Name of nominee Alice “Tinker” Parker
Community college Kankakee Community College
Discipline taught Speech Communication
Nominee’s mailing address 5976 Margo Drive St. Anne, IL 60964
Telephone # 815-933-6762 E-mail address aparker@kcc.edu

PLEASE DESCRIBE HOW THE NOMINEE MEETS EACH OF THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:
(Please use additional pages if needed)

1. In what ways has this educator demonstrated excellence in teaching?

Imagine teaching one of the most “feared” classes in any curriculum, Speech Communication. As a professor, you face a captive classroom filled with anxiety-ridden students who do not want to be there. Alice has worked with apprehensive students for years and has successfully developed teaching methods that not only educate and entertain, but aid the students in successfully completing the courses. She feels that speech requires an active audience and the professor must exhibit sincere energy and enthusiasm that will motivate the students to learn. Alice’s students are active participants in the classroom, not only as individuals but as members of a collaborative group. All of her curriculum and activities are student-centered. She creates a learning environment in which the skills learned in speech will be used in other courses, other colleges and their future careers.

Student comments include:

- “Mrs. Parker’s teaching methods are very exciting and helpful. She makes you very comfortable before giving every speech. It has been a great class.”
- “She is wonderful - encouraging, patient, understanding, and supportive. She takes a class that is a fear for most people and turns it into a warm, comfortable, even pleasant experience”
- “Professor Parker not only teaches speech, but she also actively demonstrates it every day.”

2. What has this educator initiated or helped to develop in the area of innovative programs used in two-year postsecondary institutions?

Alice has developed various exercises aimed toward reducing anxiety and building confidence, as well as cultivating team building. One such example is the use of “Popcorn Bag” activities. The students look forward to seeing the “Popcorn Bag” near the podium, which means there will be a fun exercise, such as a silly impromptu speech or a serious debate on a controversial topic. These help develop their critical thinking skills, which are vital in today’s workplace. In order to assist her students in the learning process, Alice created a student speech packet, which includes examples of various types of speech outlines, templates, and criteria. She also prepared a teaching packet for new adjunct speech professors, including speech criteria, rubrics, examples and activities. Alice volunteers to assist new adjunct faculty familiarize themselves with the college and the classroom and continues to serve as a mentor during the semester.

3. How has this educator served on technical or special committees serving two-year postsecondary education, and how did this effort affect the college program in the community, state or nation?

Alice currently serves on the Behavior Intervention Team (BIT). BIT is a campus-wide committee that was formed with the purpose of proactively reviewing the behavior of individuals about whom concerns are expressed, determining if intervention is needed, and ensuring that those interventions take place. She was also instrumental in forming a LGBT group on campus and served in the capacity of their faculty advisor.
4. **How has this educator provided leadership in helping to solve challenges to two-year postsecondary institutions?**

   During her time at KCC, Alice has become a widely respected voice for the adjunct faculty union. Her union duties include serving as the former treasurer and the current vice-president. She has worked closely with college administration for nearly six months negotiating adjunct faculty contracts, using an integrative negotiation model. In an effort to attract quality adjunct faculty to the college and provide a better working environment, she also meets yearly with administration to address topics that directly concern adjunct faculty. She serves as a mentor to new adjunct faculty hired to teach speech classes. Alice assists the Faculty Growth and Development Committee with planning the fall and spring adjunct in-service activities. In this capacity, she provides topics and issues that are of specific concern to adjuncts and the entire college.

5. **How has this educator been active in developing, organizing, or supporting state and/or national two-year postsecondary education associations?**

   Alice was a member of the Illinois Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel (ILAEOPP) where she served as State Treasurer for two years. She was also a member of the Mid-America Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel (MAEOPP). Additionally, Alice has attended numerous local, state and national conferences for the TRiO program, which is a federally funded program that helps students who are in financial need.

6. **What awards or honors has this educator received in recognition of leadership in the college or community?**

   In addition to actively participating in college initiatives and committees, Alice also plays a very active role in her local community. Some of her accomplishments and roles include:

   - L'SOMM Ministries, Kankakee, Currently serving on Board of Directors
   - Organized the Kankakee County Republican Women, Current President
   - Drug Court of Kankakee County, Served on Board of Directors for 14 years
   - Chairperson of the Women In Business Executive Committee, 2007 – 2010
   - Wrote grants, (pro-bono) for Kankakee YMCA Strong Kids Campaign and Kankakee River Valley Special Recreation for the developmentally disabled
   - Produced, directed, filmed and wrote (pro-bono) a public awareness video for Kankakee County Harbor House, a shelter for abused women
   - Initiated the Bill Moore Music Fund for Grant Park School Music Program to assist the school and students with music education and programs
   - Provena St. Mary’s Foundation Annual Dinner and Auction committee
   - Zonta Club of Kankakee, Past member

   Other awards include:

   - TRiO Student Support Services Star Award, 2012
   - TRiO Student Support Services Star Award, 2013
   - Kankakee Regional Chamber of Commerce Women In Business Leadership Award, 2008
   - Athena International Leadership Award, 2007
   - Distinguished Community College Alumnus Award, Illinois Community College Trustees, 1995
   - Pacesetter Award, Illinois Community College Board of Trustees, 1990
   - International Television Academy Silver Philo award for documentary, “First, I’m a Person”
7. How does this educator keep pace with current theories and practices in the nominee’s discipline?

Alice makes a conscious effort to participate in professional development activities aimed at enhancing her instruction. She has completed professional development training offered at KCC, which include the following three levels: Level One (ANGEL training), Level Two (In-class training), and Level Three (Researching, documenting, integrating, and evaluating the use of classroom assessment techniques and course assessment). As part of her professional development she has visited Parkland College in Champaign, IL, to tour and meet with the speech department. The purpose of the visit was to enhance her teaching style, create more effective speech evaluations, and learn new teaching methods to improve student outcomes. Alice is continuously reading new speech textbooks and researching other colleges’ speech departments for ideas that will enhance curriculum at KCC. She is also utilizing webinars offered through StarLink, which is an online media resource for professional development in higher education.

Philosophy of Education

Socrates said, “Education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel.”

Teachers, leaders and facilitators have a responsibility to not only teach the facts, but to open classroom walls to challenge students to develop strong critical thinking skills to become productive members of society. It is imperative students know how to understand and apply learned information.

My goal is to provide a productive learning environment littered with critical thinking, open-mindedness, cultural diversity, civility, respect and creativity. I remind students words are very powerful instruments and must be used effectively, respectfully and ethically.

Communication is the key which opens doors for a student's future. I offer the essential presentational communication skills students need for their futures. They learn many new communication techniques or enhance previously learned skills. Encouraging students to realize the parallels between classroom skills and those needed for future productivity is essential.

A primary learning outcome is confidence building. Often students come to speech class with high-anxiety levels and self-doubt. Most of those find success in my class coupled with earning self-confidence and pride. Collaboration as a class helps students to believe in themselves.

Educating students is a privilege which I take very seriously. If the day arrives when I look at education as a job, I will walk away. It takes energy, passion, strength and enthusiasm to teach.

So, if I am simply filling the vessel and not kindling the flame, I need to stop teaching.
March 13, 2013

Dear ICCTA,

This letter is to endorse Alice Parker as a worthy recipient of the Outstanding Part-Time Faculty Member Award. Professor Parker is a consummate professional, and our institution is better for having her as part of our team. Throughout my time working with Professor Parker, there have been several occasions where she has truly exceeded my expectations. Professor Parker continues to demonstrate leadership in teaching & learning, course and general education assessment, and meaningful professional development.

Students love Professor Parker because she loves her students. While maintaining high academic standards, all students in Professor Parker’s speech classes are provided with a positive affective environment, where even those most intimidated by public speaking can be put at ease with the professor’s constructivist methodologies. Professor Parker further reaches out to students by making herself available for office hours, where I have frequently observed positive, productive interactions. Beyond showing care for students, Professor Parker shows great care about the quality of her curriculum and instruction.

When faculty is called upon to run course and general education assessments, the responses can be mixed at best. Fortunately for our institution, Professor Parker is a role model for participating in substantive continuous assessments. It is critical that part-time instructors join in our assessment processes, and without fail, semester-by-semester, Professor Parker shares with me her delight in both running assessments and making plans based on assessment findings.

Fitting in professional development activities can be challenging for part-time faculty. However, Professor Parker continually seeks out opportunities to better herself and to help our institution improve. Recently, Professor Parker visited another college’s Speech Department to meet with their faculty and to see what resources they had that would be a good fit for our institution. Professor Parker returned with a treasure trove of information and ideas that have indeed served to enhance instruction.

On a more personal note, Professor Parker has been an outstanding colleague. Our interactions have been a tremendous help in decision-making processes. In terms of deeply caring about students, understanding and valuing institutional expectations, and bringing her very best to our community college, ICCTA will find no better candidate for the Outstanding Part-Time Faculty Member Award.

Sincerely,

Mark Lanting
Associate Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences
Dear Selection Committee:

On behalf of the Faculty Growth and Development Committee, we would like to provide our support for Alice “Tinker” Parker in her nomination for the ICCTA Outstanding Part-Time Faculty Member Award. Based on her campus and community involvement, we feel she would be a deserving recipient of this award.

Alice continually goes above and beyond the required expectations of a part-time faculty member. She truly has made a full-time commitment to the campus and students at KCC. Alice always makes sure she is accessible to her students and holds office hours each day she teaches class, which is not required of part-time faculty. It is also not uncommon to see her arrive well before class starts and stay after class is finished to speak to students and make sure all their concerns have been addressed.

As a speech instructor, Alice’s focus is on making her students feel comfortable and become more confident in their speaking abilities. It is very evident when she interacts with students that she puts them at ease and provides them with reassurance when needed. Her student evaluations consistently echo the same comments: Professor Parker creates a positive learning environment. She takes a class that is a fear for most and turns it into a pleasant experience.

Alice’s campus involvement also speaks to her dedication. She has taken an active role in the Adjunct Faculty Union and currently serves as the Vice-President. In this capacity, she works closely with the administration to be a champion for issues that are unique to part-time faculty. She also works closely with the Faculty Growth and Development Committee to identify pertinent topics that can be presented to adjunct faculty at their bi-annual in-service events. Beyond the campus, Alice also stays involved in the community. This is reflected in the many committees she has participated on and the honors she has received.

It is for these reasons that we support Alice’s nomination without any reservation. Her commitment and abilities make her an asset to KCC and surrounding communities.

Sincerely,

Mary Steichen, Co-Chair,
Faculty Growth and Development
Professor, Humanities and Social Sciences Division

Nancy Ozee, Co-Chair,
Faculty Growth and Development
Professor, Health Careers Division

Enhancing quality of life through learning
Awards Received

- 2007 Recipient Athena International Leadership Award
- 2008 Kankakee Regional Chamber of Commerce Women In Business Leadership Award
- TRIO Student Support Services Star Award, 2012 and 2013
- International Television Academy Silver Philo award for documentary, “First, I’m a Person”
- Outstanding director by International Television Academy, professional level
- Distinguished Community College Alumnus Award, Illinois Community College Trustees, 1995
- Pacesetter Award, Illinois Community College Board of Trustees, 1991
- Lincoln Academy Distinguished Laureate

2013 Outstanding Part-Time Faculty

Alice “Tinker” Parker
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March 11, 2013

Illinois Community College Trustees Association
410 E. Capitol, Ste. 200
Springfield, IL 62701-1711

RE: 2013 Outstanding Part-Time Faculty Member Award
Alice Parker, Nominee

Dear Sir or Madam:

This letter is in support of Alice Parker as Kankakee Community College’s nominee for the 2013 Outstanding Part-Time Faculty member Award for the Illinois Community College Trustees Association. Alice is a dedicated faculty member in the college’s Speech program, and she brings to class the drive and determination to assist each student in achieving his or her academic success at Kankakee Community College.

Alice displays a strong commitment to the mission of the college. Kankakee Community College is pleased to support the faculty nomination of Alice Parker for the Outstanding Part-Time Faculty Member Award.

Sincerely,

Hugh VanVoorst
KCC Board Chair