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# Professor honored by math associaton

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Vali Siadat, Ph.D., an adjunct professor of mathematics at Loyola, was honored in Washington D.C. as the 2009 winner of the Deborah and Franklin Tepper Haimo Award for Distinguished Teaching of Mathematics. This national award is the highest teaching award granted by the Mathematical Association of America (MAA).

After being nominated by his current and former students, faculty and colleagues, Siadat, 63, received the MAA's Illinois Section Distinguished Teaching Award in 2002. This award qualified him to compete for the national Haimo Award.



"I was very happy to be the state winner," Siadat said. "But then I participated in the national pool. ... I think the people there said my record kind of stood out."

Prior to teaching mathematics, Siadat worked as an electrical engineer in Silicon Valley, Calif. He then moved to Illinois and attended the University of Illinois at Chicago where he earned his M.S. in applied mathematics in 1986. During this time, Siadat began teaching part-time and developed a strong interest in pursuing a teaching career. He went on to earn a Ph.D. in pure mathematics and a D.A. (Doctor of Arts) in mathematics education.

"[I knew] I need[ed] to have rigorous training because in order to teach you need to have good knowledge of the subject," Siadat said.

Currently, Siadat teaches beginning through advanced levels of mathematics at Loyola and Richard J. Daley College, one of the City Colleges of Chicago. Students in his classes learn math from a holistic perspective, in which Siadat incorporates step-by-step processes, applications and examples and provides feedback to students. Siadat encourages his students to become engaged in the class, which he said is not always easy when teaching math.

"It is very comforting to have Dr. Siadat as a professor," said grad student Daniel Meyer, one of Siadat's students at Loyola. "He welcomes, rather, encourages questions during class ... and he is constantly smiling

all the while adhering to his lecture and course of work for the day."

Siadat attributes winning this award to his teaching techniques, commitment to students, education and experience and student interaction in his classes. However, his biggest accomplishment is "having an impact on the life of students ... making it through mathematics and graduating and moving on into the workforce."

Freshman Joseph Kelly said, "Dr. Siadat is not a teacher teaching math in the classroom. He is a friend making sure you understand to better your life."

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