

Educator of the Year Named At Local College

(KAIR)--Benedictine College has announced that the 2017 Distinguished Educator of the Year is Dr. Matthew Ramsey, associate professor, director of special education and chair in the Department of Education. The award, which is the highest honor a faculty member at the college can receive, has been given for more than 30 years. Ramsey was nominated for the distinction by Benedictine College students, faculty and staff.

“I am incredibly honored to have been named the Distinguished Educator of the Year. Within a community full of faculty so deeply committed to the teaching and learning of our students, this honor is humbling. I am incredibly thankful to Benedictine College for the opportunity to continue to learn from those around me and to continue to develop as a teacher,” Ramsey said.

Ramsey holds both undergraduate and graduate degrees from Benedictine College, earning Bachelor’s degrees in Elementary and Special Education in the fall of 1998, then returning to earn his Master of Arts in School Leadership in 2005. He also holds a Master of Science in Psychology and Special Education from Emporia State University. His doctorate is in Education Leadership and Policy Studies with a minor in Special Education from the University of Kansas.

He taught in the classroom for five years, serving students with emotional and behavioral needs in USD 409, Atchison Public Schools. He served as principal of the Gillis School, a private, special purpose school in Kansas City, Missouri, for two years. He returned to Benedictine as a faculty member in 2007.

“Matt is an outstanding educator,” said Dr. Dianna Henderson, professor and Director of Secondary Education in Benedictine’s Department of Education. “Our number of special education majors has increased significantly over the past eight years under his leadership in this program. Matt's teaching and expertise develops a passion in his students for working with special needs K-12 students. His students are tremendously devoted to him and Matt's influence on them carries over into their initial years of teaching.”

Dr. Ramsey’s research focuses on the supervision and training provided to paraprofessionals and special education finance. He also works with local school districts in program implementation and teacher and leadership coaching. Along those lines, he helped spearhead the effort to begin training teachers in a classical education concentration. The program requires Latin, Greek and courses offered through Benedictine’s Great Books curriculum and is designed to provide teachers for the burgeoning classical education programs in primary schools across the nation.

“The value of a classical education is the benefit of an education in which students are taught to become independent learners and thinkers through the use of sound pedagogy, reason and the great intellectual tradition of our society,” he said.

Ramsey compared the concentration to the certification Benedictine students can earn to teach theology.

“Dr. Ramsey is an excellent educator and an inspiration to all his students,” said Julia Johnson, a senior Elementary Education and Special Education major.

“Not only does he have a deep passion for his career that he shares with his students, he also cares very deeply for each individual who comes into his life. I have been lucky to know and learn from him these past four years, and he has shaped the course of my life forever, which is a sentiment I believe many of his current and former students share. He absolutely deserves to be recognized and honored for his commitment to education, his students and Benedictine College.”

Founded in 1858, Benedictine College is a Catholic, Benedictine, residential, liberal arts college located on the bluffs above the Missouri River in Atchison, Kansas. The school is proud to have been named one of America’s Best Colleges by *U.S. News & World Report* for the past four years as well as one of the top Catholic colleges in the nation by the *Newman Guide* and *First Things* magazine. It prides itself on outstanding academics, extraordinary faith life, strong athletic programs, and an exceptional sense of community and belonging. It has a mission to educate men and women within a community of faith and scholarship.

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