

Professor enjoys pairing science and service

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She's a lifelong teacher and a cheerleader for the sciences who has led service-learning courses for more than a decade. It's no surprise that Beth Wee, whose enthusiasm inspires her students, is the 2011 recipient of the Barbara E. Moely Service Learning Teaching Award.



The experience students gain in service-learning projects “really does give them an advantage” when they graduate, says teaching-award winner Beth Wee. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

The associate dean for undergraduate studies in the School of Science and Engineering, Wee also is co-director of the master's and undergraduate neuroscience programs and teaches such classes as Brain and Behavior and Behavioral Endocrinology, connecting both with relevant work in the community.

[Wee](#) “possesses an unparalleled ability to engage her students in service learning,” wrote Agnieszka Nance, assistant director of faculty training and support in the Center for Public Service, who nominated Wee for the [award](#), named for Barbara Moely, professor emerita in psychology and an early proponent of community engagement at Tulane.

Nance wrote that Wee is “an excellent example of a Tulane scholar” who harmoniously combines teaching and community engagement.

For example, in Wee's Brain and Behavior course, students learn about neurological problems such as strokes and spinal injuries, then work in hospitals or nursing homes with patients. Afterward, the students prepare oral and written “reflections” on their experiences.

Wee also designed a course called [Bringing Research to the Community](#) for undergraduate research students to share their enthusiasm for science with high school students.

Wee admits that it takes extra work to lead these courses. “But, are service-learning students more engaged in your topic?” she asked. “Yes!”

She thinks students get real-world experience by working in the community on class-related projects. And Wee walks the walk with her own community service activities. “You do it because you personally believe helping others is important,” she said.

Wee was honored on Tuesday (Nov. 15) at the annual faculty appreciation event held by the [Center for Public Service](#).