

Ovatio for Thomas J. Sienkewicz

The title of this award indicates very clearly the reason for its bestowal on the recipient. That person will have amassed impressive evidence of noteworthy deeds; and that service to his or her discipline, associates, and the community at large will have been performed over the course of enough years to prove that it was not an achievement that was an aberration or one-time effort, but the result of many years of dedication.

To illustrate why and how Professor Sienkewicz has earned this Eta Sigma Phi honor, it has been necessary to choose a representative sample from a vast array of scholarly products, attested to by published matter or by the recognition of his peers, or seen in the result of his influence. Because the range of his interests has been so broad, this sample may lead you to think that there is more surface value than substance, but if, with the electronic aids now available to us, you pursue his record, you will find that each item in the sample has been plucked from a deep pool of accomplishments.

Professor Sienkewicz earned his undergraduate degree at the College of the Holy Cross, and his doctoral degree from Johns Hopkins University, where he submitted a dissertation titled "Euripides' Trojan Women: An interpretive Study." He has taught at a number of institutions of higher learning, among which are chiefly to be mentioned Howard University, where he



Clockwise from top: Professor Davis delivers the well-deserved ovatio for Professor Sienkewicz; adorable granddaughter Sylvia Bond, a future ΗΣΦ member in the fine Sienkewicz family tradition; Professor Sienkewicz

rose to the rank of Associate Professor, and Monmouth College, where he has risen to the rank of full professor, and currently holds an endowed chair as Minnie Billings Capron Professor of Classics.

As a teacher, Professor Sienkewicz

has shown expertise in many topics. He has not only taught courses in Greek and Latin language and literature, but also in mythology, religion, and culture. His literary interest has not been confined to Classics, for he has developed courses in American and African literature,

teaching the poetry of Maya Angelou as well as that of Catullus, the Sundjata epic of the ancient kingdom of Mali as well as the Homeric epics of ancient Greece. He is as comfortable in Honors program classes and summer institutes for teachers as he is in the basic undergraduate curriculum at Monmouth.

Among books by this prolific author can be cited *Classical Gods and Heroes in the National Gallery of Art* (1983); *Oral Cultures Past and Present: Rappin' and Homer* (with Vivien Edwards, 1990); *The Classical Epic: An Annotated Bibliography* (1991); *Disce!* (a basic text for elements of Latin, with Ken Kitchell, 2011). Articles published by Professor Sienkewicz include ones on Greek tragedy, as his dissertation topic would have lead us to expect, but also ones on Propertius and Catullus, on Plautus and Terrence, on Latin teaching standards, on Abd Allah ibn Sa'd ibn Abi Sarh, on Zhangdi—even on the adventures of Huckleberry Finn!

Supporting his broad interests has been foreign travel and residence. He has lived in Scotland, France and Italy, and traveled to Turkey, Greece and various other European countries, and to Mali, Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal. He has especially enjoyed directing Monmouth College's study program in Florence, and is preparing a book on Walking Tours in Florence that will assist other directors of foreign study as well as fellow travel enthusiasts.

On the selection of Lifetime Achievement Awardees

Now that we have established the presentation of Lifetime Achievement Awards as a part of the banquet activities at national conventions, the Board of Trustees invites the membership at large, and particularly the membership at the host institution, to submit nominations for these awards. The awardee should be a person who has pursued a long career in Classics, and who has contributed in an outstanding fashion to ΗΣΦ and to the discipline, especially as regards outreach into the community. The Board reserves the right to select the recipients (one or two each year) from the list of persons nominated.

Please send a CV of your nominee and a brief letter stating why you think he or she deserves our recognition. Materials should be sent to the Chair of the Board of Trustees or the Executive Secretary by 1 January preceding the convention in which the award is to be made.

Ovatio for Thomas J. Sienkewicz (Continued)

When looking at grants and awards given to this outstanding person, it is not a surprise to find Phi Beta Kappa, a fellowship for study in Edinburgh, Scotland, faculty research grants, study grants from the National Endowment of the Arts—but here also is the Illinois Lieutenant Governor's Award for Contributions to Foreign Language Learning (1993), proving that he is not an ivory tower specialist, but someone whose outreach into the community has been noticed by non-academics. Thomas Sienkewicz has participated in and served administratively in his local and state professional organizations, and has contributed to the work of such organizations as the National Latin Exam and Advanced Placement. At the regional level, his service to the Classical Association of the Midwest and South has been so important that CAMWS gave him an *ovatio* in 2002. Not one to rest on his laurels, he currently serves CAMWS as its Secretary/Treasurer. At the national level, Thomas Sienkewicz has served the American Philological Association as a volunteer on various committees, and as an elected member of the Education Committee. The APA has recognized his contributions to pedagogy with its highest educational honor, the Excellence in Teaching Award, which he received in 1989.

Time does not permit the mention of the many, many other achievements of Thomas J. Sienkewicz. We now come to those that touch those of us assembled here most directly, those that involve his work in Eta Sigma Phi. When he began his long tenure at Monmouth College, he met the extraordinary Bernice L. Fox, whose name is familiar to us from the Eta Sigma Phi Society's Bernice L. Fox Fellowship for summer study. Their cooperation in the activities of the Monmouth Classics department led eventually to cooperation in the translation and editing of a book, *Sex Fabulae Breves* in 1990, and to his editorship of the *Festschrift* in her honor, which appeared in 1992. Following her example he became active in Eta Sigma Phi at Monmouth, and from there his contribution became national. We have witnessed how he went from volunteering on committee matters and on the Board of Trustees to take the post of Executive Secretary.

During his term as Executive Secretary our Society has continued to grow and to expand its profile beyond the confines of a national honorary for undergraduates in Classics to that of a promoter of opportunity for future scholars to practice their skills at presenting scholarly papers. We are well known for our sponsorship of a panel at the meetings of the Classical Association of the Midwest and South, Southern Section (a fine tradition begun by Honorary Board Member Professor C. Wayne Tucker), and most recently, one at the annual meeting of the American Philological Association. These panels alone, inspired by Professor Sienkewicz's vision, would indicate that he deserves one of the Lifetime Achievement Awards, another practice that evolved

under his aegis, and presented at an annual ceremony to recognize persons who have enriched Classics, as Professor Sienkewicz himself has done. We have also accepted our first major endowment, increased our scholarship program, concentrating on field archaeology practice as well as study at the American School in Athens, the American Academy at Rome, the Vergilian Society study tours, and selected summer study programs to increase training for pre-collegiate teachers.

Thomas J. Sienkewicz stands before you now as an Honorary Trustee, still active in the Society, and ever more worthy to be honored.

Martha Davis

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