The American Forensics Association’s Professional Development and Support Committee is pleased to announce the recipient of the 2021 Distinguished Service Award: Dr. Catherine Helen Palczewski, Professor of Communication and of Women and Gender Studies at the University of Northern Iowa.

Dr. Palczewski has a long history of supporting forensic students both as a coach and a mentor. After years as a top competitor in policy debate, she became an assistant debate coach at Northwestern University during her doctoral studies. At the University of Northern Iowa, she served as director of policy debate for fifteen years and also served as the acting director of forensics twice during those years. Although debate was her primary focus and passion, Dr. Palczewski was also highly supportive of individual event competition, supporting comprehensive forensic competition and offering guidance on specific topics and speeches in her areas of specialty. However, her support of forensic students extends beyond her capacity as director and coach. Dr. Palczewski’s guidance and mentorship has supported many forensic students in both debate and individual events to find their place in higher education as forensic professionals, scholars, and educators. As a director and adviser, she championed the importance of the right opportunities for aspiring forensic educators and, in some cases, seemed to understand the needs of her students before they did.

Dr. Palczewski’s impact on the AFA and forensic community extends beyond her impact as a coach and educator. Her commitment to furthering the field of argumentation is astonishing and has made argumentation and debate better for her contributions. Her scholarship in argumentation, political communication, and women’s and feminist rhetoric has been widely published in *Quarterly Journal of Speech, Rhetoric & Public Affairs, Women and Language,* .and AFA’s own *Argumentation and Advocacy,* among a multitude of other publications. She has also made a significant number of presentations at the AFA Conference on Argumentation in Alta, UT. In addition to her own scholarly contributions, Dr. Palczewski engages in a significant amount of service to ensure the future of quality argumentation and rhetorical scholarship, including serving on editorial boards of multiple speech and communication journals, including *Argumentation and Advocacy* and the Alta conference on argumentation. She also served as co-editor of *Argumentation & Advocacy* and director of the Alta conference. In short, Dr. Palczewski scholarship and service is frequently devoted to the assemblage of quality scholarship and in argumentation and debate, and in many cases has chosen to devote much of her time to projects and service affiliated with the American Forensics Association.

The aforementioned are just highlights in a storied career dedicated to quality teaching, forensic education and mentorship, and excellence in both scholarship and service. It is for these reasons that the 2021 AFA Distinguished Service Award Recipient is Dr. Catherine Helen Palczewski.