

AAUTY VIDEO SERIES:

2018 TEACHER OF THE YEAR:

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR KEVIN LARKIN

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Good afternoon, my name is Kevin Larkin, and I'm an Associate Professor of math education in the School of Education and Professional Studies at the Griffith University. I'm also the chapter Chair of the Arts Education, Law Group, Learning and Teaching Academy and [a] Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. And I work at Griffith now for eight years.

KEY ASPECTS OF TEACHING BEEN RECOGNISE

In terms of the recognition of my teaching through the citations and [teaching] awards. I was recognized for my sustained excellence in learning and teaching across an eight-year period, by innovative approach to blended, and face to face learning.

The ways that I've been able in those spaces to motivate and influence students learning, [with] a clear philosophical methodological and conceptual framing of my teaching, and an ability to connect the nexus between my research, my scholarly research and my teaching.

MY JOURNEY OF WINNING THE AAUT AWARDS

So my journey in the Australian teaching awards commenced with a citation from Griffith, and back in 2015, when I was encouraged to apply for internal Griffith teaching awards in 2016. I was successful being recognized at the Griffith University Teacher of the Year. Griffith then supported me in applying for a national citation which I was successful for 2017. And also, the Australian awards for overall Teaching Excellence in 2017, and I wasn't successful. But Griffith supported me again. And then I had the great honor in 2018, of being recognized as the Australian University Teacher of the Year. So it's been a five-year process of applying for these awards, getting knocked back, being unsuccessful, reworking the applications and then finally having an overall success.

MY FEELING OF BEING THE 2018 AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITY TEACHER OF THE YEAR RECIPIENT

So how did it feel being the 2018 winner. It was a bit surreal. I was very embarrassed, in a way, but also very proud to be selected as the winner and it's great that you don't know who the overall winner is going to be. It's really nice recognition for, I think, my 30 odd years in teaching, before university and in the eight years at university. And I think it was really great that mathematics education, which does suffer some bad press, was recognized in terms of my, my award. So I accepted this awards, I guess, for a long career I have in the education, but also as a representative for all academics in schools of education, who was involved in math education.

THE IMPACT ON MY CAREER SINCE RECEIVING THE AWARD

So it's been a year and half now since receiving the award. I think the big difference is that it's opened up opportunities for me at quite high levels within my university, and more widely across other Australian universities to be quite proudly and explicitly talking about the importance of learning and teaching, and being able to do that from the lens of expertise, rather than from a managerial position. So I don't have the responsibility of having to manage things at my university in terms of education, but that gives me the freedom to be able to speak quite frankly about what I see is important in learning, teaching in my institution. So I get to work closely with the Dean learning and teaching in our group, the biggest group in the university, and also with the PVC of learning and teaching across the entire university so that's quite a, quite a privilege, and that access in the sense has come about through recognition special teaching awards. And also, it's partially been responsible for promotion to associate professor.

I WOULD SAY TO ASPIRING APPLICANTS...

What I say to aspiring applicants [is to] be prepared for an initial lack of success. Any times of I've been recognized, here before I was unsuccessful. Being unsuccessful doesn't mean you've done a poor job. These are highly competitive awards and so they should be. So, take it on the chin. And then you've got a very strong application to work with the following year.

Be prepared to do many many many many many drafts over the two years of preparing for the Australian University Teacher of the Year award. I think I did about 17 drafts, so be prepared to write, rewrite, craft your work and be prepared to work with colleagues from other universities that's very important as well, and across disciplines within your own university.

CONCLUSION

So in summing up. I think it's really important that we keep these, these national awards going. Learning and Teaching is a vital part of any vibrant and successful University. It's important that our learning and teaching that are scholarly and informed by research, guide others in their own research and continue to encourage universities Australia to lobby the federal government for funds to keep this scheme going and filing that to continue to work with the 38 universities across Australia, to make sure that quality learning and teaching is recognized. So have a great day.

AAUT CONTACT DETAILS

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For any further questions, please contact the Awards Team aaut@swin.edu.au