



LSU Research Recognizes Six Rainmakers

News

[Press Releases](#)
[Event Announcements](#)
[CCT Weekly](#)
[Grants and Funding](#)
[Student News](#)
[Archived News](#)

[LSU Media Center](#)

BATON ROUGE – Six LSU faculty members have been selected to receive Rainmaker awards this year by the LSU Office of Research & Economic Development, or ORED. These faculty members show outstanding research, scholarship and creative activity for their respective ranks and disciplines. The Rainmaker awards recognize both sustained and continuing work as well as the impact that work has had on the academic community and beyond.

"Today, we are announcing six of our esteemed faculty members who are leaders in their respective research disciplines and at LSU. Their high-caliber research helps realize the university's mission to impact and serve Louisiana and the world. It's an honor to celebrate these six LSU Rainmakers," said LSU Interim Vice President of Research & Economic Development Robert Twilley.

The Rainmakers include faculty who are at the early, middle and senior stages of their careers. They have established track records in securing external research funding and publishing in high-impact journals.

The Rainmakers award is made possible in partnership with Campus Federal Credit Union.



Campus Federal Credit Union is proud to continue supporting the Rainmaker awards, which recognize the accomplishments of these outstanding members of the LSU community. These individuals and many others make our community vibrant and strong. Campus Federal was formed in 1934 by seven LSU faculty members to serve the community and remains committed to service excellence.

Jane Verret, Campus Federal Credit Union President and CEO

Each of the following award-winning faculty members has met one or more of the criteria for high-quality research or creative activities and scholarship. The criteria include but are not limited to: publication in a high-impact journal(s); a highly cited work; external awards; invited presentations at national and international meetings; high journal publication productivity; critically acclaimed book publication(s), performance(s), exhibit(s) or theatrical production(s); high grant productivity and for more senior candidates, outstanding citation records and high-impact invited presentations at national and international meetings.

Nominations are solicited from faculty, departments and colleges for the emerging, mid-career and senior scholar awards. For each award category, one award is given to a faculty member in the area of Arts, Humanities, Social or Behavioral Sciences and one to a faculty member in the area of Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics. Nominations are reviewed and prizes awarded by members of LSU's Council on Research. Each award comes with a one-time cash stipend of \$1,000 and recipients will be recognized at a reception on April 5 at the LSU Center for River Studies.



April Chen

Luttrill & Pearl Payne School of Education Assistant Professor Yu April Chen.

– Photo: LSU

Emerging Scholar Arts, Humanities, Social & Behavioral Science

[Yu April Chen](#), Luttrill & Pearl Payne School of Education, College of Human Sciences & Education

Yu April Chen is an assistant professor in the Luttrill & Pearl Payne School of Education. She received her doctoral degree in Educational Leadership specializing in Higher Education with a minor in Statistics from Iowa State University in 2014.

She applies both advanced statistical and qualitative methods to study community college transfer students, STEM success among underrepresented student populations and the experiences of international students. Her work has been published in top-tier higher education journals including *Research in Higher Education*, *Community College Review*, *Community College Journal of Research and Practice* and *Journal of College Student Retention*. She has delivered more than 40 scholarly presentations at premier national research conferences including the American Educational Research Association, Association for the Studies of Higher Education, or ASHE, and the Council for the Study of Community Colleges, or CSCC.

She received the LSU Alumni Association Rising Faculty Research Award in 2020 for her outstanding records of scholarship and published research.

Dr. Chen has served as an editorial board member for the *Journal of The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition* since 2021. She serves on the conference evaluation committee for ASHE (2021-2023) as well as the Division Co-chair for Equity, Diversity, and International Division in CSCC (2020-2021, 2021-2022).

[Read more about Dr. Chen's scholarship.](#)



– Photo: LSU

Emerging Scholar
Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics


[Emmanouil Chatzopoulos](#), Physics & Astronomy, College of Science

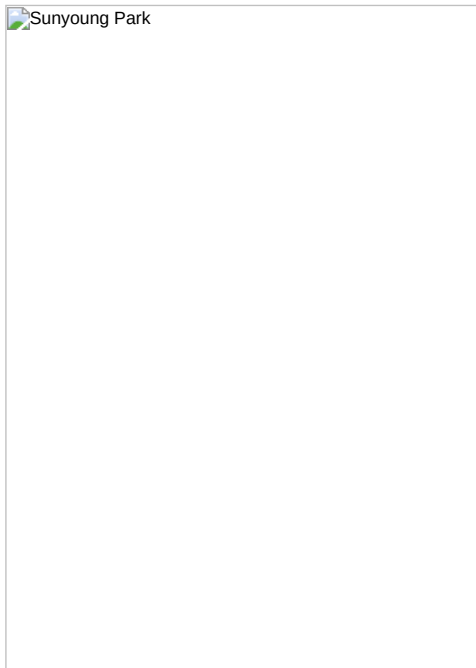
Emmanouil Chatzopoulos is a theoretical and computational astrophysicist specializing in supercomputer simulations to understand extreme astrophysical events, such as supernovae and massive stellar evolution. He currently works on a variety of research projects having a great impact on many different aspects of astrophysics and astronomy. He conducts research aimed at better understanding the deaths of stars and the most luminous transient astrophysical events in the Universe. He is at the forefront of applying fully 3D numerical models in extreme environments and his results are impacting many different astrophysical problems.

Dr. Chatzopoulos' research is supported by both the National Science Foundation and by the U.S. Department of Energy through a prestigious [Early Career Award](#). His current single investigator grants total about \$1.2 million.

He is an associate professor in the LSU Department of Physics & Astronomy. He is an internationally recognized researcher. His h-index is 21. Currently, Chatzopoulos has 13 papers with more than 50 citations, and more than 2,300 citations total.

[Read more about Dr. Chatzopoulos' research.](#)

 Sunyoung Park



LSU School of Leadership & Human Resource Development Associate Professor and the Jones S. Davis Distinguished Professor Sunyoung Park

– Photo: LSU

Mid-Career Scholar
Arts, Humanities, Social & Behavioral Science

[Sunyoung Park](#), School of Leadership & Human Resource Development, College of Human Sciences & Education

Sunyoung Park is an associate professor and holds the Jones S. Davis Endowed Professorship of Human Resource Development. She received her PhD from the University of Minnesota in Human Resource Development, or HRD. Her research interests concern organizational culture and behavior, learning and performance in the workplace, leadership and research trends in HRD and related fields. Her teaching focuses on the fields of instructional design, performance analysis, training and development and research methods.

Dr. Park has received several research awards including a 2016 Awards for Excellence: Highly Commended Paper Award from European Journal of Training and Development and Cutting Edge Awards at the 2011, 2014 and 2016 AHRD International Research Conference in the Americas. She received the LSU Alumni Association Rising Faculty Research Award in 2017.

Originally from Korea, Dr. Park has spent the last 10 years working with clients in government, non-profit organizations, schools and companies. As a project manager and team leader, Dr. Park has extensive experience in planning, designing and implementing diverse educational programs in both face-to-face and online environments.

[Read more about Dr. Park's research.](#)

LSU Department of Oceanography & Coastal Sciences Associate Professor Z. George Xue has a joint appointment with the Center for Computation and Technology.

– Photo: LSU

Mid-Career Scholar
Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics

[Z. George Xue](#), Oceanography & Coastal Sciences, College of the Coast & Environment and Center for Computation and Technology

Z. George Xue is an oceanographer with extensive experience in sediment, nutrient and carbon dynamics of the Mississippi River-Gulf of Mexico and the Mekong River-South China Sea systems. His areas of interest include physical-bio-geochemical modeling, coastal and ocean carbon cycling and coupled atmospheric-hydrological modeling.



He currently leads a research team funded by NASA tracking the impact of severe weather disturbances on the coastal wetlands and estuaries in Louisiana and Texas. Since 2014, he has brought in \$14.9 million in external research funding, including projects from NOAA, NASA, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, National Science Foundation and others.

[Read more about Dr. Xue's research.](#)



LSU
Department
of World
Languages,
Literatures
& Cultures
Professor
Mark
Wagner

– Photo:
LSU

**Senior
Scholar
Arts,**

Humanities, Social & Behavioral Science

[Mark Samuel Wagner](#), World Languages, Literatures, & Cultures, College of Humanities & Social Sciences

Mark Samuel Wagner is a professor of Arabic whose scholarship interests include Classical Arabic literature, Arabic vernacular literature, Islamic law and Muslim-Jewish relations.

Dr. Wagner's research focuses on classical Arabic literature, Arabic vernacular literature, Islamic law, and Muslim-Jewish relations. He was recently awarded a fellowship at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIAS), where he is undertaking a research project titled, "The Rothschilds of Arabia and Africa: The Rise and Fall of a Jewish Mercantile Empire Under the British Raj." He is writing a history of the Messa family of Aden and its network of satellite communities.

Dr. Wagner is also the recipient of prestigious awards and honors that include the David J. Kriskovich Distinguished Professorship (2011-2013), the SIAS Summer Institute fellowship, Institut d'études avancées de Paris fellowship, National Foundation for Jewish Culture dissertation fellowship, and the IAYS research grant.

He is the author of two books, "Jews and Islamic Law in Early 20th-Century Yemen" and "Like Joseph in Beauty: Yemeni Vernacular Poetry and Arab-Jewish Symbiosis."

[Read more about Dr. Wagner's scholarship.](#)

LSU Mechanical Engineering Professor Shengmin Guo

– Photo: LSU


**Senior Scholar
Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics**

[Shengmin Guo](#), Mechanical Engineering, College of Engineering

Shengmin Guo hold the Jack Holmes Professorship in Mechanical Engineering and is a Louisiana-registered professional engineer. Prior to joining LSU in 2004, he was junior faculty at the University of Oxford and the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology in England.

Dr. Guo's research activities are in the fields of thermal fluids, instrumentation, power generation, laser additive manufacturing, and high-temperature materials. More specifically, he has an established track record on gas turbine aerodynamics and heat transfer, plasma spray coatings, high-temperature ceramics and alloys, laser-based additive manufacturing, and solid-state friction stir-based advanced manufacturing.

His research projects are funded by the National Science Foundation, NASA, U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Air Force, LaSPACE, Louisiana Board of Regents and industry. His current research focus is on laser-based additive manufacturing, which provides challenges and opportunities for future engineers and high-tech leaders.

 Shengmin Guo

[Read more about Dr. Guo's research.](#)

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