

September 16-17, 2020

ITEM 190-1009-R0920

Request for Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus on Jan LaBonty, University of Montana - Missoula

THAT

Upon the retirement of Janice LaBonty from the faculty of the University of Montana, the faculty wishes to express its appreciation for her twenty-four years of service to the University and the State of Montana by recommending that the rank of Professor Emeritus be conferred upon her by the Board of Regents of the Montana University System.

EXPLANATION

Professor LaBonty earned her Ph.D. at the University of Nebraska in Administration, Curriculum, and Instruction in 1986. Upon completing her doctorate, Professor LaBonty served as a Visiting Professor at the University of Nebraska and as an Assistant Professor at Montana Northern College and the University of Southern Indiana before joining the faculty in the in what is now the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences in 1992. Professor LaBonty was promoted to Associate Professor in 1994, awarded tenure in 1998, and promoted to Professor in 1999.

Professor LaBonty was a revered teacher for both undergraduate and graduate students. She earned the Most Inspirational Teacher Award in 1995. She likewise earned seven merit awards for distinguished teaching, research, and service in 1996, 1998, 2001, 2002, 2006, 2008, and 2009. Professor LaBonty regularly taught courses in the Department's Literacy Endorsement Program, preparing future and practicing teachers with a repertoire of instructional practices and collections of robust materials to pique children's curiosity and appreciation of the written word.

Professor LaBonty is known for her love of poetry and fiction, and her research and creative scholarship exemplified this. She presented at numerous scholarly reading and literacy conferences as well as providing professional development workshops for teachers and school administrators in Montana. Her interests in children and teachers as interpretive readers sparked research into valid and reliable teacher evaluation practices and the representation of different cultures in children's books. To this end, Professor LaBonty was a Principal Investigator for a Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant through the US Department of Education.

Professor LaBonty's service at the University, within Montana, and nationally is notable. She served on a number of departmental, community, and state committees related to curriculum and curricular standards, faculty evaluation, teacher preparation, and literature and literacy. Professor LaBonty likewise served on national review committees for the US Department of Education and for journals such as The Reading Teacher and The Dragon Lode.

The Department of Teaching and Learning is honored to recommend Professor LaBonty for Emerita status.

ATTACHMENTS

None.