



April 8, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

I am delighted to announce that three of our faculty colleagues have been named *Distinguished University Professor* (DUP) for 2021. Being selected as a DUP involves an intensive internal and external review of the faculty member's credentials that culminates in selection by the DUP Recommending Committee. I am also pleased to announce that this year's DUPs will be recognized at an upcoming 2021 commencement exercise. Those named this year will have their titles formally bestowed at the Faculty Honors & Awards ceremony to be held during the Fall 2021 semester, and will deliver a DUP presentation to which the entire university community is invited during the 2021-2022 academic year. Courtesy of the DUP Recommending Committee, please see the following brief overviews, which merely touch on the impressive academic profiles, of our 2021 *Distinguished University Professors*.

Professor Maureen Groer, College of Nursing

Dr. Maureen W. Groer, RN, FAAN, is the Gordon Keller Professor of Nursing. She is a nationally and internationally recognized expert in biobehavioral research whose research focuses on immunology, psychoneuroimmunology, breastfeeding, and the infant gut microbiome. She is particularly well known for her work on understanding cytokines, chemokines, and growth factors in mother's milk and her pioneering work on mother-infant microbiomes. In addition to her foundational work in these areas, Dr. Groer has distinguished herself by facilitating the advances of others through extensive collaborations. She has a strong and steady record of extramural funding from the National Institutes of Health and private foundations, and has served as a co-investigator on numerous collaborative grants. Dr. Groer is a clinician-scientist who has ably mentored clinicians and basic scientists from the College of Nursing and the College of Medicine, many of whom are now established scholars. She founded the Biobehavioral Laboratory in the College of Nursing and has been a core faculty member of numerous cross-USF scientific initiatives. Dr. Groer is recognized as an excellent teacher who has received teaching awards at USF and her prior institutions. Dr. Groer is a Fellow of the *Society of Behavioral Biology* and a *Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing* and has served on Academy expert panels, shaping policy that benefits women's and children's health.

Professor William E. Haley, College of Behavioral and Community Sciences, School of Aging Studies

Dr. William Haley is a Professor in the School of Aging Studies in the College of Behavioral and Community Sciences. He is an intellectual leader in the field of aging studies, having pioneered and shaped the field of family caregiving research over the past 30 years. His work is noted for being methodologically rigorous, innovative, and paradigm-shifting in addressing significant questions with regard to the problems, issues, and coping strategies of caregivers of family members with



chronic illness and disability. Dr. Haley's research has been continuously externally funded, widely published, and highly cited. Moreover, he has been generous with his time and talents, having held a variety of impactful leadership roles both within the university and within the professional community. Dr. Haley is the recipient of numerous awards in recognition of his exceptional mentoring of students (e.g., Susan V. Saxon Outstanding Teaching Award in the Field of Gerontology; Minority Mentorship Award, Gerontological Society of America Task Force on Minority Issues in Gerontology). He is a Fellow of the *Association for the Advancement of Science*, *American Psychological Association*, *Gerontological Society of America*, *American Psychological Society*, and the *Association for Gerontology in Higher Education*. Dr. Haley is the consummate scholar, with an outstanding record of contributions to research, teaching and mentoring, and service.

Professor Sudeep Sarkar, College of Engineering, Department of Computer Science and Engineering

Dr. Sudeep Sarkar is a Professor and Chair of the Computer Science and Engineering Department, and an Associate Vice President for Special Programs at USF. He has distinguished himself as one of the global leaders in computer vision, biometrics, and artificial intelligence. He has developed systems to recognize persons from the way they walk (gait), automated sign language recognition, and extracting precise medically relevant information from medical images. Dr. Sarkar is considered a world leader in gait biometrics, and his benchmark algorithm for gait recognition is regarded as the de-facto standard. He is a Fellow of American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), National Academy of Inventors (NAI), Institute for Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE), International Association for Pattern Recognition (IAPR), and American Institute for Medical and Biomedical Engineering (AIMBE). He is the Editor-in-Chief of *Pattern Recognition Letters*, a top-10 journal in the field of computer vision and pattern recognition. He is also the President of the IEEE Biometrics Council. Dr. Sarkar is an outstanding educator, having won the Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award and the Teaching Incentive Program Award at USF. He has directed 22 Doctoral and 23 Master's students. The Florida Education Fund awarded him the William R. Jones Outstanding Mentor Award.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the dedication shown by members of the DUP Recommending Committee; year after year, they face the challenging task of making their selections from an impressive pool of worthy candidates. This year's Committee consisted of Professors Tammy Allen, D. Yogi Goswami, Steven Jones, Nataša Jonoska, Kami Kim, Kirby Russell, and Charles Stanish. Moreover, Senior Vice Provost Dwayne Smith, along with his administrative assistant Ms. Rosie Lopez, are to be commended for facilitating the complex DUP process in supporting the vital work of the Committee.

Please join me in congratulating our 2021 Distinguished University Professors Maureen W. Groer, William E. Haley, and Sudeep Sarkar.

Sincerely,

Ralph C. Wilcox

Provost & Executive Vice President
University of South Florida