred University's newly established Phi Beta Kappa chapter. Mandolang, a graduate of The George School in Philadelphia, is a daughter of Dr. Nadine Hoover of Alfred and Felix Mandolang of Orlando, FL. She also becomes the first "multi-generational" recipient of the Abigail Allen Award; her grandmother, Dr. Sharon Hoover, professor emerita of English, received the faculty award in 2001. Abigail Allen, wife of AU's second president, Jonathan Allen, "dedicated her life's work to advancing the cause of coeducation and encouraging women to pursue higher education. In doing so, she contributed immeasurably to improving the quality of women's lives on our campus and in the wider community." The Abigail Allen Award is presented each year to a faculty or staff member who has contributed to the Alfred University campus and the community by "improving the lives of women's lives today and whose exceptional efforts deserve recognition." The award is particularly noteworthy for the Alfred University community because AU, founded in 1836, was the first institution of higher education in New York, and only the second in the nation, to educate women on the same basis as men.