

Cendara University

Awards and Recognition

2023–2024 University Honors

Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching **Recipient:** Dr. Simone L. Marquez

Department: Mathematics

Presented on: May 4, 2024

Citation:

Dr. Marquez is recognized for distinguished teaching and innovative curriculum development in applied mathematics. Her engaging approach and dedication to student mentorship have significantly improved departmental outcomes.

Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award **Recipient:** Dr. Priyanka Halson (Class of 2005)

Field: Medical Research

Presented on: March 15, 2024

Citation:

Dr. Halson, Director of Cardiology at Meridian General Hospital, has pioneered advancements in heart disease diagnostics, receiving international acclaim. Her commitment to global health advocacy exemplifies Cendara values.

Staff Service Recognition **Recipient:** Mr. James O. Felix

Department: Facilities & Operations

Years of Service: 25

Presented on: December 10, 2023

Citation:

Mr. Felix’s long-standing dedication has been vital to campus safety and sustainability initiatives. His efforts have contributed to Cendara attaining a regional Green Campus certification.

Undergraduate Research Excellence Award **Recipient:** Maya Elise Greene

Major: Environmental Science

Presented on: May 2, 2024

Citation:

Maya’s project on river pollution and restoration in the Cendara Valley

garnered publication in the Northeast Ecology Review and shaped local environmental policy recommendations.

2023 Institutional Achievements

- **Top Regional University Award**
Granted by the Eastern Academic Review Board for outstanding academic innovation and student satisfaction.
- **Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion (Gold Level)**
Awarded by the National Association for Inclusive Education (NAIE) for Cendara’s “Bridge Horizons” initiative, boosting underrepresented groups in STEM by 35%.
- **Innovative Campus Sustainability Program Award**
Recognized by the Green Futures Alliance for the comprehensive “Solar Steps” campus energy overhaul, including solar canopy installations and electric fleet conversion.

Faculty Recognition (2023–2024)

Name	Department	Award	Organization	Date
Dr. Mikhail Valenko	Urban Studies	Urban Planning Impact Fellow	Nat. Planning Inst.	January 2024
Prof. Rita Chen	Theater Arts	Outstanding Creative Educator	State Arts Council	October 2023
Dr. Sarah Oluwatunji	Biology	Life Sciences Research Advancement Medal	BioSociety North	March 2024

Student Achievement Highlights

- **Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl Champions**
The Cendara Debate Society triumphed in the Northeast Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl, defeating nine regional universities, March 2024.
- **Meridian Technology Prize Finalist**
Team AquaAdapt (Katherine Su, Omar Bedeir, Linh Phan) reached the finals for their development of an affordable portable water purifier, April 2024.

- **First Place, National Short Film Festival**
“Reflections of Tomorrow,” directed by senior media studies student Elena DiLuca, won top honors for original screenplay, November 2023.
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Community & Partner Recognition

- **Civic Engagement Leadership Certification**
Presented by Meridian City Council to Cendara University for sustained community service programming and voter engagement workshops, February 2024.
 - **Industry Innovation Award**
Awarded jointly by Cendara Technology Consortium and InfoStream Corp. for the “STEM to Success” internship pipeline, March 2024.
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For additional details on awards and recognition, contact the Office of University Relations at recognition@cendara.edu.