

Ralph A. Ciancio Award for Excellence in Teaching

Corey Freeman-Gallant
Professor, Biology Department

The Faculty Development Committee is pleased to announce Corey Freeman-Gallant as the recipient of this year's Ralph Cianco Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Corey sets high expectations for his students. He provides extensive guidance and encouragement as they strive to measure up to these expectations. Lectures and labs are designed with meticulous care and attention. Corey instills curiosity and wonder and induces students to engage deeply with the natural world. He creates a collaborative learning environment where students become accustomed to trusting and relying on one another as they face the challenges that the natural world presents to them. Corey supplements his lectures with a broad range of activities and materials which include self-assessments, study guides, and frequent and timely feedback. All of this material assists students in staying on track and it strengthens their study habits as they work toward mastery of the course topics. He strives to draw students into, as he puts it in his teaching statement, "the discomfort of deep learning."

Corey's command of his subject matter, his organization, and his enthusiasm are all evident to and highly appreciated by his students. Reading his teaching evaluations is a humbling experience. The number five is ubiquitous on the college-wide forms. "Best professor at Skidmore" or even "best professor ever" are common refrains on the long-forms. One student in particular captured Corey's pedagogical genius with this line: Corey "made me excited to wake up at 8 AM to talk about birds."

Corey's engagement with his students extends beyond the classroom. Students are eager to join his research group and are provided with a unique combination of field work and molecular research in the laboratory. Twenty-two different Skidmore students are co-authors on publications in top journals in Corey's discipline.

Corey is fond of a quotation from J.A. Baker's terrific book *The Peregrine*. "The hardest thing of all," Baker writes, "is to see what is really there." While that may be true of the natural world, it's certainly not true of Corey's excellence in the classroom. Thank you for your dedication to our students. On behalf of the Faculty Development Committee and the entire Skidmore community, we extend our heartfelt congratulations!