



News

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

Susanne Brenner and Ward Plummer Named Boyd Professors, the Highest and Most Prestigious Academic Rank at LSU

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BATON ROUGE – On Friday, Dec. 8, the LSU Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to award Boyd Professorships to [Susanne Brenner](#), Nicholson Professor in the LSU Department of Mathematics, and [Ward Plummer](#), LSU professor of physics. The designation of Boyd Professor is LSU's highest and most prestigious academic rank, and is only awarded to faculty who have achieved national and international recognition for outstanding research, teaching or other creative achievements.

"It is our great privilege to bestow LSU's most elite faculty recognition, the title of Boyd Professor, to Dr. Susanne Brenner and Dr. Ward Plummer," said LSU President F. King Alexander. "Drs. Brenner and Plummer are internationally recognized researchers and educators in their fields, and we are honored to count them among LSU's faculty. Individuals like them are a major part of what makes LSU the exceptional place it is for our students, faculty, staff and the citizens of Louisiana."

Nominations for the Boyd Professorship are evaluated by the LSU Boyd Professor Review Committee, which seeks confidential evaluations from distinguished scholars in the candidate's field of expertise. Once endorsed by the review committee, the nomination is forwarded to the LSU president and Board of Supervisors for approval.

"The Boyd Professor designation honors the extraordinary accomplishments of our faculty and their dedication to the mission of Louisiana State University," said Rick Koubek, Executive Vice President and Provost. "I am pleased to congratulate both Dr. Brenner and Dr. Plummer for earning this most honorable distinction. As leaders in their respected fields, their research and reputation epitomize our values as an institution."

Brenner and Plummer are the 74th and 75th Boyd Professor named across LSU, and the 48th and 49th from the Flagship campus to be awarded the coveted title since it was established in 1953 to honor brothers David and Thomas Boyd, early faculty members and presidents of LSU. With these appointments, there are now 23 active Boyd Professors across multiple campuses of LSU.

Both Brenner and Plummer received a number of letters of support from their dean, colleagues across campus and colleagues across the academic and research community for their nomination as Boyd Professors.

In her nomination letter for Brenner, LSU College of Science Dean Cynthia Peterson wrote, "Dr. Brenner is an exemplary faculty member who enjoys an outstanding reputation for her work on numerical solutions to partial differential equations ... Brenner is a highly esteemed mathematician who is recognized internationally, reflecting well on LSU and bringing highly favorable recognition to our campus."

Brenner, who received her Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of Michigan, holds a joint appointment with the Department of Mathematics and Center for Computation and Technology, or CCT. At CCT, she has served as the associate director for academic affairs since 2008. In 2005, she was awarded a Humboldt Research Award from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. In 2011, she was awarded the AWM-SIAM Sonia Kovalevsky Lecture. She is a SIAM Fellow (Class of 2010), AMS Fellow (Inaugural Class 2013) and AAAS Fellow (2012). Brenner was selected as an LSU Rainmaker in 2009 and Distinguished Research Master in 2013. She is also the 2017 SEC Faculty Achievement Award winner from LSU.

In his letter of support for Brenner, Director of the LSU Center for Computation and Technology J. "Ram" Ramanujam wrote, "Sue Brenner has been one of the highly influential, innovative and productive educators and researchers on the faculty at LSU. She has an outstanding record of teaching, research, mentoring and service to the profession and community. Dr. Susanne Brenner richly deserves the rank of Boyd Professor at LSU."

Brenner serves as managing editor of Mathematics of Computation. She also serves on the editorial boards of the SIAM Journal on Numerical Analysis, Numerische Mathematik, Numerical Algorithms, Electronic Transactions on Numerical Analysis and the Journal of Numerical Mathematics. She serves on the Scientific Council of the Center International de Mathématiques Pures et Appliquées and the AMS Council. In addition, she was a member of the Electorate Nominating Committee for the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the SIAM Fellows Selection Committee. She is a past SIAM vice president for publications and served on the SIAM Council.

For more information on the LSU Department of Mathematics, visit www.math.lsu.edu. For more information on CCT, visit www.cct.lsu.edu.

In her nomination letter for Plummer, Peterson wrote, "On the basis of his exceptional career of first-rate world-class research, his outstanding preparation of our next-generation scientists and his generous service contributions to the university and the profession, I am proud to submit Dr. Plummer's nomination as a Boyd Professor. I am proud to have such a distinguished colleague who is universally held in high regard by leading scientists around the world."

Joining LSU's faculty in 2009, as part of the Multidisciplinary Hiring Initiative in Materials Science and Engineering, Plummer is a professor in the Department of Physics & Astronomy, and a special assistant to the vice chancellor of research. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Lewis and Clark College in 1962 and completed his Ph.D. degree in physics at Cornell University in 1967. He is a member of the National Academy of Science and was elected a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. As an eminent physicist in materials research, he has developed advanced high-resolution observation methods focused on investigating the phenomena associated with the unique environment at a surface or interface. To date, he has published more than 400 scientific articles and been quoted by other scholars over 17,000 times.

In his letter of support for Plummer, LSU Boyd Professor and Dr. Mary Lou Applewhite Distinguished Professor Mark Batzer wrote, "Dr. Plummer is one of the highest profile researchers at LSU as evidenced by his membership in a variety of scientific societies, regular invitations to provide invited lectures throughout the world and multiple organizational activities at national and international meetings. In fact, internationally he is one of the most widely recognized researchers in the world."

Earlier this year, Plummer was honored with the Award for International Scientific Cooperation from the Chinese Academy of Sciences, or CAS. He is the only physicist from the United States to have ever received this award. He has served as the chief scientific adviser for the International Center for Quantum Structures at the CAS Institute of Physics since 2000. He also acted as foreign adviser at the High Magnetic Field Laboratory under the Hefei Institutes of Physical Science, as leader of the international expert panel for evaluating the Institute of Physics' 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020), and as a member of the judging panel for many important awards.

For more information on the LSU Department of Physics and Astronomy, visit www.lsu.edu/physics.

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Center for Computation & Technology

2003 Digital Media Center • Telephone: +1 225/578-5890 • Fax: +1 225/578-8957

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