



NEWS RELEASE

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USI Spanish professor given 2 state awards

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Oscar Ozete, a University of Southern Indiana Spanish professor the past 15 years, will be recognized October 28 in Indianapolis when two state organizations -- the Indiana chapter, American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese and the Indiana Foreign Language Teachers Association -- will present him with Professor of the Year awards.

The groups present awards in Spanish, French, and German each year and Dr. Ozete will be presented the 1994 awards in Spanish during a luncheon ceremony.

Dr. Ozete has taught Spanish at USI since 1980 and has been instrumental in the growth of the University's foreign language department from Spanish and German classes to a program that offers majors and minors in Spanish, German, and French; instruction in Japanese; and a Language and International Trade course which takes the student into an international internship.

Sherrianne Standley, USI vice president for University Relations, called the awards well deserved, noting Dr. Ozete "is the epitome of the kind of teachers we prize at USI, the ones who can thoroughly involve their students by the strength of their own knowledge and love for their subject.

"In his classroom, you hear nothing but Spanish. At his Spanish Day Fiestas, he could pack 1,500 high school students into the PAC (Physical Activities Center) and you would hear nothing but Spanish. And they all loved it.

"His energetic, involved teaching is sort of the way he approaches everything. It is his charisma that has helped recruit superior foreign language teachers and superior foreign language students to the University," Standley said.

(more)

One former student, writing to the state groups in support of Dr. Ozete's nomination, best described student regard for their teacher when she explained they had nicknamed him "Papa Ozete." She declared, "Though he was an inspiration to me as a student, he is more of an inspiration now that I am a teacher."

A USI colleague, Dr. Guillermo Latorre, associate professor of Spanish and literature, cited Dr. Ozete's "indefatigable commitment to the teaching of Spanish at all levels..." and said as chair of the Foreign Language Department, "he has skillfully combined leadership with a profound respect for the individual freedom of those who work with him."

Teaching colleagues from Indianapolis cited his teaching ability, his deep involvement with professional groups at all levels, and his impressive list of publications, including the textbook *Contigo*, which he co-authored. Dr. Latorre described the textbook as "a model of its kind regarding clarity, precision and ease of use."

Dr. Ozete is a Havana native who grew up in New York City before matriculating at the University of Miami. He received his B.Ed. in 1960 and taught in Miami junior and senior high schools for nine years, then moved to college-level teaching at Indiana University, where he received an M.A.T. in 1968 and Ph.D. in 1974. Dr. Ozete taught at the University of Wisconsin-Madison for six years before joining the faculty at USI in 1980.

Dr. Ozete has been a member or chair of most University committees, held leadership positions with numerous professional organizations, and has taken his enthusiasm for Spanish into the community, including organizing the annual Spanish Day Fiesta at USI for high school Spanish students. His community activities also include Leadership Evansville, Tri-State World Trade Council, Toastmasters International, and Rotary International. He also has been a translator and editor for the monthly newsletter AMF International.